

THE PEACOCK LETTER



THE INTEGRAL KNOWLEDGE STUDY CENTER

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FROM "THE VISION AND
THE BOON" IN SAVITRI

THE INTEGRAL KNOWLEDGE STUDY CENTER

The Integral Knowledge Study Center was formed in 1979, when a visit from India by M. P. Pandit and Vasanti Rao brought together a number of seekers into a collective endeavour of study, meditation, and inner growth. The overarching goal of the Center, in harmony with the vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, has since been to aid in the discovery of the secret soul of delight that dwells within each person, and to promote the integral perfection of life that can flow from this discovery of authentic being.

A number of activities are sponsored that support this spiritual search, but the core of the Center's collective life is a weekly study group that meets on Sunday evenings. Appropriate books drawn from the extensive literature of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother serve as the focus of these meetings, where probing, positive discussions among the participants enhance clarity and lead into a concluding group meditation.

Among other public offerings are seminars and workshops covering a wide variety of themes relating to spiritual life, the viewing of significant films dealing with the growth of consciousness, and the occasional sponsorship of guest speakers. Private counselling and instruction in meditation are also available for individuals through the Center without charge.

On August 15, 1983, Sri Aurobindo's Relics were inaugurated at the Center. It marked the first time that the Relics had ever left India for another country. For many seekers in America the Relics offer profound significance and continuing inspiration.

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FINDING A HALLWAY TO HARMONY

Rand Hicks

We bend together your minds, together your courses, together your designs; ye yonder who are of discordant courses, we make you bend [them] together here. . . . Worked in for me [are] heaven-and-earth; worked in [is] divine Sarasvati; worked in for me [are] both Indra and Agni; may we be successful here, O Sarasvati.

Atharva Veda, VI.94.1,3

India always saw the soul as pivotally important to the cosmic order. The human aspiration voiced in the Veda was ignited and borne upwards by Agni in the soul-fire, made skyey through Indra leading the mind, inspired and blessed by the supramental Sarasvati, affords deep symbolism for us. They delineate the conscious course to divinity, and we ourselves are a key link in the cosmic purpose.

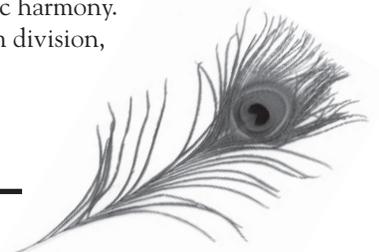
Yoga leads us to the wholeness of being. The liberation of consciousness into essential being is a great step; we can go further, though, and find that same reality figured here. To the yogin, the vast cosmos implies — and experience reveals — the presence of a founding Being, a discoverable Divine who is everywhere, a Mother who begets and guides each and all with unique wisdom and love. The teeming worlds are a dimensional and sequenced movement of One who is beyond all borders and distinctions. And yet each thing in the cosmos, from the vast to the infinitesimal, bears the signature of her conscious Force, is really her.

In life, we secure this great world-harmony through consecrated work, we manifest it in conscious action. Our inner integrity and harmony brings divine possibilities into the world. So our consecrated, conscious action not only dissolves internal divisions, but reveals our soul, unites us to the All, profoundly enriches our experience, and justifies the soul's mission in the cosmos.

But there is a farther work that we might do together. The grand diversity constellated in the universe is meant to be reflected in our social self, too. In other words, an awakened single soul aiming beyond personal transformation can set ablaze the group effort, ignite, lift the general



awareness and, by spreading light, lead a significant and soulful slice of society beyond ego and division and towards a ripening unity. In that enlarged form, we could demonstrate more vastly the love, power, and delight implied in the Divine Mother's essential being. For She is ever the one Reality, the balancing harmony that unites all diversities, *sâmarasya parâyanâ*. Our yogic work is incomplete until we extend soul-awareness into society. The cosmic harmony will not fructify until the larger family accords it consciously. Universal fulfillment waits for us to rise by choice to that strength of oneness. The One in the many must be real to our collective inner experience, must arise as a frequent motif, must substantiate our work. That growing realization should ground our spiritual community. To travel to the most wonderful destinations of spiritual possibility, a soul-centered social life must give voice to the cosmic harmony. Let us lean into oneness and away from division, prefer the light to darkness.





PEACOCK'S FAN

The month of December was memorable for our center. At its beginning, David Mitchell and Kate Buffington moved to Pensacola from Wisconsin, settling in to a new harmony in their lovely home. And other families visited us for the first time, including the Modha family from Tampa (Mahesh and Shilpa and Sweta and Isha) and the Nanda family from Houston (Jyoti and Sarmistha and Nishita and Anjaneya). And to our delight, Wayne Hicks and Setsuko Matsue, also from Houston, came towards the month's and year's end.

Our New Year's celebration — a tradition over thirty years old here — continued with the distribution of the 2012 calendars, featuring inspiring images of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. Friends present with us at midnight received the New Year's Message, blessings, books, incense, and greeted that first day with a fresh step. May a year of progress lead to a gathering perfection.

In our Sunday studies, we paused after finishing the first series in *Essays on the Gita* to move meaningfully through *The Mother* by Sri Aurobindo. This powerful work, which flows like honey, has been aptly called a Matri Upanishad. We expect to continue with it beyond Mother's month into March.

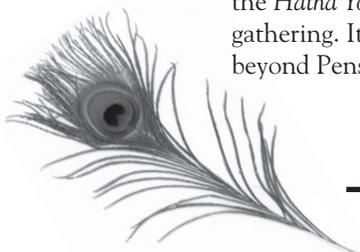
And in March we are planning to present the core teaching and principal insights from the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* to a Thursday evening gathering. It will be advertised to our friends in and beyond Pensacola and will be open to the public.

THE GNOSTIC EVOLUTION

Sri Aurobindo

All supramental gnosis is a twofold Truth-consciousness, a consciousness of inherent self-knowledge and, by identity of self and world, of intimate world-knowledge; this knowledge is the criterion, the characteristic power of the gnosis. But this is not a purely ideative knowledge, it is not consciousness observing, forming ideas, trying to carry them out; it is an essential light of consciousness, the self-light of all the realities of being and becoming, the self-truth of being determining, formulating and effectuating itself. To be, not to know, is the object of the manifestation; knowledge is only the instrumentation of an operative consciousness of being. This would be the gnostic life on earth, a manifestation or play of truth-conscious being, being grown aware of itself in all things, no longer lost to consciousness of itself, no longer plunged into a self-oblivion or a half-oblivion of its real existence brought about by absorption in form and action, but using form and action with a delivered spiritual power for its free and perfect self-expression, no longer seeking for its own lost or forgotten or veiled and hidden significance or significances, no longer bound, but delivered from inconscience and ignorance, aware of its own truths and powers, determining freely in a movement always concurrent and in tune in every detail with its supreme and universal Reality its manifestation, the play of its substance, the play of its consciousness, the play of its force of existence, the play of its delight of existence.

In the gnostic evolution there would be a great diversity in the poise, status, harmonised operations of consciousness and force and delight of existence. There would naturally appear in time many grades of the farther ascent of the evolutive supermind to its own summits; but in all there would be the common basis and principle. In the manifestation the Spirit, the Being, while knowing all itself, is not bound to put forth all itself in the actual front of formation and action which is its immediate power and degree of self-expression: it may put forth a frontal self-expression and hold all the rest of itself behind in an unexpressed delight of self-being. That All behind and its delight would find itself in the front, know itself

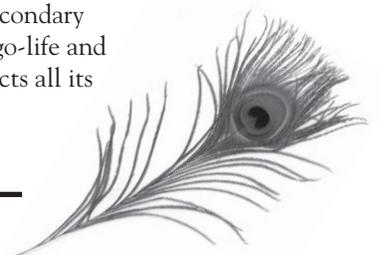


in it, maintain and suffuse the expression, the manifestation with its own presence and feeling of totality and infinity. This frontal formation with all the rest behind it and held in power of being within it would be an act of self-knowledge, not an act of Ignorance; it would be a luminous self-expression of the Superconscience and not an upthrow from the Inconscience. A great harmonised variation would thus be an element in the beauty and completeness of the evolution of the gnostic consciousness and existence. Even in dealing with the mind of ignorance around it, as in dealing with the still lower degrees of the gnostic evolution, the supramental life would use this innate power and movement of its Truth of being: it would relate in the light of that integral Reality its own truth of being with the truth of being that is behind the Ignorance; it would found all relations upon the common spiritual unity, accept and harmonise the manifested difference. The gnostic Light would ensure the right relation and action or reaction of each upon each in every circumstance; the gnostic power or influence would affirm always a symphonic effectuation, secure the right relation of the more developed and the less developed life and impose by its influence a greater harmony on the lower existence.

This would be the nature of the being, life and action of the gnostic individual so far as we can follow the evolution with our mental conception up to that point where it will emerge out of overmind and cross the border into supramental gnosis. This nature of the gnosis would evidently determine all the relations of the life or group-life of gnostic beings; for a gnostic collectivity would be a collective soul-power of the Truth-consciousness, even as the gnostic individual would be an individual soul-power of it: it would have the same integration of life and action in unison, the same realised and conscious unity of being, the same spontaneity, intimate oneness-feeling, one and mutual truth-vision and truth-sense of self and each other, the same truth-action in the relation of each with each and all with all; this collectivity would be and act not as a mechanical but a spiritual integer. A similar inevitability of the union of freedom and order would be the law of the collective life; it would



be a freedom of the diverse play of the Infinite in divine souls, an order of the conscious unity of souls which is the law of the supramental Infinite. Our mental rendering of oneness brings into it the rule of sameness; a complete oneness brought about by the mental reason drives towards a thoroughgoing standardisation as its one effective means, — only minor shades of differentiation would be allowed to operate: but the greatest richness of diversity in the self-expression of oneness would be the law of the gnostic life. In the gnostic consciousness difference would not lead to discord but to a spontaneous natural adaptation, a sense of complementary plenitude, a rich many-sided execution of the thing to be collectively known, done, worked out in life. For the difficulty in mind and life is created by ego, by separation of integers into component parts which figure as contraries, opposites, dispartes: all in which they separate from each other is easily felt, affirmed and stressed; that in which they meet, whatever holds their divergences together, is largely missed or found with difficulty; everything has to be done by an overcoming or an adjustment of difference, by a constructed unity. There is, indeed, an underlying principle of oneness and Nature insists on its emergence in a construction of unity; for she is collective and communal as well as individual and egoistic and has her instrumentation of associativeness, sympathies, common needs, interests, attractions, affinities as well as her more brutal means of unification: but her secondary imposed and too prominent basis of ego-life and ego-nature overlays the unity and afflicts all its



constructions with imperfection and insecurity. A farther difficulty is created by the absence or rather the imperfection of intuition and direct inner contact making each a separate being forced to learn with difficulty the other's being and nature, to arrive at understanding and mutuality and harmony from outside instead of inwardly through a direct sense and grasp, so that all mental and vital interchange is hampered, rendered ego-tainted or doomed to imperfection and incompleteness by the veil of mutual ignorance. In the collective gnostic life the integrating truth-sense, the concording unity of gnostic nature would carry all divergences in itself as its own opulence and turn a multitudinous thought, action, feeling into the unity of a luminous life-whole. This would be the evident principle, the inevitable result of the very character of the Truth-Consciousness and its dynamic realisation of the spiritual unity of all being. This realisation, the key to the perfection of life, difficult to arrive at on the mental plane, difficult even when realised to dynamise or organise, would be naturally dynamic, spontaneously self-organised in all gnostic creation and gnostic life.

(From *The Life Divine*, CWSA, Vol. 22, pages 1044-1047.)

THE INDISPENSABLE COLLECTIVITY

The Mother

In practice, how can we participate in this...?

This discovery?

Well!... Basically, it is always the same thing.

It is always the same thing: to realise one's own being, to enter into conscious relation with the supreme Truth of one's own being, in any form, by any path — it does not matter at all — but this is the only way. We carry, each individual carries within him a truth, and this is the truth he must unite with, this is the truth he must live; and so the path he must follow to reach and realise this truth is the path that will lead him as near as possible to Knowledge. That is to say, the two are absolutely one: the personal realisation and the Knowledge.

Who knows, perhaps this very multiplicity of approach will yield the secret — the secret that will open the door.



(*hoya carnosa*)

Power of Collective Aspiration

A harmonious collective aspiration can change the course of circumstances.

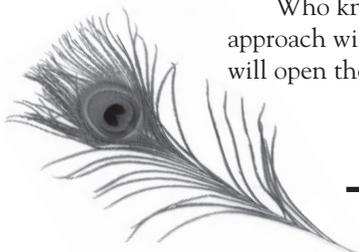
I do not think that a single individual on the earth as it is now, a single individual, however great, however eternal his consciousness and origin, can on his own change and realise — change the world, change the creation as it is and realise this higher Truth which will be a new world, a world more true, if not absolutely true. It would seem that a certain number of individuals — until now it seems to have been more in time, as a succession, but it could also be in space, a collectivity — are indispensable so that this Truth can become concrete and realise itself.

Practically, I am sure of it.

That is to say, however great, however conscious, however powerful he may be, one Avatar cannot by himself realise the supramental life on earth. It is either a group in time, extending over a period of time, or a group spread out in space — perhaps both — that are indispensable for this Realisation. I am convinced of it.

The individual can give the impulsion, indicate the path, walk on the path himself — that is to say, show the path by realising it himself — but he cannot fulfil. The fulfilment obeys certain group laws which are the expression of some aspect of Eternity and Infinity — naturally, it is all the same Being! They are not different individuals or different personalities, it is all the same Being. And it is all the same Being expressing Himself in a way which for us becomes a body, a group, a collectivity.

(On *Thoughts and Aphorisms*, MCW, Vol. 10, pages 138-139.)



From “The Vision and the Boon”

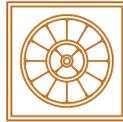
I saw the Omnipotent's flaming pioneers
 Over the heavenly verge which turns towards life
 Come crowding down the amber stairs of birth;
 Forerunners of a divine multitude,
 Out of the paths of the morning star they came
 Into the little room of mortal life.
 I saw them cross the twilight of an age,
 The sun-eyed children of a marvellous dawn,
 The great creators with wide brows of calm,
 The massive barrier-breakers of the world
 And wrestlers with destiny in her lists of will,
 The labourers in the quarries of the gods,
 The messengers of the Incommunicable,
 The architects of immortality.
 Into the fallen human sphere they came,
 Faces that wore the Immortal's glory still,
 Voices that communed still with the thoughts of God,
 Bodies made beautiful by the spirit's light,
 Carrying the magic word, the mystic fire,
 Carrying the Dionysian cup of joy,
 Approaching eyes of a diviner man,
 Lips chanting an unknown anthem of the soul,
 Feet echoing in the corridors of Time.
 High priests of wisdom, sweetness, might and bliss,
 Discoverers of beauty's sunlit ways
 And swimmers of Love's laughing fiery floods
 And dancers within rapture's golden doors,
 Their tread one day shall change the suffering earth
 And justify the light on Nature's face.

Savitri, pages 343-344.

Arichand



THE INTEGRAL KNOWLEDGE STUDY CENTER
SRI AUROBINDO CIRCLE
221 CLEMATIS STREET
PENSACOLA, FL 32503
USA



*It is ages of ardent
aspiration that have
brought us here to
do the Divine's Work.*

With my blessings

Yogi

