

The Sunlit Path



Sri Aurobindo Chair of Integral Studies

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Editorial

My dear friends,

I am happy to bring to you 15th January, 2021 issue of The Sunlit Path. 'Living Words' contain the new year Message card distributed from Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry.

The year 2020-2021 is birth centenary year of Dr H. Maheshwari. (20st March, 1921) He was the first chairperson of Si Aurobindo Chair of Integral Studies, Sardar Patel University. The chair was established on 24th November, 1995. The present issue is being brought out as a loving homage to him. It contains an article on Integral Education written by Dr H. Maheshwari. We have his short biography and Reminiscences of him.

Sri Aurobindo Chair of Integral Studies will be arranging several activities to commemorate centenary of Dr. Maheshwari in next few months.

I do hope you will find the contents enlightening.

Sincere regards,

Dr Bhalendu Vaishnav

Living Words



Bonne année

Blessings



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.

Sri Aurobindo

True Education

In The Light Of Sri Aurobindo And The Mother

Dr. H. Maheshwari

There is hardly any preoccupation of man which is so purposive as Education is and which deserves so clear an orientation as Education does. And yet, the sad plight is that even the term 'Education' has become so ambiguous that there is hardly any agreement amongst the so-called educationists as to its meaning and aim and function. The claims of socio-political ideologies have further confused and even vitiated our approach to the basic problems of Educations. There are, consequently, unsettled and unsettling debates on the theory of Education on the one hand, and, on the other, scenes of dissatisfaction and agitation in its practical fields all around. There are sometimes serious doubts as to the very justification of the activity we call 'Education'; one can even witness the grave concern of serious minded people when they plead for a deschooling movement in the society.

But it is precisely this situation, with all its challenges, which invites sober minded people to think afresh and dive deep and look ahead for a true meaning of Education, so that a proper orientation could be provided to our educational activities with a view to preparing

ourselves for that future which may truly fulfill the hope of huminity.

The one thing that is fundamentally important, and about which there can be so dispute is that there can be no solution to the varied educational problems unless we have a very clear aim of Education in view. And in fact there can be no clarity regarding the aim of Education unless the aim of human life is absolutely clear.

The greatest damage done to Education is by the uncritical notion that its proper business it to serve as an expedient means for meeting the demands of time and clime in changing situations of life. According to such a notion, educational programmes are always subjected to varying schemes of our socio-economic or socio-political planning. If for example, a country is to strive for economic development, the business of Education, it is supposed, is to prepare efficient individuals for various jobs; or else if a nation is to grow into a big power, it is considered to be the function of Education to infuse heroic spirit in the students. Its natural corollary is that every individual student starts looking upon his education as a mere means for achieving this or that desired end in practical life or for the fulfilment of some coveted ambition. Thus there enters the malady of crazy choices of students for this or that line of career-making education, not because that will particularly suit one's aptitude but because it would cater to something which happens to tempt a particular student. We see for example a great rush today in India for medical courses, not because that is

vocationally suited to thousands and thousands of those rushing for it, but because the medical profession happens to be quite lucrative at the moment.

This is how we miss, individually for our own development and collectively for the good of the society, the right inspiration for true Education, and, motivated by passing needs or fleeting attractions we lavish our attention to transitory gains at the cost of lasting values of life. This is how the entire orientation of Education goes on wandering, and in place of sustained and worthwhile pursuits we go about managing merely the contingencies of ordinary existence.

It is therefore, of primary importance that, while attending to the life situations which of course have their own problems demanding specific and immediate solutions, we make a sober reflection on what life as life on the whole demands and also perhaps what Nature seeks to accomplish through life. For indeed man's life is not isolated from the grand life in Nature, nor is Nature a blind mechanism devoid of all purpose in evolving life.

It is here that we are greatly helped in our reflection by the revealing vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother that Nature is working out her great plan of bringing about perfection. Every thing in Nature has its own potentialities, and in course of evolution and general progression there potentialities actually realise themselves. It is like the plants

budding forth and the buds flowering into blossoms, and thus bringing into manifestation what is best in their life according throughout to the Nature's self-perfecting process.

Observing, further that Nature's process of development and growth becomes more and more conscious in human life, and that Education implies man's choicest selection of a pursuit, we may make a simple and unambiguous statement regarding the true meaning of Education in tune with Nature which is working out the perfection of the future, It would be : Education has to be conscious attempt of man to promote Nature's scheme of bringing about human perfection.

Commonly speaking we are familiar with the phrase "all round development of personality" as the aim of Education. But what this 'personality' truly is and what properly the terms of its 'development' are, we seldom know. And whatever little we gather in concepts from those who venture to explore into the nature of human personality, we hardly utilise for our educational purposes simply because we are too much given to the mediocrities of the 'work'aday life. The result is that phrases like 'personality development' remain with us more or less like truisms, more or less for advertisement.

Human personality in fact deserves a very deep probe, a very profound research. This could be done by only those great psychologists who are prepared to dive much deeper than the superficial details on which

most of the present day psychology is lavishing its attention. Fortunately for us, very deep explorations have been made by the great science of Yoga in India. Educational psychology can do no better than to draw on the treasures of Yogic discoveries. Thanks to the growing frustrations of the present day life, we have already started consulting Yoga for personality rehabilitation. Only one consistent step more, and we can have the sure advantage of knowing better and still better what the human personality is and how best we can work for its perfect development.

To know the depths and extensions of human personality along with the secrets of Nature and her occult intention to bring about perfection, we need the help and guidance of not only psychologists and Yogins but even of Seers. And it is here that we have the great privilege of turning to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother whose revealing vision has opened new dimensions of knowledge about life and its supreme Goal, and whose inspiring guidance has encouraged new adventures in Education at the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education at Pondicherry. We have a new meaning of Education with an immutable significance, a new philosophy of Education based on the immutable vision of the spirit in the universe, a new aim of Education that immutably sustains the every growing pursuits and ever fresh programme of perfecting activity which refuses to settle into any fixed system or degenerate into any lifeless routine.

Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have revealed that Nature has worked out the evolution of life from Matter, and Mind from Life, and that her evolution continues to work out all that is superior to mind towards a divine supramental perfection. They have simultaneously opened to us the complex weft of human personality which is our five fold constitution; we are a body, a life, a mind, a psyche and a spirit. This five-fold personality is not a mere combination of five different elements but an integral whole in which each part has a bearing on every other and in which the psychic and the spiritual principle is of central importance.

Education, therefore, has to be integral and the task of true Education in tune with the divine intention of Nature is to work for the integral perfection of the entire personality. That can best be done when the center of our being, the psychic entity in us, could conduct the progress of the body- life-mind personality, organising each in harmony with the others. That would indeed be to bring out the best of a personality. In the words of Sri Aurobindo. "The chief aim of education should be to help the growing soul to draw out that in itself which is best and to make it perfect for a noble use."

The terms of perfection of each part of the human personality are so elaborate and so inviting. Health and strength and endurance and dexterity and harmony and plasticity and beauty of the body, sense-refinement, courage, will-power, self-control, character, perseverance,

tolerance, faithfulness, fearlessness, straightforwardness etc. etc. of the vital nature, clarity of thought, reasoning, analysis, synthesis, good memory, imagination, discrimination, discernment etc. of the mind along with happy emotional disposition and developed aesthetic tastes, peace and love and light and goodness and divine aspirations of the psychic nature all these and many more are the virtues and the qualities which Education for integral Perfection stands to promote, these are the marks of personality development which it promises.

What is very interesting here is that every individual being is unique and the development of each towards his or her perfection is different from that of every other. Therefore, freedom to every child to grow according to his or her own nature, his or her '*Swabhava*' is of capital importance in providing this or that educational programme.

With all this background, what is going on as Integral Education at the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education at Pondicherry is so interesting so unique, so encouraging, so inspiring, so promising.(1)



Homage:



Dr H. Maheshwari

Birth Centenary: 20 March, 1921-2020

**The First Chairperson of Sri Aurobindo Chair of Integral Studies,
Sardar Patel University**

Dr Hazarilal Maheshwari (known at the Sri Aurobindo ashram as Maheshwar, the name given to him by the Mother) was a versatile scholar of Indian Philosophy and of the teaching of Sri Aurobindo. He is well known to the community of truth-seekers for his works in English and Hindi on the Bhagavad Gita in the light of Sri Aurobindo. As a seeker, devotee and disciple of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, he served Them with integrity of knowledge, devotion and dynamic action throughout his life.

Dr. H. Maheshwari was born in March 1921 in U.P. He received M.A. in Philosophy with First Rank from Banaras Hindu University in 1945 and Ph.D. from Agra University. He was Professor & Head of the Department of Philosophy for 20 years at Mathura, U.P. and after 1965 served as a Principal at the Institute of Oriental Philosophy at Vrindaban.

Maheshwar-ji came early under the influence of Sri Aurobindo, and came to stay at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, taking early retirement from principalship in 1971. At the ashram, he was a professor of philosophy at the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education. He was steeped in the atmosphere of the Mother and of the ashram and toured extensively all parts of India, giving many talks at the centres and branches of the Sri Aurobindo Society. He conducted swadhyay camps at various places in India and abroad. He also

organized education camps for teachers of Integral Schools and was a member of the Advisory Committee of the Sri Aurobindo Institute of Research in Social Sciences. In the mid-90s, Maheshwar-ji was selected as the first chairperson for the endowed chair for Sri Aurobindo chair of Integral Studies at the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel University in Anand, Gujarat, and served there for two years. In 1992, Maheshwar-ji went to the US and installed the relics of Sri Aurobindo at the Sri Aurobindo Center of Los Angeles on 15th August, Sri Aurobindo's Birthday.

In May 2002, he took his eternal abode in his Master's Consciousness.

His main works: 1. Bhagavad Gita in the Light of Sri Aurobindo (Text & Translation); 2. The Gita's Gospel in Sri Aurobindo's Light (A Thematic Study); 3. Sri Aravinda ke Alok mein Gita ka Divya Sandesh (In Hindi and it was also translated and published in Gujarati and Marathi); 4. The Philosophy of Swami Rama Tirtha.

We take this opportunity to salute his poised yogic consciousness, *sthita-prajna*, and the sincerity, dedication and detailed perfection that was his life.

A interview by Dr H. Maheshwari, recorded in 2002 by Debashish Banerji can be viewed at:

<https://auromaa.org/an-interview-by-dr-h-maheshwari/>

Reminiscences

Dr Maheshwariji

Dr.Bhalendu Vaishnav



Reminiscences of Dr Maheshwariji are deeply embedded in our heart and mind. His grace, charming sweetness, remarkable dignity of conduct and physical fitness, amicability and gentleness, sharp intellect and above all his heart flowering out through devotional songs....all are very tangibly fresh in the hearts of all who came in his contact.

He was an educationist-*par excellence*. His discourses were scholarly and highly inspiring. His attitude and approach while teaching led to sprouting of seeds of aspiration and dedication to the Divine had lasting effects. Just as a tree grows in due course of time and bears flowers and fruits, the inspiration and lines of growth charted by him long ago are bringing out results for those who came in direct contact with him specifically and for a larger campus community in general.

He graced the chair as the first chairperson of Sri Aurobindo Chair of

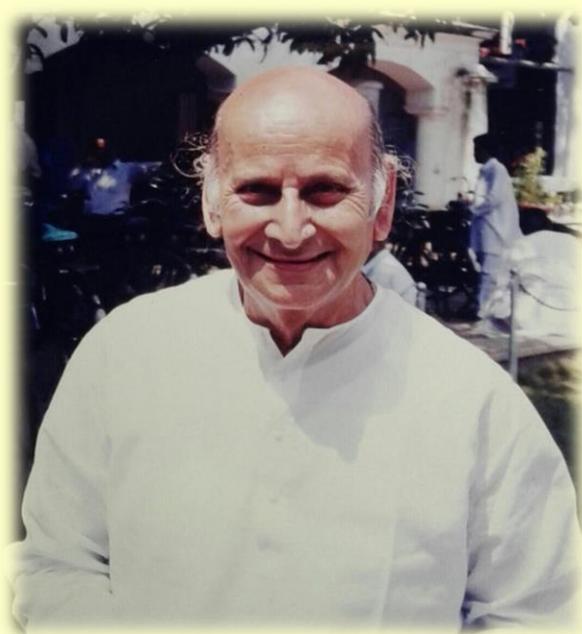
Integral Studies at the Sardar Patel University. By accepting the University's invitation to come from Pondicherry to Vallabh Vidyanagar during later years of life, he supported aspirational actions of the then Vice Chancellor of the Sardar Patel University, Dr. Dilwasinh Jadeja, his wife Ushaben Jadeja and others on the path. I am convinced beyond doubt that thus doing, he fulfilled a role of chosen and perfect instrument of the Divine Mother. He undertook many inspiring activities at the Chair. He visited many departments of the University regularly and conducted scholarly sessions on Integral Yoga, Integral Education and Integral Health. Sardar Patel University published his book on the Gita. He used to conduct study sessions on 'The Mother' and 'The Life Divine' at Sri Aurobindo Sadhana Kendra, and on the Gita at a residence as a part of study circle organized by Prof. S. V. Vaishnav every week. He encouraged devotional music activities at Sri Aurobindo Sadhana Kendra. His devotional songs have left profoundly touching impressions.

More than the details of activities, the consciousness and sincerity from which he carried out the same are very much alive and reverberating; words would not be adequate to describe the same. It has catalytically helped many in making the contact with inner Divinity.

Once we were travelling together in a train from Anand to Pondicherry. We discussed many topics pertaining to teachings of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother. During our discussion about *duty* and *dharma*,

he said, 'there comes a stage, a moment in life when one is *impelled from within* to leave every other work and follow his inner seeking resolutely.... And at that moment, the 'Inner Call' supercedes every outer duty... this inner call is like a strong magnet- one who feels it, knows it."

His contribution at the Chair has had foundational effects in sprouting and nurturing aspirations of new generation of academia for turning to Sri Aurobindo's and The Mother's Light and Teaching. *He inspired*. His contribution for Sri Aurobindo Chair of Integral Studies will be remembered for all the time. On behalf of the University and on my own self, I express immense gratitude to him for his precious and timeless gifts to the Sardar Patel University on the occasion of his birth centenary.





Acknowledgements

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1. Dr. H.Maheshwari, Bulletin of Integral Education
2. <https://auromaa.org/an-interview-by-dr-h-maheshwari/>

The Sunlit Path is a monthly e magazine of **Sri Aurobindo Chair of Integral Studies, Sardar Patel University**. It can be viewed at: http://www.spuvvn.edu/academics/academic_chairs/aurobindo/

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