

NAIROBI CENTRE – NEWSLETTER MAY 2011

Dates to remember:-

1st May 2011 – Sunday – Prosperity Day Meditation at 11.00 a.m. at the Bhavan.

Every Saturday: 5.15p.m. to 6.30p.m.: Meditation, "SAVITRI" studies, readings from "GROWING WITHIN".

Every Sunday: 11.00a.m. to 12.30p.m.: Readings from "The Synthesis of Yoga"

Shrine: Sri Aurobindo's Shrine at Sri Aurobindo Bhavan is open from 8a.m. to 7p.m. You are welcome. It is a place for silent meditation.

NEWS

1. On 9th March 2011 the Secretary of the Nairobi Centre of Sri Aurobindo Society gave a talk of 45 minutes to approximately 300 students of Oshwal Academy Nairobi (Senior High) on the Aim of Life and the right attitude to face difficulties as they prepare to sit their A level examinations. The talk was followed by a question and answer session.
2. On 21st March 2011, Nairobi Centre of Sri Aurobindo Society presented three thousand booklets in ten titles to The Nairobi Women's Hospital, one of the largest hospitals for women in Nairobi. It also has out-patients clinic and one more branch in Nairobi.
3. On 29th March 2011, Nairobi Centre of Sri Aurobindo Society presented two thousand booklets in ten titles to Nairobi Hospice which gives health care to terminally ill patients. The booklets were received by the deputy chief executive officer and other hospice staff at Sri Aurobindo Bhavan, Nairobi.
4. The Nairobi Centre of Sri Aurobindo Society presented three thousand booklets in ten titles to Kenya National Library Services which distributes books on education, character-building, etc. throughout Kenya. The organisation has about forty centres spread all over the country. The booklets were received by Mr. Cherop, Acquisition Librarian at Sri Aurobindo Bhavan, on 7th April 2011.

THE INTEGRAL YOGA OF SRI AUROBINDO

Introduction - What is Sri Aurobindo's yoga?

Like his personality, the teaching of Sri Aurobindo is multifaceted and all-embracing but unified by his central vision of a spiritual and divine destiny which must evolve. His teaching states that behind the appearances of the universe there is a Divine Truth-Consciousness, a Self of all things, one and eternal. This consciousness is involved here in **Matter**. Evolution is the method by which it liberates itself. **Life** is the first step of this release of consciousness; **Mind** is the second; however, the evolution does not finish with mind, but awaits a release into

something greater, a consciousness which is **spiritual and supramental**.

What Nature achieves through a slow and laborious evolution, Yoga effects for the individual by a rapid inner transformation. The object of Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga is not only to rise out of the ordinary ignorant world-consciousness into the higher Truth-Consciousness, but also to bring down this Truth-Consciousness on earth, to fix it here, so as to create a new individual and collective life in all its richness and manifold dimensions.

The one aim of his Yoga is an inner self-development by which each one who follows it can, in time, discover the One Self in all, and evolve to a higher consciousness than the mental, a spiritual and supramental consciousness which will transform and divinise human nature.

How is Sri Aurobindo's Yoga different from other yogas and spiritual traditions?

It is said that Sri Aurobindo's Yoga begins where the Gita ends. In other words after the realization and instrumentality, Sri Aurobindo moves on to Supramentalisation of matter. Realisation of the Divine within has been achieved by many in the past. Sri Aurobindo's yoga goes to the next level which is bringing down the supramental into the earth consciousness as a physical principle. This, Sri Aurobindo says, will lead to divinizing matter.

(Taken from Sri Aurobindo Society's Newsletter of November 2010)

Sri Aurobindo on Integral Yoga

(Taken from 'The Soul-Marks of Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga' by G.P.Gupta)

I have called it the Integral Yoga and that means that it takes up the essence and many processes of the old Yogas – its newness is in its aim, standpoint and the totality of its methods.

It is new as compared with old Yogas on three grounds. These are –

1. It aims not at a departure out of the world and life into Heaven or *Nirvana*, but at a change of life and existence, not as something subordinate or incidental but as a distinct and central object... Here the ascent is the first step, but it is a means for the descent. Here the object is the divine fulfillment of life.
2. The object sought after is not an individual achievement of divine realization for the sake of the individual, but something to be gained for the earth consciousness here...
3. The purpose is total and integral change of the consciousness and nature. Our Yoga is not a retreading of old walks, but a spiritual adventure.

(SABCL VOL.26. pp.108-09)

It is no part of my Yoga to have nothing to do with the world or with life or to kill the senses or entirely inhibit their action. It is the object of my Yoga to transform life by bringing down into it the Light, Power and Bliss of the divine Truth and its dynamic certitudes. This Yoga is not a Yoga of world-shunning asceticism, but of Divine life.

(SABCL Vol.26, p.99)

Our Yoga has a different function. The movements of the ordinary consciousness have to be quieted and into the quietude there has to be brought down a higher consciousness and its powers which will transform the nature.

(Sri Aurobindo: More Lights on Yoga, p.76)

The Integral Yoga and the Ordinary Life

THE ONE THING NEEDFUL

It is the lesson of life that always in this world everything fails a man – only the Divine does not fail him, if he turns entirely to the Divine. It is not because there is something bad in you that blows fall on you – blows fall on all human beings because they are full of desire for things that cannot last and they lose them or, even if they get, it brings disappointment and cannot satisfy them. To turn to the Divine is the only truth in life.

Sri Aurobindo (Letters on Yoga(3): p.1639)

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To find the Divine is indeed the first reason for seeking the spiritual Truth and the spiritual life; it is the one thing indispensable and all the rest is nothing without it. The Divine once found, to manifest Him, - that is, first of all to **transform** one's own limited consciousness into the Divine Consciousness, to live in the infinite Peace, Light, Love, Strength, Bliss, to become that in one's essential nature and, as a consequence, to be its vessel, channel, instrument in one's active nature. To bring into activity the principle of oneness on the material plane or to work for humanity is a mental mistranslation of the Truth - these things cannot be the first true object of spiritual seeking. We must find the Self, the Divine, then only can we know what is the work the Self or the Divine demands from us.

Sri Aurobindo (Letters on Yoga (2): pp.516-17)

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... the principle of this Yoga is not **perfection** of the human nature as it is but a psychic and spiritual transformation of all the parts of the being through the action of an inner consciousness and then of a higher consciousness which works on them, throws out their old movements or changes them into the image of its own and so transmutes lower into higher nature. It is not so much the perfection of the intellect as a transcendence of it, a transformation of the mind, the substitution of larger greater principle of knowledge - and so with all the rest of the being.

This is a slow and difficult process; the road is long and it is hard to establish even the necessary basis. The old existing nature resists and obstructs and difficulties arise one after another and repeatedly till they are overcome. It is therefore necessary to be sure that this is the path to which one is called before one finally decides to tread it.

Sri Aurobindo (On Himself, p.176)

The Object of the Integral Yoga

The object of the Yoga is to enter into and be possessed by the Divine Presence and Consciousness, to love the Divine for the Divine's sake alone, to be tuned in our nature into the nature of the Divine, and in our will and works and life to be the instrument of the Divine. Its object is not to be a great yogi or a Superman (although that may come) or to grab at the Divine for the sake of the ego's power, pride or pleasure. It is not for

Moksha though liberation comes by it and all else may come, but these must not be our objects. The Divine alone is our object.

Sri Aurobindo (Letters on Yoga (2), p. 503)

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This yoga demands a total dedication of the life to the aspiration for the discovery and embodiment of the Divine Truth and to nothing else whatever. To divide your life between the Divine and some outward aim and activity that has nothing to do with the search for the Truth is inadmissible. The least thing of that kind would make success in the yoga impossible.

You must go inside yourself and enter into a complete dedication to the spiritual life. All clinging to mental preferences must fall away from you, all insistence on vital aims and interests and attachments must be put away, all egoistic clinging to family, friends, country must disappear if you want to succeed in yoga. Whatever has to come as outgoing energy or action, must proceed from the Truth once discovered and not from the lower mental or vital motives, from the Divine Will and not from personal choice or the preferences of the ego.

Sri Aurobindo (Letters on Yoga (2), p. 519)

“ALL HAS TO BE DONE BY THE WORKING OF THE MOTHER’S FORCE AIDED BY YOUR ASPIRATION, DEVOTION AND SURRENDER.”

SRI AUROBINDO