



Sri Aurobindo's *Arya*

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Abstract: Sri Aurobindo launched the philosophical journal *Arya* it intended to provide a grand synthesis of knowledge and yogic experience. The *Arya* had a two-fold object firstly a systematic study of the highest problems of existence and secondly the formation of a vast synthesis of knowledge, harmonizing the diverse religious traditions' of humanity, occidental as well as oriented. The journal endeavoured to give not only studies in philosophy but also translations of ancient texts and commentaries on them. It would also deal in the comparative religion

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INTRODUCTION

Sri Aurobindo launched the philosophical journal *Arya* it intended to provide a grand synthesis of knowledge and yogic experience. The decision was taken on 1 June 1914. The first monthly issue was to come out only on Sri Aurobindo's forty-second birthday, 15 August 1914.

It was also decided that the *Arya* should have a French counterpart consisting mainly of translations from the original English. The main inspiration was Sri Aurobindo. K.R Srinivasa Iyengar states, "After his acquittal in 1909, he had started on his own the Karmayoga and the Dharma, with a marked shift in emphasis from politics to politics cum Sanatana Dharma. And now, five years after, he was to launch *Arya* and the Revue, Philosophical journals both with for horizons and a global and integral outlook. Sri Aurobindo's Yoga had already been spread over twelve years, and he had assimilated and overpassed his won and the world's past, and had reached the stage when it was incumbent on him to lay the foundations of the future." (399) The *Arya* would give Sri Aurobindo an opportunity to share with others his views on the nature of existence.

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diverse religious traditions' of humanity, occidental as well as oriented. The journal endeavoured to give not only studies in philosophy but also translations of ancient texts and commentaries on them. It would also deal in the comparative religion.

Sri Aurobindo chose the word 'Arya' for his journal. For him 'Aryan' was a concept, an ideal Sri Aurobindo explained the significance of the name:

... the word in its original use expressed of culture. For in the Veda, the Aryan peoples are those who had accepted a particular type of self-culture of inward and outward practice of ideality of aspiration. In later times, the word Arya expressed a particular ethical and social ideal, an ideal of well-governed life candour, courtesy, nobility, straight dealing, courage gentleness, purity, humanity, compassion, protection of the weak, liberality, observation of social duty, eagerness of knowledge, respect for the wise and learned... the combined ideal of the Brahmana and the Kshatriya...

Intrinsically, in its most fundamental sense Arya means an effort or an uprising and overcoming. The Aryan is he who strives and over comes all outside him and within him they stands opposed to the human advance self-conquest is the first law of his nature. For in everything he seeks truth, in everything right, in everything height and freedom...

Self-perfection is the aim of his self-conquest therefore what he conquers he does not destroy, but ennoble and fulfills... always the Aryan is a worker and warrior, He spares himself no labour of mind or body whether to seek the highest or to serve it, He avoids no difficulty, he accepts no cessation from fatigue. Always he fights for the coming of that kingdom within himself and in the world. (SABCL Vol 17, 393, 394, 395)

The word "Arya" connotes certain aspirations. It is not a reference to any race. After trials and tribulations, he reaches his goal. He becomes the perfected Aryan, the "Arhat".

K R Srinivasa Iyengar in his *Sri Aurobindo: A biography and history* states

The perfect Arhat is he who is able to live simultaneously in all the three apparent states of existence, elevate the lower into the higher, receive the higher into the lower, so that he may represent perfectly in the symbols of the word that with which he is identified in all parts of his being, the triple and trine Brahman. (SABCL, Vol 17,396)

The Arhat can be an Asian or a European. K R Srinivasa Iyengar calls the *Arya* a "bold adventure" (403). It is different from more academic scholarship. It is also not a mixture of traditional philosophies. Iyengar further states, "This was audacious futurist research and reconstruction on the basis of intuitive thought and sustained tapasya." (403)

Sri Aurobindo states:

The problem of thought therefore is to find out the right idea and the right way of harmony; to restate the ancient and eternal spiritual truth of the self so that it shall re-embrace, permeate, dominate, transfigure the mental and physical life; to develop the most profound and vital methods of psychological self-discipline and self-development so that the mental and psychical life of man may express the spiritual life through the utmost possible expansion of its own riches, power and complexity, and to seek for the means and motives by which his external life his society and his institutions may revolved themselves progressively in the truth of the spirit and develop towards the utmost possible harmony of individual freedom and social unity. (SABCL, Vol 16, PP 313-14)

Sri Aurobindo's collaborator Paul Richard was called for Military service and had to leave for France. The *Revue* ceased publication after its seventh issue. Sri Aurobindo edited the *Arya* till January 1921.

CONCLUSION

The pride of place in the *Arya* was given to Sri Aurobindo's *The Life Divine*. It was the spiritual manifesto of Sri Aurobindo. Next in importance was *The Synthesis of Yoga*. It was a detailed description of classical Yogas, Integral Yoga and the need to go beyond. *The Secret of the Veda* was a new and mystic interpretation of the Vedas. *Essays on the Gita* was a landmark series. Complementary services – *The Ideal of Human Unity* and *The Psychology of Social Development* (now known as 'The Human Cycle') appeared in 1915 and 1916 respectively. Other works were *The Future Poetry*, *Heraclitus* and *A Defence of Indian Culture*. Among the shorter works were *Ideals and Progress*, *The Superman*, *Evolution*, *The Renaissance in India*, *War and Self determination* and the commentaries on the Isha and Kena Upanishads. The *Arya* was also a commercial success.

K.R Srinivasa Iyengar states, "For six years and a half, the *Arya* gave its readers and the world at large the very munificence of Sri Aurobindo's thought in the several realms of knowledge, philosophy, literature, Yoga, scriptural exegesis, art and literary criticism, history and sociology, national and international politics." (414) Sri Aurobindo's contributions were a God's labour.

Works cited

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