

**All India Magazine**

**August 2019**

**The Yogi - Revolutionary**

## **Cover Page:**

*Kesari (Saffron) is the traditionally regarded as the colour of sacrifice, of purity and renunciation. From the standpoint of the Integral Yoga it denotes the colour of a supramentalised earth or rather 'The Light of the Supramental in the physical.*

---

### **ALL INDIA MAGAZINE**

#### **A Monthly Magazine of Sri Aurobindo Society**

Annual Subscription: Rs.180 in India, US \$ 25 by Air-mail

*Owner:* Sri Aurobindo Society

*Printer:* Swadhin Chatterjee for Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press

*Publisher:* Pradeep Narang for Sri Aurobindo Society

*Published from:* Society House, 11 Saint Martin Street, Puducherry - 605 001

*Printed from:* Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, No 38, Goubert Avenue,  
Puducherry - 605 001, India.

**Editor: Dr. Alok Pandey**

Registered with the Registrar of Newspapers for India : No. 22334/71

Phone Nos:(0413) 2336396-97-98

**Email:** [info@aurosociety.org](mailto:info@aurosociety.org)      **Website:** [www.aurosociety.org](http://www.aurosociety.org)

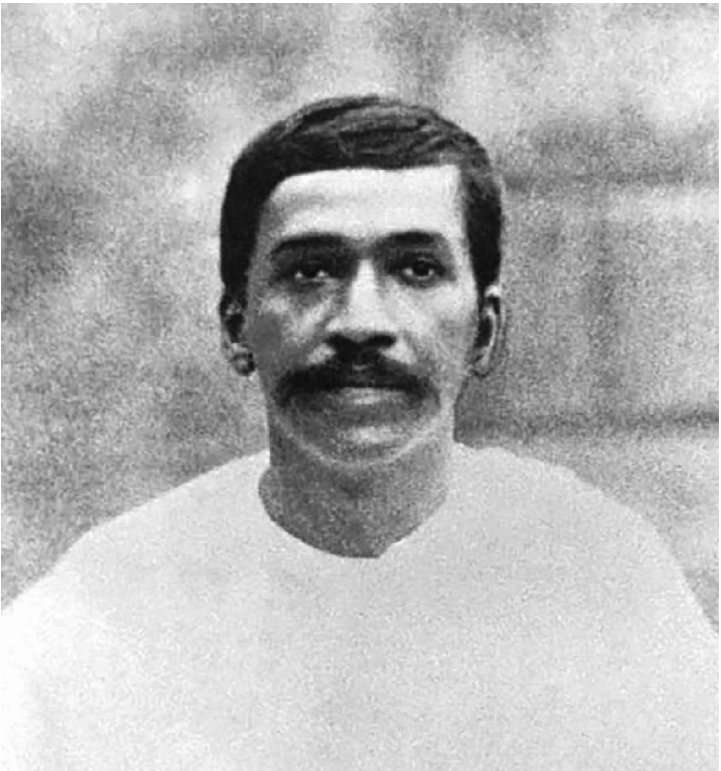
# The Yogi - Revolutionary

*Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face. — Sri Aurobindo*

## CONTENTS

The Revolutionary Nationalist	...	5
Reminiscences	...	26
Writings from 'Bande Mataram'	...	33
Writings from 'Karmayogin'	...	37
Writings from 'Dharma'	...	42

*Editorial Note: Sri Aurobindo plunged into the Indian Independence movement around the time of the Bengal partition in 1905. It was for a brief period of about 5 years but that was enough for him to give a decisive turn to the Freedom movement. He fired the imagination of a nation, galvanised its people through his writings and speeches, created the occult atmosphere necessary for the freedom to come and then withdrew to a still greater field of revolution that awaited him. Hardly anyone in the history of a movement achieved so much in so short a time. By the time he withdrew he had already laid the lines for the future course through which India would eventually regain independence. Though a slice from the past, his writings of that era continue to remain relevant for inspiring and igniting sleeping hearts and minds and awakening the soul of India for her future work. In this issue we take a look at Sri Aurobindo's life during this tumultuous period of Indian history when great sowings were taking place for India's and the world's future.*



*He had already in England decided to devote his life to the service of his country and its liberation. He even began soon after coming to India to write on political matters (without giving his name) in the daily press, trying to awaken the nation to the ideas of the future.*

CWSA 36: 67

**Sri Aurobindo**

## The Revolutionary Nationalist

### A nationalist leader

A great part of the last years of this period was spent on leave in silent political activity, for he was debarred from public action by his position at Baroda. The outbreak of the agitation against the partition of Bengal in 1905 gave him the opportunity to give up the Baroda Service and join openly in the political movement. He left Baroda in 1906 and went to Calcutta as Principal of the newly-founded Bengal National College.

The political action of Sri Aurobindo covered eight years, from 1902 to 1910. During the first half of this period he worked behind the scenes, preparing with other co-workers the beginnings of the Swadeshi (Indian Sinn Fein) movement, till the agitation in Bengal furnished an opening for the public initiation of a more forward and direct political action than the moderate reformism which had till then been the creed of the Indian National Congress. In 1906 Sri Aurobindo came to Bengal with this purpose and joined the New Party, an advanced section small in numbers and not yet strong in influence, which had been recently formed in the Congress. The political theory of this party was a rather vague gospel of Non-cooperation; in action it had not yet gone farther than some ineffective clashes with the Moderate leaders at the annual Congress assembly behind the veil of secrecy of the "Subjects Committee". Sri Aurobindo persuaded its chiefs in Bengal to come forward publicly as an All-India party with a definite and challenging programme, putting forward Tilak, the popular Maratha leader at its head, and to attack the then dominant Moderate (Reformist or Liberal) oligarchy of veteran politicians and capture from them the Congress

and the country. This was the origin of the historic struggle between the Moderates and the Nationalists (called by their opponents Extremists) which in two years changed altogether the face of Indian politics.

\*

### **The new-born Nationalist party**

The new-born Nationalist party put forward Swaraj (independence) as its goal as against the far-off Moderate hope of colonial self-government to be realised at a distant date of a century or two by a slow progress of reform; it proposed as its means of execution a programme which resembled in spirit, though not in its details, the policy of Sinn Fein developed some years later and carried to a successful issue in Ireland. The principle of this new policy was self-help; it aimed on one side at an effective organisation of the forces of the nation and on the other professed a complete non-cooperation with the Government. Boycott of British and foreign goods and the fostering of Swadeshi industries to replace them, boycott of British law courts and the foundation of a system of Arbitration courts in their stead, boycott of Government universities and colleges and the creation of a network of National colleges and schools, the formation of societies of young men which would do the work of police and defence and, wherever necessary, a policy of passive resistance were among the immediate items of the programme. Sri Aurobindo hoped to capture the Congress and make it the directing centre of an organised national action, an informal State within the State, which would carry on the struggle for freedom till it was won. He persuaded the party to take up and finance as its recognised organ the newly-founded daily paper, *Bande Mataram*, of which he was at the time acting editor. The *Bande Mataram*, whose policy from the beginning of 1907

till its abrupt winding up in 1908 when Aurobindo was in prison was wholly directed by him, circulated almost immediately all over India. During its brief but momentous existence it changed the political thought of India which has ever since preserved fundamentally, even amidst its later developments, the stamp then imparted to it. But the struggle initiated on these lines, though vehement and eventful and full of importance for the future, did not last long at the time; for the country was still unripe for so bold a programme.

\*

### **The trial and the transformation**

Sri Aurobindo was prosecuted for sedition in 1907 and acquitted. Up till now an organiser and writer, he was obliged by this event and by the imprisonment or disappearance of other leaders to come forward as the acknowledged head of the party in Bengal and to appear on the platform for the first time as a speaker. He presided over the Nationalist Conference at Surat in 1907 where in the forceful clash of two equal parties the Congress was broken to pieces. In May, 1908, he was arrested in the Alipur Conspiracy Case as implicated in the doings of the revolutionary group led by his brother Barindra; but no evidence of any value could be established against him and in this case too he was acquitted. After a detention of one year as undertrial prisoner in the Alipur Jail, he came out in May, 1909, to find the party organisation broken, its leaders scattered by imprisonment, deportation or self-imposed exile and the party itself still existent but dumb and dispirited and incapable of any strenuous action. For almost a year he strove single-handed as the sole remaining leader of the Nationalists in India to revive the movement. He published at this time to aid his effort a weekly English paper, the *Karmayogin*, and a

Bengali weekly, the *Dharma*. But at last he was compelled to recognise that the nation was not yet sufficiently trained to carry out his policy and programme. For a time he thought that the necessary training must first be given through a less advanced Home Rule movement or an agitation of passive resistance of the kind created by Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa. But he saw that the hour of these movements had not come and that he himself was not their destined leader. Moreover, since his twelve months' detention in the Alipur Jail, which had been spent entirely in the practice of Yoga, his inner spiritual life was pressing upon him for an exclusive concentration. He resolved therefore to withdraw from the political field, at least for a time.

CWSA 36: 6-8

### **An early prediction**

Since 1907, we are living in a new era which is full of hope for India. Not only India, but the whole world will see sudden upheavels and revolutionary changes, The high will become low and the low high. The oppressed and the depressed shall be elevated. The nation and humanity shall be animated by a new consciousness, new thought and new efforts will be made to reach new ends. Amidst these revolutionary changes, India will become free.

SABCL 26: 390

**Sri Aurobindo**



### **Three sides to Sri Aurobindo's political work**

There were three sides to Sri Aurobindo's political ideas and activities. First, there was the action with which he started, a secret revolutionary propaganda and organisation of which the central object was the preparation of an armed insurrection. Secondly, there was a public propaganda intended to convert the whole nation to the ideal of independence which was regarded, when he entered into politics, by the vast majority of Indians as unpractical and impossible, an almost insane chimera. It was thought that the British Empire was too powerful and India too weak, effectively disarmed and impotent even to dream of the success of such an endeavour. Thirdly, there was the organisation of the people to carry on a public and united opposition and undermining of the foreign rule through an increasing noncooperation and passive resistance.

\*

### **Passive Resistance, Pacifism and the end of violence**

Sri Aurobindo is neither an impotent moralist nor a weak pacifist.

The rule of confining political action to passive resistance was adopted as the best policy for the National Movement at that stage and not as a part of a gospel of Non-violence or pacific idealism. Peace is a part of the highest ideal, but it must be spiritual or at the very least psychological in its basis; without a change in human nature it cannot come with any finality. If it is attempted on any other basis (moral principle or gospel of Ahimsa or any other) it will fail, and even may leave things worse than before. He is in favour of an attempt to put down war by international agreement and international force, what is now contemplated in the "New Order", if that proves possible, but that would not be Ahimsa, it would be a putting down of anarchic force by

legal force, and even then one cannot be sure that it would be permanent. Within nations this sort of peace has been secured, but it does not prevent occasional civil wars and revolutions and political outbreaks and repressions, sometimes of a sanguinary character. The same might happen to a similar world-peace.

\*

### **Sowing the seeds of revolution**

For the first few years in India, Sri Aurobindo abstained from any political activity (except the writing of the articles in the *Indu Prakash*) and studied the conditions in the country so that he might be able to judge more maturely what could be done. Then he made his first move when he sent a young Bengali soldier of the Baroda army, Jatin Banerji, as his lieutenant to Bengal with a programme of preparation and action which he thought might occupy a period of 30 years before fruition could become possible. As a matter of fact it has taken 50 years for the movement of liberation to arrive at fruition and the beginning of complete success. The idea was to establish secretly or, as far as visible action could be taken, under various pretexts and covers, revolutionary propaganda and recruiting throughout Bengal. This was to be done among the youth of the country while sympathy and support and financial and other assistance were to be obtained from the older men who had advanced views or could be won over to them. Centres were to be established in every town and eventually in every village. Societies of young men were to be established with various ostensible objects, cultural, intellectual or moral and those already existing were to be won over for revolutionary use. Young men were to be trained in activities which might be helpful for ultimate military action, such as riding, physical training, athletics of various kinds, drill and

organised movement. As soon as the idea was sown it attained a rapid prosperity; already existing small groups and associations of young men who had not yet the clear idea or any settled programme of revolution began to turn in this direction and a few who had already the revolutionary aim were contacted and soon developed activity on organised lines; the few rapidly became many.

\*

### **The Bengal partition and Yugantar**

Afterwards there came the partition of Bengal and a general outburst of revolt which favoured the rise of the extremist party and the great nationalist movement. Sri Aurobindo's activities were then turned more and more in this direction and the secret action became a secondary and subordinate element. He took advantage, however, of the Swadeshi movement to popularise the idea of violent revolt in the future. At Barin's suggestion he agreed to the starting of a paper, *Yugantar*, which was to preach open revolt and the absolute denial of the British rule and include such items as a series of articles containing instructions for guerrilla warfare. Sri Aurobindo himself wrote some of the opening articles in the early numbers and he always exercised a general control; when a member of the sub-editorial staff, Swami Vivekananda's brother, presented himself on his own motion to the police in a search as the editor of the paper and was prosecuted, the *Yugantar* under Sri Aurobindo's orders adopted the policy of refusing to defend itself in a British Court on the ground that it did not recognise the foreign Government and this immensely increased the prestige and influence of the paper. It had as its chief writers and directors three of the ablest younger writers in Bengal, and it at once acquired an immense influence throughout Bengal. It may be noted that the Secret

Society did not include terrorism in its programme but this element grew up in Bengal as a result of the strong repression and the reaction to it in that province.

\*

### **Indu Prakash**

The public activity of Sri Aurobindo began with the writing of the articles in the *Indu Prakash*. These articles written at the instance of K. G. Deshpande, editor of the paper and Sri Aurobindo's Cambridge friend, under the caption "New Lamps for Old" vehemently denounced the then congress policy of pray, petition and protest and called for a dynamic leadership based upon self-help and fearlessness. But this outspoken and irrefutable criticism was checked by the action of a Moderate leader who frightened the editor and thus prevented any full development of his ideas in the paper; he had to turn aside to generalities such as the necessity of extending the activities of the Congress beyond the circle of the bourgeois or middle class and calling into it the masses. Finally, Sri Aurobindo suspended all public activity of this kind and worked only in secret till 1905, but he contacted Tilak whom he regarded as the one possible leader for a revolutionary party and met him at the Ahmedabad Congress; there Tilak took him out of the pandal and talked to him for an hour in the grounds expressing his contempt for the Reformist movement and explaining his own line of action in Maharashtra.

\*

### **The Swadeshi and Swaraj**

Sri Aurobindo included in the scope of his revolutionary work one kind of activity which afterwards became an important item in the public programme of the Nationalist party. He encouraged the young men in the centres of work to propagate the Swadeshi idea which at that time was

only in its infancy and hardly more than a fad of the few. One of the ablest men in these revolutionary groups was a Mahratta named Sakharam Ganesh Deuskar who was an able writer in Bengali (his family had been long domiciled in Bengal) and who had written a popular life of Shivaji in Bengali in which he first brought in the name of Swaraj, afterwards adopted by the Nationalists as their word for independence, — Swaraj became one item of the fourfold Nationalist programme. He published a book entitled *Deshar Katha* describing in exhaustive detail the British commercial and industrial exploitation of India. This book had an immense repercussion in Bengal, captured the mind of young Bengal and assisted more than anything else in the preparation of the Swadeshi movement. Sri Aurobindo himself had always considered the shaking off of this economic yoke and the development of Indian trade and industry as a necessary concomitant of the revolutionary endeavour.

\*

### **An awakening**

The part Sri Aurobindo took publicly in Indian politics was of brief duration, for he turned aside from it in 1910 and withdrew to Pondicherry; much of his programme lapsed in his absence, but enough had been done to change the whole face of Indian politics and the whole spirit of the Indian people, to make independence its aim and non-cooperation and resistance its method, and even an imperfect application of this policy heightening into sporadic periods of revolt has been sufficient to bring about the victory. The course of subsequent events followed largely the line of Sri Aurobindo's idea. The Congress was finally captured by the Nationalist party, declared independence its aim, organised itself for action, took almost the whole nation minus a majority of the Mohammedans and a minority of

the depressed classes into acceptance of its leadership and eventually formed the first national, though not as yet an independent, Government in India and secured from Britain acceptance of independence for India.

At first Sri Aurobindo took part in Congress politics only from behind the scenes as he had not yet decided to leave the Baroda service; but he took long leave without pay in which, besides carrying on personally the secret revolutionary work, he attended the Barisal Conference broken up by the police and toured East Bengal along with Bepin Pal and associated himself closely with the forward group in the Congress. It was during this period that he joined Bepin Pal in the editing of the *Bande Mataram*, founded the new political party in Bengal and attended the Congress session at Calcutta at which the Extremists, though still a minority, succeeded under the leadership of Tilak in imposing part of their political programme on the Congress.

\*

### **Seeds of a National Education and the *Bande Mataram***

The founding of the Bengal National College gave him the opportunity he needed and enabled him to resign his position in the Baroda service and join the college as its Principal. Subodh Mullick, one of Sri Aurobindo's collaborators in his secret action and afterwards also in Congress politics, in whose house he usually lived when he was in Calcutta, had given a lakh of rupees for this foundation and had stipulated that Sri Aurobindo should be given a post of professor in the college with a salary of Rs. 150; so he was now free to give his whole time to the service of the country. Bepin Pal, who had been long expounding a policy of self-help and non-cooperation in his weekly journal, now started a daily with the name of *Bande Mataram*, but it was likely to be a brief adventure since he began with only Rs. 500 in his

pocket and no firm assurance of financial assistance in the future. He asked Sri Aurobindo to join him in this venture to which a ready consent was given, for now Sri Aurobindo saw his opportunity for starting the public propaganda necessary for his revolutionary purpose. He called a meeting of the forward group of young men in the Congress and [they] decided then to organise themselves openly as a new political party joining hands with the corresponding group in Maharashtra under the proclaimed leadership of Tilak and to join battle with the Moderate party which was done at the Calcutta session. He also persuaded them to take up the *Bande Mataram* daily as their party organ and a *Bande Mataram* Company was started to finance the paper, whose direction Sri Aurobindo undertook during the absence of Bepin Pal who was sent on a tour in the districts to proclaim the purpose and programme of the new party. The new party was at once successful and the *Bande Mataram* paper began to circulate throughout India.

\*

### **Poorna Swaraj**

Sri Aurobindo's first preoccupation was to declare openly for complete and absolute independence as the aim of political action in India and to insist on this persistently in the pages of the journal; he was the first politician in India who had the courage to do this in public and he was immediately successful. The party took up the word *Swaraj* to express its own ideal of independence and it soon spread everywhere; but it was taken up as the ideal of the Congress much later on at the [Lahore] session of that body when it had been reconstituted and renovated under Nationalist leadership. The journal declared and developed a new political programme for the country as the programme of the Nationalist Party, non-cooperation, passive resistance,

Swadeshi, Boycott, national education, settlement of disputes in law by popular arbitration and other items of Sri Aurobindo's plan.

\*

### **The policy of Boycott**

The Nationalist programme could only achieve a partial beginning before it was temporarily broken by severe government repression. Its most important practical item was Swadeshi plus Boycott; for Swadeshi much was done to make the idea general and a few beginnings were made, but the greater results showed themselves only afterwards in the course of time. Sri Aurobindo was anxious that this part of the movement should be not only propagated in idea but given a practical organisation and an effective force. He wrote from Baroda asking whether it would not be possible to bring in the industrialists and manufacturers and gain the financial support of landed magnates and create an organisation in which men of industrial and commercial ability and experience and not politicians alone could direct operations and devise means of carrying out the policy; but he was told that it was impossible, the industrialists and the landed magnates were too timid to join in the movement, and the big commercial men were all interested in the import of British goods and therefore on the side of the status quo: so he had to abandon his idea of the organisation of Swadeshi and Boycott. Both Tilak and Sri Aurobindo were in favour of an effective boycott of British goods — but of British goods only; for there was little in the country to replace foreign articles: so they recommended the substitution for the British of foreign goods from Germany and Austria and America so that the fullest pressure might be brought upon England. They wanted the Boycott to be a political weapon and not merely an aid to Swadeshi; the total boycott of all foreign goods was



an impracticable idea and the very limited application of it recommended in Congress resolutions was too small to be politically effective. They were for national self sufficiency in key industries, the production of necessities and of all manufactures of which India had the natural means, but complete self-sufficiency or autarchy did not seem practicable or even desirable since a free India would need to export goods as well as supply them for internal consumption and for that she must import as well and maintain an international exchange.

CWSA 36: 47-58

### **The importance of a National education**

National education was another item to which Sri Aurobindo attached much importance. He had been disgusted with the education given by the British system in the schools and colleges and universities, a system of which as a professor in the Baroda College he had full experience. He felt that it tended to dull and impoverish and tie up the naturally quick and brilliant and supple Indian intelligence, to teach it bad intellectual habits and spoil by narrow information and mechanical instruction its originality and productivity. The movement began well and many national schools were established in Bengal and many able men became teachers, but still the development was insufficient and the economical position of the schools precarious. Sri Aurobindo had decided to take up the movement personally and see whether it could not be given a greater expansion and a stronger foundation, but his departure from Bengal cut short this plan. In the repression and the general depression caused by it, most of the schools failed to survive. The idea lived on and it may be hoped that it will one day find an adequate form and body an adequate form and body.

SABCL 26: 31-32

## **Creation of a new spirit in the country**

The purely political elements of the Nationalist programme and activities were those which lasted and after each wave of repression and depression renewed the thread of the life of the movement for liberation and kept it recognisably one throughout nearly fifty years of its struggle. But the greatest thing done in those years was the creation of a new spirit in the country. In the enthusiasm that swept surging everywhere with the cry of *Bande Mataram* ringing on all sides men felt it glorious to be alive and dare and act together and hope; the old apathy and timidity were broken and a force created which nothing could destroy and which rose again and again in wave after wave till it carried India to the beginning of a complete victory.

\*

## **Leader of the Nationalist movement**

After the *Bande Mataram* case, Sri Aurobindo became the recognised leader of Nationalism in Bengal. He led the party at the session of the [district] Conference at Midnapore where there was a vehement clash between the two parties. He now for the first time became a speaker on the public platform, addressed large meetings at Surat and presided over the Nationalist conference there. He stopped at several places on his way back to Calcutta and was the speaker at large meetings called to hear him. He led the party again at the session of the Provincial Conference at Hooghly. There it became evident for the first time that Nationalism was gaining the ascendant, for it commanded a majority among the delegates and in the Subjects Committee Sri Aurobindo was able to defeat the Moderates' resolution welcoming the Reforms and pass his own resolution stigmatising them as utterly inadequate and unreal and rejecting them. But the Moderate leaders threatened

to secede if this was maintained and to avoid a scission he consented to allow the Moderate resolution to pass but spoke at the public session explaining his decision and asking the Nationalists to acquiesce in it in spite of their victory so as to keep some unity in the political forces of Bengal. The Nationalist delegates, at first triumphant and clamorous, accepted the decision and left the hall quietly at Sri Aurobindo's order so that they might not have to vote either for or against the Moderate resolution. This caused much amazement and discomfiture in the minds of the Moderate leaders who complained that the people had refused to listen to their old and tried leaders and clamoured against them, but at the bidding of a young man new to politics they had obeyed in disciplined silence as if a single body.

\*

### **God's trysting ground**

About this period Sri Aurobindo had decided to take up charge of a Bengali daily, *Nava Shakti*, and had moved from his rented house in Scott's Lane, where he had been living with his wife and sister, to rooms in the office of this newspaper, and there, before he could begin this new venture, early one morning while he was still sleeping, the police charged up the stairs, revolver in hand, and arrested him. He was taken to the police station and thence to Alipore Jail where he remained for a year during the magistrate's investigation and the trial in the Sessions Court at Alipore. At first he was lodged for some time in a solitary cell but afterwards transferred to a large section of the jail where he lived in one huge room with the other prisoners in the case; subsequently, after the assassination of the approver in the jail, all the prisoners were confined in contiguous but separate cells and met only in the court or in the daily

exercise where they could not speak to each other. It was in the second period that Sri Aurobindo made the acquaintance of most of his fellow-accused. In the jail he spent almost all his time in reading the Gita and the Upanishads and in intensive meditation and the practice of Yoga. This he pursued even in the second interval when he had no opportunity of being alone and had to accustom himself to meditation amid general talk and laughter, the playing of games and much noise and disturbance; in the first and third periods he had full opportunity and used it to the full. In the Sessions Court the accused were confined in a large prisoners' cage and here during the whole day he remained absorbed in his meditation attending little to the trial and hardly listening to the evidence. C. R. Das, one of his Nationalist collaborators and a famous lawyer, had put aside his large practice and devoted himself for months to the defence of Sri Aurobindo who left the case entirely to him and troubled no more about it; for he had been assured from within and knew that he would be acquitted. During this period his view of life was radically changed; he had taken up Yoga with the original idea of acquiring spiritual force and energy and divine guidance for his work in life. But now the inner spiritual life and realisation which had continually been increasing in magnitude and universality and assuming a larger place took him up entirely and his work became a part and result of it and besides far exceeded the service and liberation of the country and fixed itself in an aim, previously only glimpsed, which was world-wide in its bearing and concerned with the whole future of humanity.

CWSA 36: 59-61

## **Sri Krishna Vasudeva: The Friend and Lover**

Therefore this was the next thing He pointed out to me, — He made me realise the central truth of the Hindu religion. He turned the hearts of my jailers to me and they spoke to the Englishman in charge of the jail, “He is suffering in his confinement; let him at least walk outside his cell for half an hour in the morning and in the evening.” So it was arranged, and it was while I was walking that His strength again entered into me. I looked at the jail that secluded me from men and it was no longer by its high walls that I was imprisoned; no, it was Vasudeva who surrounded me. I walked under the branches of the tree in front of my cell, but it was not the tree, I knew it was Vasudeva, it was Sri Krishna whom I saw standing there and holding over me His shade. I looked at the bars of my cell, the very grating that did duty for a door and again I saw Vasudeva. It was Narayana who was guarding and standing sentry over me. Or I lay on the coarse blankets that were given me for a couch and felt the arms of Sri Krishna around me, the arms of my Friend and Lover. This was the first use of the deeper vision He gave me. I looked at the prisoners in the jail, the thieves, the murderers, the swindlers, and as I looked at them I saw Vasudeva, it was Narayana whom I found in these darkened souls and misused bodies.

CWSA 8: 6

## **Karmayogin and Dharma**

When he came out from jail, Sri Aurobindo found the whole political aspect of the country altered; most of the Nationalist leaders were in jail or in self-imposed exile and there was a general discouragement and depression, though the feeling in the country had not ceased but was only suppressed and was growing by its suppression. He

determined to continue the struggle; he held weekly meetings in Calcutta, but the attendance which had numbered formerly thousands full of enthusiasm was now only of hundreds and had no longer the same force and life. He also went to places in the districts to speak and at one of these delivered his speech at Uttarpara in which for the first time he spoke publicly of his Yoga and his spiritual experiences. He started also two weeklies, one in English and one in Bengali, the *Karmayogin* and *Dharma*, which had a fairly large circulation and were, unlike the *Bande Mataram*, easily self-supporting.

CWSA 36: 61

### **Facts of the departure**

These are the facts of that departure. I was in the Karmayogin office when I received word, on information given by a high-placed police official, that the office would be searched the next day and myself arrested. (The office was in fact searched but no warrant was produced against me; I heard nothing more of it till the case was started against the paper later on, but by then I had already left Chandernagore for Pondicherry.) While I was listening to animated comments from those around on the approaching event, I suddenly received a command from above in a Voice well known to me, in the three words; "Go to Chandernagore." In ten minutes or so I was in the boat for Chandernagore. Ramchandra Majumdar guided me to the Ghat and hailed a boat and I entered into it at once along with my relative Biren Ghosh and Mani (Suresh Chandra Chakrabarti) who accompanied me to Chandernagore, not turning aside to Bagbazar or anywhere else. We reached our destination while it was still dark and they returned in the morning to Calcutta.

I remained in secret entirely engaged in Sadhana and my active connection with the two newspapers ceased from that time. Afterwards, under the same "sailing orders", I left Chandernagore and reached Pondicherry on April 4th 1910.

I may add in explanation that from the time I left Lele at Bombay after the Surat Congress and my stay with him in Baroda, Poona and Bombay, I had accepted the rule of following the inner guidance implicitly and moving only as I was moved by the Divine. The spiritual development during the year in jail had turned this into an absolute law of the being. This accounts for my immediate action in obedience to the adesh received by me.

CWSA 36: 89-90

### **The final seat of tapasya**

At Pondicherry, from this time onwards Sri Aurobindo's practice of Yoga became more and more absorbing. He dropped all participation in any public political activity, refused more than one request to preside at sessions of the restored Indian National Congress and made a rule of abstention from any public utterance of any kind not connected with his spiritual activities or any contribution of writings or articles except what he wrote afterwards in the *Arya*. For some years he kept up some private communication with the revolutionary forces he had led through one or two individuals, but this also he dropped after a time and his abstention from any kind of participation in politics became complete. As his vision of the future grew clearer, he saw that the eventual independence of India was assured by the march of Forces of which he became aware, that Britain would be compelled by the pressure of Indian resistance and by the pressure of international events to concede independence and that she was already moving towards that

eventuality with whatever opposition and reluctance. He felt that there would be no need of armed insurrection and that the secret preparation for it could be dropped without injury to the nationalist cause, although the revolutionary spirit had to be maintained and would be maintained intact. His own personal intervention in politics would therefore be no longer indispensable. Apart from all this, the magnitude of the spiritual work set before him became more and more clear to him, and he saw that the concentration of all his energies on it was necessary.

\*

### **A new field of action and revolution**

But this did not mean, as most people supposed, that he had retired into some height of spiritual experience devoid of any further interest in the world or in the fate of India. It could not mean that, for the very principle of his Yoga was not only to realise the Divine and attain to a complete spiritual consciousness, but also to take all life and all world activity into the scope of this spiritual consciousness and action and to base life on the Spirit and give it a spiritual meaning. In his retirement Sri Aurobindo kept a close watch on all that was happening in the world and in India and actively intervened whenever necessary, but solely with a spiritual force and silent spiritual action; for it is part of the experience of those who have advanced far in Yoga that besides the ordinary forces and activities of the mind and life and body in Matter, there are other forces and powers that can act and do act from behind and from above; there is also a spiritual dynamic power which can be possessed by those who are advanced in the spiritual consciousness, though all do not care to possess or, possessing, to use it, and this power is greater than any other and more effective. It was this force which, as soon



as he had attained to it, he used, at first only in a limited field of personal work, but afterwards in a constant action upon the world forces. He had no reason to be dissatisfied with the results or to feel the necessity of any other kind of action. Twice however he found it advisable to take in addition other action of a public kind. The first was in relation to the second World War. At the beginning he did not actively concern himself with it, but when it appeared as if Hitler would crush all the forces opposed to him and Nazism dominate the world, he began to intervene.

CWSA 36: 64-65

**Sri Aurobindo**

### **Fighting without rancour**

*Sri Aurobindo never brought any rancour into his politics. He never had any hatred for England or the English people; he based his claim for freedom for India on the inherent right to freedom, not on any charge of misgovernment or oppression; if he attacked persons even violently, it was for their views or political action, not from any other motive.*

CWSA 36: 80-81

**Sri Aurobindo**

## Reminiscences

### Mother India

*When you wrote that you looked upon India not as an inert, dead mass of matter, but as the very Mother, the living Mother, I believe that you saw that Truth.*

My dear sir, I am not a materialist. If I had seen India as only a geographical area with a number of more or less interesting or uninteresting people in it, I would hardly have gone out of my way to do all that for the said area.

*Is there something in what you wrote? Or was it just poetic or patriotic sentiment?*

Merely a poetic or patriotic sentiment — just as in yourself only your flesh, skin, bones and other things of which the senses give their evidence are real, but what you call your mind and soul do not really exist being merely psychological impressions created by the food you eat and the activity of the glands. Poetry and patriotism have of course the same origin and the things they speak of are quite unreal. Amen.

CWSA 35: 17

### Aftermath of the Swadeshi movement

The Swadeshi movement was idealist on one side (no great movement can go without an ideal), but it was perfectly practical in its aims and methods. We were quite aware of the poverty of India and its fallen condition, but we did not try to cure the poverty by Khaddar and Hindi prachar. We advocated the creation of an industrial India and made the movement a Swadeshi movement in order to give that new birth a field and favourable conditions — cottage industries

were not omitted in our view, but there were no fads. The Swadeshi movement created the following very practical effects:

(a) It destroyed the Moderate reformist politics and spread the revolutionary mentality (as Jawaharlal now calls it) and the ideal of independence.

(b) It laid the foundations of an industrial India (not of course wholly industrial, that was not our intention) which is however slowly growing today.

(c) It brought in the commercial classes and the whole educated middle class into the political field — and not the middle class only, while Moderatism had touched only a small fringe.

(d) It had not time to bring in the peasantry, but it had begun the work and Gandhi only carried it farther on by his flashy and unsound but exciting methods.

(e) It laid down a method of agitation which Gandhi took up and continued with three or four startling additions, Khaddar, Hindiism, Satyagraha = getting beaten with joy, Khilafat, Harijan etc. All these had an advertisement value, a power of poking up things which was certainly livelier than anything we put into it. Whether the effects of these things have been good is a more doubtful question.

CWSA 35: 19-20

### **The Hindu-Moslem affair**

As for the Hindu-Moslem affair, I saw no reason why the greatness of India's past or her spirituality should be thrown into the waste-paper basket in order to conciliate the Moslems who would not at all be conciliated by such a stupidity. What has created the Hindu-Moslem split was not Swadeshi, but the acceptance of the communal principle by the Congress, (here Tilak made his great blunder), and the

farther attempt by the Khilafat movement to conciliate them and bring them in on wrong lines. The recognition of that communal principle at Lucknow made them permanently a separate *political* entity in India which ought never to have happened; the Khilafat affair made that separate political entity an organised separate political power.

CWSA 35: 21

### **Living dangerously**

I was so astonished by this succinct, complete and impeccably accurate biography of myself that I let myself go in answer! But I afterwards thought that it was no use living more dangerously than I am obliged to, so I rubbed all out. My only answer now is !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I thank you for the safe, rich, comfortable and unadventurous career you have given me. I note also that the only danger man can run in this world is that of the lack of money. Karl Marx himself could not have made a more economic world of it! But I wonder whether that was what Nietzsche meant by living dangerously?

CWSA 35: 22

If you don't realise that starting and carrying on for ten years and more a revolutionary movement for independence without means and in a country wholly unprepared for it meant living dangerously, no amount of puncturing of your skull with words will give you that simple perception. And as to the Yoga, you yourself were perorating at the top of your voice about its awful, horrible, pathetic and tragic dangers.

CWSA 35: 23

## Politics and Truth-Speaking

*Would it not sometimes be dangerous to speak truth, e.g., in politics, war, revolution? The truth-speaking moralist who would always insist on not concealing anything may bring disaster by revealing the plans and movements of one side to the opposite side.*

There is no necessity to reveal one's plans and movements to those who have no business to know it, who are incapable of understanding or who would act as enemies or spoil all as a result of their knowledge. Secrecy is perfectly admissible and usual in spiritual matters except in special relations like that of the shishya to the guru. We do not let people outside know what is going on in the Asram but we do not tell any lies about it either. Most Yogis say nothing about their spiritual experiences to others or not until long afterwards and secrecy was a general rule among the ancient Mystics. No moral or spiritual law commands us to make ourselves naked to the world or open up our hearts and minds for public inspection.

CWSA 35: 24

Hinduism recognizes human nature and makes no such impossible demand. It sets one ideal for the saint, another for the man of action, a third for the trader, a fourth for the serf. To prescribe the same ideal for all is to bring about *varnasankara*, the confusion of duties, and destroy society and the race. If we are content to be serfs, then indeed boycott is a sin for us, not because it is a violation of love, but because it is a violation of the Sudra's duty of obedience and contentment. Politics is the field of the Kshatriya and the morality of the Kshatriya ought to govern our political actions. To impose on politics the Brahminical duty of saintly sufferance, is to preach *varnasankara*.

CWSA 7: 1118

## The Surat Congress (1907)

History very seldom records the things that were decisive but took place behind the veil; it records the show in front of the curtain. Very few people know that it was I (without consulting Tilak) who gave the order that led to the breaking of the Congress and was responsible for the refusal to join the new-fangled Moderate Convention which were the two decisive happenings at Surat. Even my action in giving the movement in Bengal its militant turn or founding the revolutionary movement is very little known.

CWSA 35: 26

## Leaving Politics

I may also say that I did not leave politics because I felt I could do nothing more there; such an idea was very far from me. I came away because I did not want anything to interfere with my Yoga and because I got a very distinct adesh in the matter. I have cut connection entirely with politics, but before I did so I knew from within that the work I had begun there was destined to be carried forward, on lines I had foreseen, by others, and that the ultimate triumph of the movement I had initiated was sure without my personal action or presence. There was not the least motive of despair or sense of futility behind my withdrawal. For the rest, I have never known any will of mine for any major event in the conduct of the world affairs to fail in the end, although it may take a long time for the world-forces to fulfil it.

CWSA 35: 26

## The Adesh

Sri Aurobindo's departure to Chandernagore was the result of a sudden decision taken on the strength of an *adesh* from above and was carried out rapidly and secretly with-

out consultation with anybody or advice from any quarter. He went straight from the Dharma office to the Ghat — he did not visit the Math, nobody saw him off; a boat was hailed, he entered into it with two young men and proceeded straight to his destination. His residence at Chandernagore was kept quite secret; it was known only to Srijit Motilal Roy who arranged for his stay and to a few others. Sister Nivedita was confidentially informed the day after his departure and asked to conduct the Karmayogin in place of Sri Aurobindo to which she consented. In his passage from Chandernagore to Pondicherry Sri Aurobindo stopped only for two minutes outside College Square to take his trunk from his cousin and paid no visit except to the British Medical Officer to obtain a medical certificate for the voyage. He went straight to the steamship Duplex and next morning was on his way to Pondicherry.

It may be added that neither at this time nor any other did Sri Aurobindo receive any kind of initiation from Sarada Devi; neither did he ever take any formal diksha from anyone.

CWSA 36: 90-91

### **The Divine Sadhaka**

My yoga begun in 1904 had always been personal and apart; those around me knew I was a sadhak but they knew little more as I kept all that went on in me to myself. It was only after my release that for the first time I spoke at Uttarpara publicly about my spiritual experiences. Until I went to Pondicherry I took no disciples; with those who accompanied me or joined me in Pondicherry I had at first the relation of friends and companions rather than of a guru and disciples; it was on the ground of politics that I had come to know them and not on the spiritual ground. Afterwards only there was a gradual development of spiritual relations

until the Mother came back from Japan and the Ashram was founded or rather founded itself in 1926. I began my yoga in 1904 without a guru; in 1908 I received important help from a Mahratta yogi and discovered the foundations of my sadhana; but from that time till the Mother came to India I received no spiritual help from anyone else. My sadhana before and afterwards was not founded upon books but upon personal experiences that crowded on me from within. But in the jail I had the Gita and the Upanishads with me, practised the yoga of the Gita and meditated with the help of the Upanishads; these were the only books from which I found guidance; the Veda which I first began to read long afterwards in Pondicherry rather confirmed what experiences I already had than was any guide to my sadhana. I sometimes turned to the Gita for light when there was a question or a difficulty and usually received help or an answer from it, but there were no such happenings in connection with the Gita as are narrated in the book. It is a fact that I was hearing constantly the voice of Vivekananda speaking to me for a fortnight in the jail in my solitary meditation and felt his presence, but this had nothing to do with the alleged circumstances narrated in the book, circumstances that never took place, nor had it anything to do with the Gita. The voice spoke only on a special and limited but very important field of spiritual experience and it ceased as soon as it had finished saying all that it had to say on that subject.

CWSA 36: 98-99

**Sri Aurobindo**

---

*When I was asleep in the Ignorance, I came to a place of meditation full of holy men and I found their company wearisome and the place a prison; when I awoke, God took me to a prison and turned it into a place of meditation and His trysting-ground.*

CWSA 12: 428

**Sri Aurobindo**



## Writings from 'Bande Mataram'

### The composition of Indian Nation

Our history has been different in many respects from the history of other peoples. The composition of the Indian people has been unique in all the world. Nations grew in the past by the accretion and assimilation of different tribes. This is an earlier process. But India has not been a mere meeting place of tribes, but a meeting place of grown up nations with developed social and religious lines of their own, and with original castes and types of cultures peculiar to them. The character and composition of the coming Indian nation, therefore, will differ very materially from those of the European nations, the process of unification among whom took place at a much earlier and comparatively more nebular stage of their growth. This is a fact which our old school politicians and social reformers do not seem as yet to have had any time to think of, and we are not hopeful that even now, after it is pointed out to them, in the plainest language possible, they will have the patience to do so and recognise this essential peculiarity of our infant national life. The nation-idea in India will realise itself, in all its departments, along what may be called federal lines, — it will be a union of different nationalities, each preserving its own specific elements both of organisation and ideal, each communicating to the others what they lack in either thought or character, and all moving together towards one universal end, both in civic and social life, progressively realising that end along its own historic and traditional lines, and thus indefinitely drawing near to each other, without, for an equally indefinite period, actually losing themselves in any one particular form of that life, whether old or new. The Mahomedan, the Hindu, the Buddhist, the Christian in India will not have to cease to be Mahomedan, Hindu, Buddhist,

or Christian, in any sense of the term, for uniting into one great and puissant Indian nation. Devotion to one's own ideals and institutions, with toleration and respect for the ideals and institutions of other sections of the community, and an ardent love and affection for the common civic life and ideal of all — these are what must be cultivated by us now, for the building up of the real Indian nation.

CWSA 6 : 168-69

### **The grand workshop of spiritual experiment**

Through all these ages Asia has been seeking for a light within, and whenever she has been blessed with a glimpse of what she seeks a great religion has been born, Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity, Mahomedanism with all their countless sects. But the grand workshop of spiritual experiment, the laboratory of the soul has been India, where thousands of great spirits have been born in every generation who were content to work quietly in their own souls, perfect their knowledge, hand down the results of their experiments to a few disciples and leave the rest to others to complete. They did not hasten to proselytise, were in no way eager to proclaim themselves, but merely added their quota of experience and returned to the source from which they had come. The immense reservoir of spiritual energy stored up by the self-repression was the condition of this birth of *avatars*, of men so full of God that they could not be satisfied with silent bliss, but poured it out on the world, not with the idea of proselytising but because they wished to communicate their own ecstasy of realisation to others who were fit to receive it either by previous *tapasya* or by the purity of their desires. Of all these souls Sri Ramakrishna was the last and greatest, for while others felt God in a single or limited aspect, he felt Him in His illimitable unity as the sum of an illimitable variety. In

him the spiritual experiences of the millions of saints who had gone before were renewed and united. Sri Ramakrishna gave to India the final message of Hinduism to the world. A new era dates from his birth, an era in which the peoples of the earth will be lifted for a while into communion with God and spirituality become the dominant note of human life.

CWSA 7: 978 – 979

### **Hindu-Moslem unity**

Of one thing we may be certain, that Hindu-Mahomedan unity cannot be effected by political adjustments or Congress flatteries. It must be sought deeper down, in the heart and the mind, for where the causes of disunion are, there the remedies must be sought. We shall do well in trying to solve the problem to remember that misunderstanding is the most fruitful cause of our differences, that love compels love and that strength conciliates the strong. We must strive to remove the causes of misunderstanding by a better mutual knowledge and sympathy; we must extend the unfaltering love of the patriot to our Musulman brother, remembering always that in him too Narayana dwells and to him too our Mother has given a permanent place in her bosom; but we must cease to approach him falsely or flatter out of a selfish weakness and cowardice. We believe this to be the only practical way of dealing with the difficulty.

CWSA 8: 31

### **Hindu Nationalism**

Hindu nationalism had a meaning in the times of Shivaji and Ramdas, when the object of national revival was to overthrow a Mahomedan domination which, once tending to Indian unity and toleration, had become oppressive and disruptive. It was possible because India was then a world to itself and the existence of two geographical units entirely

Hindu, Maharashtra and Rajputana, provided it with a basis. It was necessary because the misuse of their domination by the Mahomedan element was fatal to India's future and had to be punished and corrected by the resurgence and domination of the Hindu. And because it was possible and necessary, it came into being. But under modern conditions India can only exist as a whole. A nation depends for its existence on geographical separateness and geographical compactness, on having a distinct and separate country. The existence of this geographical separateness is sure in the end to bear down all differences of race, language, religion, history. It has done so in Great Britain, in Switzerland, in Germany. It will do so in India. But geographical compactness is also necessary. In other words, the *desh* or country must be so compact that mutual communication and the organisation of a central government becomes easy or, at least, not prohibitively difficult....

CWSA 8: 304

### **Swadesh is the base**

Our ideal therefore is an Indian Nationalism, largely Hindu in its spirit and traditions, because the Hindu made the land and the people and persists, by the greatness of his past, his civilisation and his culture and his invincible virility, in holding it, but wide enough also to include the Moslem and his culture and traditions and absorb them into itself. It is possible that the Mahomedan may not recognise the inevitable future and may prefer to throw himself into the opposite scale. If so, the Hindu, with what little Mahomedan help he may get, must win Swaraj both for himself and the Mahomedan in spite of that resistance. There is a sufficient force and manhood in us to do a greater and more difficult task than that, but we lack unity, brotherhood, intensity of single action among ourselves.

CWSA 8: 305-06

**Sri Aurobindo**

## Writings from 'Karmayogin'

### Ourselves

There is the sentiment of Indianism, there is not yet the knowledge. There is a vague idea, there is no definite conception or deep insight. We have yet to know ourselves, what we were, are and may be; what we did in the past and what we are capable of doing in the future; our history and our mission. This is the first and most important work which the *Karmayogin* sets for itself, to popularise this knowledge. The Vedanta or Sufism, the temple or the mosque, Nanak and Kabir and Ramdas, Chaitanya or Guru Govind, Brahmin and Kayastha and Namasudra, whatever national asset we have, indigenous or acclimatised, it will seek to make known, to put in its right place and appreciate. And the second thing is how to use these assets so as to swell the sum of national life and produce the future. It is easy to appraise their relations to the past; it is more difficult to give them their place in the future. The third thing is to know the outside world and its relation to us and how to deal with it. That is the problem which we find at present the most difficult and insistent, but its solution depends on the solution of the others.

CWSA 8: 20-21

### A nation is building in India today

A nation is building in India today before the eyes of the world so swiftly, so palpably that all can watch the process and those who have sympathy and intuition distinguish the forces at work, the materials in use, the lines of the divine architecture. This nation is not a new race raw from the workshop of Nature or created by modern circumstances. One of the oldest races and greatest civilisations on this earth, the

most indomitable in vitality, the most fecund in greatness, the deepest in life, the most wonderful in potentiality, after taking into itself numerous sources of strength from foreign strains of blood and other types of human civilisation, is now seeking to lift itself for good into an organised national unity. Formerly a congeries of kindred nations with a single life and a single culture, always by the law of this essential oneness tending to unity, always by its excess of fecundity engendering fresh diversities and divisions, it has never yet been able to overcome permanently the almost insuperable obstacles to the organisation of a continent. The time has now come when those obstacles can be overcome. The attempt which our race has been making throughout its long history, it will now make under entirely new circumstances. A keen observer would predict its success because the only important obstacles have been or are in the process of being removed. But we go farther and believe that it is sure to succeed because the freedom, unity and greatness of India have now become necessary to the world. This is the faith in which the *Karmayogin* puts its hand to the work and will persist in it, refusing to be discouraged by difficulties however immense and apparently insuperable. We believe that God is with us and in that faith we shall conquer. We believe that humanity needs us and it is the love and service of humanity, of our country, of the race, of our religion that will purify our heart and inspire our action in the struggle.

CWSA 8: 23-24

### **The task before us**

The task we set before ourselves is not mechanical but moral and spiritual. We aim not at the alteration of a form of government but at the building up of a nation. Of that task politics is a part, but only a part. We shall devote ourselves

not to politics alone, nor to social questions alone, nor to theology or philosophy or literature or science by themselves, but we include all these in one entity which we believe to be all-important, the *dharma*, the national religion which we also believe to be universal. There is a mighty law of life, a great principle of human evolution, a body of spiritual knowledge and experience of which India has always been destined to be guardian, exemplar and missionary. This is the *sanatana dharma*, the eternal religion. Under the stress of alien impacts she has largely lost hold not of the structure of that *dharma*, but of its living reality. For the religion of India is nothing if it is not lived. It has to be applied not only to life, but to the whole of life; its spirit has to enter into and mould our society, our politics, our literature, our science, our individual character, affections and aspirations. To understand the heart of this *dharma*, to experience it as a truth, to feel the high emotions to which it rises and to express and execute it in life is what we understand by Karmayoga. We believe that it is to make the *yoga* the ideal of human life that India rises today; by the *yoga* she will get the strength to realise her freedom, unity and greatness, by the *yoga* she will keep the strength to preserve it. It is a spiritual revolution we foresee and the material is only its shadow and reflex.

CWSA 8: 24

### **Our aim and the way ahead in building up India**

Our aim will therefore be to help in building up India for the sake of humanity — this is the spirit of the Nationalism which we profess and follow. We say to humanity, “The time has come when you must take the great step and rise out of a material existence into the higher, deeper and wider life towards which humanity moves. The problems which

have troubled mankind can only be solved by conquering the kingdom within, not by harnessing the forces of Nature to the service of comfort and luxury, but by mastering the forces of the intellect and the spirit, by vindicating the freedom of man within as well as without and by conquering from within external Nature. For that work the resurgence of Asia is necessary, therefore Asia rises. For that work the freedom and greatness of India is essential, therefore she claims her destined freedom and greatness, and it is to the interest of all humanity, not excluding England, that she should wholly establish her claim."

We say to the nation, "It is God's will that we should be ourselves and not Europe. We have sought to regain life by following the law of another being than our own. We must return and seek the sources of life and strength within ourselves. We must know our past and recover it for the purposes of our future. Our business is to realise ourselves first and to mould everything to the law of India's eternal life and nature. It will therefore be the object of the *Karmayogin* to read the heart of our religion, our society, our philosophy, politics, literature, art, jurisprudence, science, thought, everything that was and is ours, so that we may be able to say to ourselves and our nation, 'This is our *dharma*.' We shall review European civilisation entirely from the standpoint of Indian thought and knowledge and seek to throw off from us the dominating stamp of the Occident; what we have to take from the West we shall take as Indians. And the *dharma* once discovered we shall strive our utmost not only to profess but to live, in our individual actions, in our social life, in our political endeavours."

CWSA 8: 26-27



## Recover the Aryan Dharma

We say to the individual and especially to the young who are now arising to do India's work, the world's work, God's work, "You cannot cherish these ideals, still less can you fulfil them if you subject your minds to European ideas or look at life from the material standpoint. Materially you are nothing, spiritually you are everything. It is only the Indian who can believe everything, dare everything, sacrifice everything. First therefore become Indians. Recover the patrimony of your forefathers. Recover the Aryan thought, the Aryan discipline, the Aryan character, the Aryan life. Recover the Vedanta, the Gita, the Yoga. Recover them not only in intellect or sentiment but in your lives. Live them and you will be great and strong, mighty, invincible and fearless. Neither life nor death will have any terrors for you. Difficulty and impossibility will vanish from your vocabularies. For it is in the spirit that strength is eternal and you must win back the kingdom of yourselves, the inner Swaraj, before you can win back your outer empire. There the Mother dwells and She waits for worship that She may give strength. Believe in Her, serve Her, lose your wills in Hers, your egoism in the greater ego of the country, your separate selfishness in the service of humanity. Recover the source of all strength in yourselves and all else will be added to you, social soundness, intellectual preeminence, political freedom, the mastery of human thought, the hegemony of the world."

CWSA 8: 27-28

**Sri Aurobindo**

## Writings from 'Dharma'

### The need of Kshatratej

National greatness cannot be founded solely on the strength of the Kshatriya, all the fourfold power of the four orders of society is the basis of that greatness. The sattwic power of the Brahmin keeps alive the rajasic Kshatriya power with its sweet elixir of knowledge, humility and thought for the good of others; the Kshatriya power gives protection to the power of the Brahmin. Brahmin power bereft of the strength of the Kshatriya is affected by tamasic attitudes and gives umbrage to the ignoble qualities of the Shudra; hence it is forbidden for a Brahmin to live in a country where there is no Kshatriya. If the race of Kshatriyas comes to an end, to create the Kshatriya a new is the first duty of the Brahmin. Kshatriya power bereft of the Brahmin's strength turns into a violent uncontrollable titanism, turns at first to the destruction of others' good, finally destroys itself. The Roman poet was right when he said that the titans fall from the excess of their own strength and are utterly destroyed. Sattwa should create Rajas, Rajas should protect Sattwa, should engage itself in sattwic works; that makes possible the good of the individual and the nation. If Sattwa engulfs Rajas or if Rajas engulfs Sattwa, the quality thus victorious is itself vanquished by the emergence of Tamas, there is a reign of the Tamasic mode. The Brahmin can never be king; if the Kshatriya is destroyed, the Shudra becomes king; the Brahmin becoming tamasic will distort knowledge out of greed for money and take to the service of the Shudra; spirituality will encourage inaction, will itself fade away and be the occasion for a fall from the right law. The subjection of a nation without Kshatriyas and run by the Shudra is inevitable. This is what has come to pass in India. *Writings in Bengali: 146-47*

## **Patriotism and Nationalism**

Patriotism and national consciousness are two different qualities. The patriot lives in a rapture of service to the motherland; he perceives her everywhere, looks upon her as a godhead, and to her offers all work done as a sacrifice for the good of the country; his own interest merges in the interest of the country. The English of the eighteenth century did not have this feeling as it cannot abide permanently in the heart of any Occidental materialist nation. The English did not come to India for the good of their country. They came here to do business, to make money for themselves. Not out of love for their country did they conquer or pillage India but they conquered it mainly in their own interest. However, without being patriots, they had the national feeling; the pride that "our country is the best, the traditions and customs, religion, character, morality, strength, courage, intelligence, opinion and work of our nation are inimitably perfect, unattainable by others"; the belief that "the good of my country is my good, the glory of my country is my glory, the prosperity of my fellow countrymen is my prosperity; instead of seeking only personal ends, I shall advance at the same time the interest of my nation; it is the duty of every one in the country to fight for her honour, glory and prosperity; it is the religion of the hero, if need be, to die bravely in that fight"; this sense of duty exhibits the main characteristic of the national consciousness. Patriotism is in its nature sattwic, whereas the national consciousness is rajasic. One who can lose his ego in the ego of the country is the ideal patriot; one who aggrandises the ego of the country, all the while maintaining intact his own ego is a nationally conscious individual. The Indians of that epoch were wanting in national consciousness. We do not mean to say that they

never cared for the good of their nation, but if there was the least conflict between their personal interest and that of the country, they often sacrificed the good of the country to achieve their own. According to us, the lack of national consciousness was a more fatal defect than the lack of unity. If full national consciousness spread everywhere in the country, then unity could be realised even in this land afflicted with division.

*Writings in Bengali: 217-18*

### **Waning of the Sattwic power of Knowledge**

On the other hand, the Indians were a great sattwic nation. It was because of this sattwic power that they became incomparable in knowledge, courage and in spite of their disunity were able to resist and throw back foreign attacks for a thousand years. Then began the increase of rajas and the decrease of sattwa. At the time of the Muslim advent, the widespread knowledge had already begun to shrink and the Rajputs who were predominantly rajasic occupied the throne of India. Northern India was in the grip of wars and internal quarrels and, owing to a decadence of Buddhism, Bengal was overcast with tamas. Spirituality sought refuge in South India and by the grace of that sattwic power South India was able to retain her freedom for a long time. Yearning for knowledge, progress of knowledge slowly declined; instead, erudition was more and more honoured and glorified; spiritual knowledge, development of yogic power and inner realisation were mostly replaced by tamasic religious worship and observance of rajasic ceremonies to gain worldly ends; when the cult of the four great orders of society disappeared, people began to attach more importance to outward customs and actions. Such an extinction of the national dharma had brought

about the death of Greece, Rome, Egypt and Assyria; but the Aryan race which held the ancient religion was saved by the rejuvenating flow of heavenly nectar which gushed from time to time from the ancient source. Shankara, Ramanuja, Chaitanya, Nanak, Ramdas and Tukaram brought back to life a moribund India by sprinkling her with that divine nectar. However, the current of rajas and tamas was so strong that by its pull, even the best were altered into the worst; common people began to justify their tamasic nature with the knowledge given by Shankara; the cult of love revealed by Chaitanya became a cover for extreme tamasic inactivity; the Marathas who were taught by Ramdas, forgot their Maharashtrian dharma, wasted the power in selfish pursuits and internal conflicts and destroyed the kingdom founded by Shivaji and Bajirao. In the eighteenth century this current attained its maximum force. Society and religion were confined within narrow limits as ordained by a few modern law-givers; the pomp of outward rites and ceremonies came to be designated as religion; with the Aryan knowledge vanishing and the Aryan character dying, the ancient religion abandoned society and took shelter in the forest-life of the Sannyasi and in the heart of the devotee. India was then enveloped in the thickest darkness of tamas, yet a stupendous rajasic impulse under the cloak of an outward religion relentlessly pursued vile and selfish ends, bringing ruin to the nation and the country. Power was not lacking in the country, but owing to the eclipse of the Aryan dharma and of sattwa, that power unable to defend itself, brought about its own destruction.

*Writings in Bengali: 220-21*



Sri Aurobindo says that it is impossible for him to take up political action and enter the political field which would involve a sacrifice of his spiritual work.

His spiritual help is given to the country and individually to all those who aspire for it. He is ready to continue this help and even to increase it if it is necessary. But he is convinced that written messages alone are not sufficient to have a permanent effect or even a sufficiently wide effect.

CWSA 35: 27

Sri Aurobindo

## The Country and Nationalism

When it is one country, one Mother — there is bound to be unity one day, and out of the union of many races shall emerge a strong and invincible nation. Our religious views may differ, there might be endless conflict among the communities, neither concordance nor any hope of concordance, still one need not have any misgivings. By the powerful magnetic attraction of the Mother embodied in the country, by fair means or foul — whether by mutual understanding, or by force or by appeasement — harmony will be achieved; communalism, separation will be drowned in fraternal feelings, in a common love and worship of the Mother. In a land of many languages brother is unable to understand brother, we do not sympathise with each other's feelings, between heart and heart there are immense barriers. These have to be overcome with much effort. Yet one need not fear. There is the same current of thought in every mind, of one country, one life, and under pressure of need a common language is bound to evolve, either one of the existing languages will come to be accepted, else a new language will be created. In the Mother's temple all will use that language. There is nothing permanent about these obstacles. The Mother's need, her attraction and deeper desire are not to be frustrated, these will surmount all obstacles and conflicts. Born of the same Mother, on her lap we live, in her five elements we merge and melt, in spite of a thousand real dissensions we shall unite at Her call. This is a law of Nature, the lesson of history everywhere: the country is the base of nationalism, an inevitable bond. Where there is a country of one's own, nationalism is bound to be there. On the other hand, if the country is not one, even if the race, the religion and the language are the same, nothing will come of that. One day a separate race is sure to appear. By yoking together separate

countries a great empire may be built. But that is not how a great nationality comes about. When the empire declines, separate nations spring up. Very often it is this inherent separativeness that causes the empire to crash.

*Writings in Bengali: 224-25*

## **East and West**

The unification of the East and the West is the religion of today. But in this task of unification, if we consider the West as the foundation or the chief support we shall be making a grievous error. The East is the foundation, the chief support. The outer world is established in the inner, not vice versa. Respect and emotion, or inner attitude (*bhāva*), are the source of energy and activity, one has to be faithful to one's inner attitude (*bhāva*) and sense of reverence, but one is not to be attached to the application of force and the external forms and means of activity. The occidentals are busy with the outward forms and means of democracy. But the external form is only for the purpose of expressing the inner attitude; it is this attitude that shapes the form, it is one's reverence that creates the means or the instrument. The occidentals are so attached to the forms and instruments that they are unable to notice that in their external expressions the inner attitude and reverence are languishing. These days in the eastern countries the inner attitude and respect for democracy are becoming fast clearer and creating external means and building its outward forms, while in the western countries that feeling is getting dimmed, that respect is much attenuated. The East has set its face towards the dawn, moving towards the light — the West is moving back towards the dark night.

*Writings in Bengali: 256*

**Sri Aurobindo**



In February, 1910, he withdrew to a secret retirement at Chandernagore and in the beginning of April sailed for Pondicherry in French India. A third prosecution was launched against him at this moment for a signed article in the *Karmayogin*; in his absence it was pressed against the printer of the paper who was convicted, but the conviction was quashed on appeal in the High Court of Calcutta. For the third time a prosecution against him had failed. Sri Aurobindo had left Bengal with some intention of returning to the political field under more favourable circumstances; but very soon the magnitude of the spiritual work he had taken up appeared to him and he saw that it would need the exclusive concentration of all his energies. Eventually he cut off connection with politics, refused repeatedly to accept the Presidentship of the National Congress and went into a complete retirement. During all his stay at Pondicherry from 1910 to the present moment he has remained more and more exclusively devoted to his spiritual work and his sadhana.

CWSA 36: 9

Sri Aurobindo



*With best compliments of:*

**DEORAH SEVA NIDHI**

(Founder Trustee: Late Shri S.L. Deorah)

25, Ballygunge Park, Kolkata - 700019

SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY

Notice for the Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the members of Sri Aurobindo Society will be held on Saturday, the 21<sup>st</sup> September 2019, at 4.00 p.m. at its registered office, Sri Aurobindo Bhavan, 8, Shakespeare Sarani, Kolkata – 700 071, to transact the following business:

- 1. To confirm the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2018.
- 2. To consider and approve the audited Balance Sheet and Income & Expenditure Account of the Society for the year ended 31.03.2019.
- 3. To consider and adopt the Executive Committee’s Annual Report of Activities for the year 2018–2019.
- 4. To appoint an auditor for the Society for the year 2019-2020.
- 5. To consider any other matter with the permission of the chair.

Sd/-

(Pradeep Narang)  
Chairman

30.04.2019  
Puducherry

*Note: The members are entitled to appoint proxy. Proxies must be deposited at the Registered Office of the Society, No.8, Shakespeare Sarani, Kolkata – 700 071, during office hours, in advance but not less than 48 hours before the time of the meeting. The proxy should be a member of the Society. Proxy form is printed below.*



**PROXY**

SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY,  
Regd. Office: 8, Shakespeare Sarani, Kolkata – 700 071.

I, ..... being a member of Sri Aurobindo Society, having membership No. .... valid upto ..... do hereby appoint ..... having Society’s membership No. .... valid upto ..... as my proxy in my absence to attend and vote for me and on my behalf at the Annual General Meeting of the Society, to be held on Saturday, the 21<sup>st</sup> September 2019, at 4.00 p.m. and at any adjournment thereof.

In witness whereof, I have set my hand this  
..... day of ..... 2019.

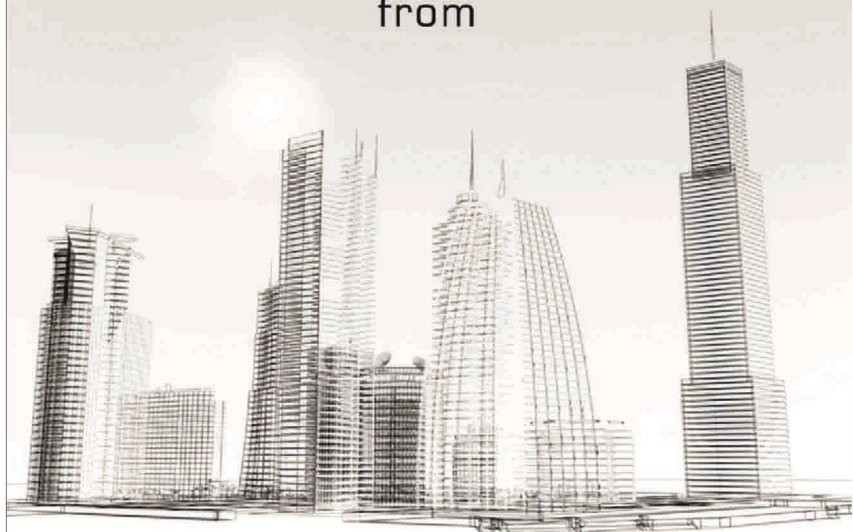
Revenue Stamp

(Signature of the member across the stamp)

*Note: The proxy must be deposited at the Registered Office of the Society, No.8, Shakespeare Sarani, Kolkata – 700 071, not less than 48 hours before the time of the meeting.*



with  
best compliments  
from



Raheja Centre-Point, 294, C.S.T. Road, Kalina, Santacruz (E), Mumbai - 400 098. Tel: +91 66414141  
fax: +91 6641 4242 | email - mail@rahejauniversal.com | web - www.rahejauniversal.com

Rs.30.00

Vol. 49, No.01

Regd.:SSP/PY/42/2018-2020

ISSN 0972-0782

WPPNo. TN/PMG/(CCR)/WPP-471/18-2020

Date of Publication: 01. 08. 2019 (Monthly)

RNI No. 22334/71

A school by The Vatika Group 

## Nature Friendly

"My child is in Grade 4. My son's journey with this school started 5 years back.

What really drew me to the school at the first instance is the calmness that prevails in the atmosphere!

Being a doctor myself, it was very important for me that the school environment should be healthy – class rooms in MatriKiran are the most nature friendly, spacious, well ventilated, they open out to green spaces... perfect to stay in communion with nature."

**Dr. Nidhi Gogia**

*Mother of Soham Sharma, Grade 4*



**ADMISSIONS OPEN**  
Academic Year 2018-19

ICSE Curriculum



**MatriKiran**

[www.matrikiran.in](http://www.matrikiran.in)

**Junior School** SOHNA ROAD  
Pre Nursery to Grade 5

**Senior School** VATIKA INDIA NEXT  
Grade 6 onwards

**Junior School**

W Block, Sec 49, Sohna Rd, Gurugram  
+91 124 4938200, +91 9650690222

**Senior School**

Sec 83, Vatika India Next, Gurugram  
+91 124 4681600, +91 9821786363