

THE PEACOCK LETTER



THE INTEGRAL KNOWLEDGE STUDY CENTER

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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.

THE PEACOCK LETTER

The Peacock Letter is an online quarterly published by the Integral Knowledge Study Center, 221 Clematis Street, Pensacola, Florida 32503, a tax-exempt, non-profit corporation. You can find us online at iksc.org, and email us at randhicks@iksc.org. Requests for digital subscriptions to *The Peacock Letter* should be sent to the Integral Knowledge Study Center at one of the above addresses. Contributions to defray associated expenses are appreciated. For past issues of *The Peacock Letter* and other information about the yoga of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother, please write to us.

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EMBRACING NATURE

Rand Hicks

Sri Aurobindo and the Mother founded the integral yoga on the experience of an all-embracing oneness. Unnameable and transcendent beyond all figuring, the Divine delighted in self-awareness purposely and playfully manifests a vast universe from its infinity, invests its Nature with its own being, yet remains intact, as if above, in its indescribability. Thoroughly immanent, the very substance of every world formed, the Divine retains its immaculate transcendence. Alone in its Personality, it astounds by standing as the supporting truth beneath all planes, behind all individualities, in every expression of force. God is real. Nature is real. Our souls are real. All is That.

This unvalled vision of the Divine everywhere is the warp and woof of the integral yoga, the beginning point of our work of transformation. Nature, again, is not a denial of great being; it is the ground of our work; it encourages our growth. It benefits from our elevation in consciousness. If we depart from the early episodes of the cosmic story for its continuation and denouement, it is only natural. But it is still the one story worth telling. For it is a story of how the One becomes the many, how delight becomes insentience and suffering, how consciousness becomes the ignorant inane — and then how the universe climbs back, through us. For the awakening soul in the individual, like a tasting flame of Agni exploring the world, carries in its inextinguishable essence the world explored back to its origin above, where waits the Supreme in its many colorations. Above and below are bonded in the soul; nothing is annulled. All is affirmed. The universe appears to be divided, shifting circumstances appear to annul the permanence of being, yet you and all else and all others here are profoundly real, genuine, precious.

Sri Aurobindo finds no enemy in matter, and the thrust of a supramental yoga does not aim at the cancellation of Nature. The Mahashakti works for aeons behind the veil to further its forceful expression of will-power in the revelation of light and the pursuit through desire of delight. We eventually leave behind the old experiments for new. All universal process moves to actualize



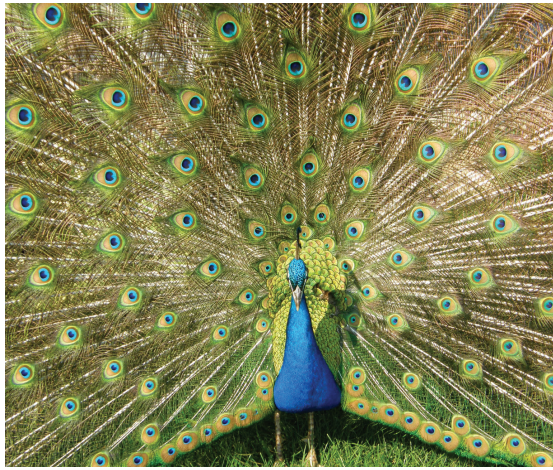
Krishna gazes at the sun while fluting in the forest
Malwa, Rajasthan, c. 1720

divinity. The many as they become conscious seek the One. We seek the fulfilment of Nature in Ananda, to felicitate our greater Self. The enlarging spiritual mission of the soul in the world is to discover and manifest all the hidden richness of Nature.

The well-seated soul appreciates Nature from the inside. There is scant need to own things when all things dwell within the widened self; the soul knows itself to be the Self of all. Living in the soul's awareness unveils the richness of the world. Your deepest happiness accords with all and does not detract from others. The happy soul, *sukham*, is not wasteful. One with all creatures, friendly to all natural forces, it feels everything to be essentially equal in spiritual status. An evolutionary advance does not mean that one is essentially "better."

One offers, one accepts; one attempts even mighty things, but with a context always in view, with a heart for the harmony that can be present now, with an eye for the manifestation of a still greater truth as it becomes available and possible. Evolution asks us to create, to preserve, to destroy only wisely, to give and be given, to become one and not to own, to enjoy and not to possess.





PEACOCK'S FAN

We mentioned in November's issue that our Sunday studies were progressing into the Mother's talks. In October, we began our work in her *Conversations* from 1929, and in January moved into her talks from 1930 and 1931. While we'll finish our survey of this set in early March, we will continue in the study of the Mother's insights.

Since December we have been visited by Wolfram and Sue Verlaan, Terry Goss and his friend Karen, and Jennifer Williams. Wolfram Verlaan celebrated his 50th birthday on the 28th. Terry Goss, who owns and operates HealthSkills Institute in Austin, Texas, came especially to share in the New Year's midnight meditation. It was his and Karen's first visit to the Center. And our David Mitchell and Kate Buffington traveled to Pondicherry on the 17th of December and returned to Pensacola on the 18th of February.

On the 28th of February, the Center will host a presentation on Auroville, highlighting its exemplary ideals and influence in building a unified and sustainable world. In time for the Mother's birthday, we are happy to note that we have posted audio on our website (iksc.org) for around two dozen talks given by M.P. Pandit in 1985 on "The Book of the Divine Mother," the third book in Sri Aurobindo's epic masterpiece in blank verse, *Savitri*.

Bill Leon and the group at the Sri Aurobindo Circle of Seattle are planning a weekly study of *The Four Faces of the Universe*, a deep assessment of

cosmology by Dr. Robert Kleinman. They meet on Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m.

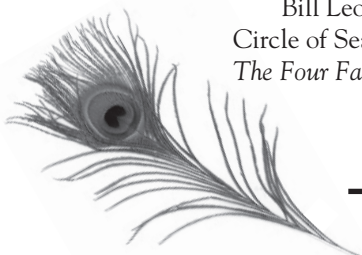
Through the good efforts of Lotus Press, a number of Integral Yoga titles are now available in digital formats, friendly to readers and tablets of all descriptions. Titles by Sri Aurobindo include *Savitri*, *The Life Divine*, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, *The Mind of Light*, and *The Integral Yoga: Sri Aurobindo's Teaching & Method of Practice*. Works available digitally by M.P. Pandit include *Kundalini Yoga*, *How Do I Begin?*, *How Do I proceed?*, *A Summary of Savitri*, *Pitfalls in Sadhana*, *Readings in Savitri*, Vol. 6, and *Yoga in Savitri*. Many more are planned. And these are available in either mobi or epub versions.

We call your attention to the website at vedah.com, where those interested can download a treasury of writings and talks on the nature and thrust of the Indian vision, and these in a variety of formats. The material is authored by Dr. R.L. Kashyap, founder of the Sri Aurobindo Kapali Sastry Institute of Vedic Culture. While many enterprises ostentatiously describe themselves today as vedic, SAKSI deserves the appellation for its sincerity and clarity. They've published 150 books in eight languages, traversing the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, and more.

A SPIRITUALISED SOCIETY

Sri Aurobindo

A spiritualised society would treat in its sociology the individual, from the saint to the criminal, not as units of a social problem to be passed through some skilfully devised machinery and either flattened into the social mould or crushed out of it, but as souls suffering and entangled in a net and to be rescued, souls growing and to be encouraged to grow, souls grown and from whom help and power can be drawn by the lesser spirits who are not yet adult. The aim of its economics would be not to create a huge engine of production, whether of the competitive or the cooperative kind, but to give to men — not only to some but to all men each in his highest possible measure — the joy of work according to their own nature and free leisure to grow inwardly, as well as a simply rich and beautiful life for all. In its politics it would not regard the nations within the scope of their own



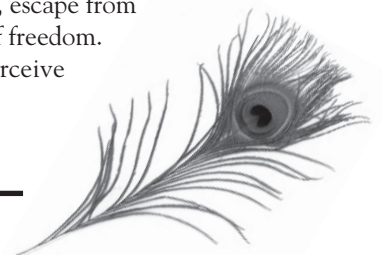
internal life as enormous State machines regulated and armoured with man living for the sake of the machine and worshipping it as his God and his larger self, content at the first call to kill others upon its altar and to bleed there himself so that the machine may remain intact and powerful and be made ever larger, more complex, more cumbrous, more mechanically efficient and entire. Neither would it be content to maintain these nations or States in their mutual relations as noxious engines meant to discharge poisonous gas upon each other in peace and to rush in times of clash upon each other's armed hosts and unarmed millions, full of belching shot and men missioned to murder like war-planes or hostile tanks in a modern battle-field. It would regard the peoples as group-souls, the Divinity concealed and to be self-discovered in its human collectivities, group-souls meant like the individual to grow according to their own nature and by that growth to help each other, to help the whole race in the one common work of humanity. And that work would be to find the divine Self in the individual and the collectivity and to realise spiritually, mentally, vitally, materially its greatest, largest, richest and deepest possibilities in the inner life of all and their outer action and nature.

For it is into the Divine within them that men and mankind have to grow; it is not an external idea or rule that has to be imposed on them from without. Therefore the law of a growing inner freedom is that which will be most honoured in the spiritual age of mankind. True it is that so long as man has not come within measurable distance of self-knowledge and has not set his face towards it, he cannot escape from the law of external compulsion and all his efforts to do so must be vain. He is and always must be, so long as that lasts, the slave of others, the slave of his family, his caste, his clan, his Church, his society, his nation; and he cannot but be that and they too cannot help throwing their crude and mechanical compulsion on him, because he and they are the slaves of their own ego, of their own lower nature. We must feel and obey the compulsion of the Spirit if we would establish our inner right to escape other compulsion: we must make our lower nature the willing slave, the conscious and illumined instrument or the ennobled but still self-subjected portion, consort or partner of the divine



Being within us, for it is that subjection which is the condition of our freedom, since spiritual freedom is not the egoistic assertion of our separate mind and life but obedience to the Divine Truth in ourself and our members and in all around us. But we have, even so, to remark that God respects the freedom of the natural members of our being and that he gives them room to grow in their own nature so that by natural growth and not by self-extinction they may find the Divine in themselves. The subjection which they finally accept, complete and absolute, must be a willing subjection of recognition and aspiration to their own source of light and power and their highest being. Therefore even in the unregenerated state we find that the healthiest, the truest, the most living growth and action is that which arises in the largest possible freedom and that all excess of compulsion is either the law of a gradual atrophy or a tyranny varied or cured by outbreaks of rabid disorder. And as soon as man comes to know his spiritual self, he does by that discovery, often even by the very seeking for it, as ancient thought and religion saw, escape from the outer law and enter into the law of freedom.

A spiritual age of mankind will perceive



this truth. It will not try to make man perfect by machinery or keep him straight by tying up all his limbs. It will not present to the member of the society his higher self in the person of the policeman, the official and the corporal, nor, let us say, in the form of a socialistic bureaucracy or a Labour Soviet. Its aim will be to diminish as soon and as far as possible the need of the element of external compulsion in human life by awakening the inner divine compulsion of the spirit within and all the preliminary means it will use will have that for its aim. In the end it will employ chiefly if not solely the spiritual compulsion which even the spiritual individual can exercise on those around him, — and how much more should a spiritual society be able to do it, — that which awakens within us in spite of all inner resistance and outer denial the compulsion of the Light, the desire and the power to grow through one's own nature into the Divine. For the perfectly spiritualised society will be one in which, as is dreamed by the spiritual anarchist, all men will be deeply free, and it will be so because the preliminary condition will have been satisfied. In that state each man will be not a law to himself, but the law, the divine Law, because he will be a soul living in the Divine Reality and not an ego living mainly if not entirely for its own interest and purpose. His life will be led by the law of his own divine nature liberated from the ego.

Nor will that mean a breaking up of all human society into the isolated action of individuals; for the third word of the Spirit is unity. The spiritual life is the flower not of a featureless but a conscious and diversified oneness. Each man has to grow into the Divine Reality within himself through his own individual being, therefore is a certain growing measure of freedom a necessity of the being as it develops and perfect freedom the sign and the condition of the perfect life. But also, the Divine whom he thus sees in himself, he sees equally in all others and as the same Spirit in all. Therefore too is a growing inner unity with others a necessity of his being and perfect unity the sign and condition of the perfect life. Not only to see and find the Divine in oneself, but to see and find the Divine in all, not only to seek one's own individual liberation or perfection, but to seek the liberation and perfection of others is the complete

law of the spiritual being. If the divinity sought were a separate godhead within oneself and not the one Divine, or if one sought God for oneself alone, then indeed the result might be a grandiose egoism, the Olympian egoism of a Goethe or the Titanic egoism imagined by Nietzsche, or it might be the isolated self-knowledge or asceticism of the ivory tower or the Stylites pillar. But he who sees God in all, will serve freely God in all with the service of love. He will, that is to say, seek not only his own freedom, but the freedom of all, not only his own perfection, but the perfection of all. He will not feel his individuality perfect except in the largest universality, nor his own life to be full life except as it is one with the universal life. He will not live either for himself or for the State and society, for the individual ego or the collective ego, but for something much greater, for God in himself and for the Divine in the universe.

The spiritual age will be ready to set in when the common mind of man begins to be alive to these truths and to be moved or desire to be moved by this triple or triune Spirit. That will mean the turning of the cycle of social development which we have been considering out of its incomplete repetitions on a new upward line towards its goal. For having set out, according to our supposition, with a symbolic age, an age in which man felt a great Reality behind all life which he sought through symbols, it will reach an age in which it will begin to live in that Reality, not through the symbol, not by the power of the type or of the convention or of the individual reason and intellectual will, but in our own highest nature which will be the nature of that Reality fulfilled in the conditions — not necessarily the same as now — of terrestrial existence. This is what the religions have seen with a more or less adequate intuition, but most often as in a glass darkly, that which they called the kingdom of God on earth, — his kingdom within in man's spirit and therefore, for the one is the material result of the effectivity of the other, his kingdom without in the life of the peoples.

(From *The Human Cycle*, CWSA, Vol. 25, pages 257-260.)



The Cosmic Spirit

*I am a single Self all Nature fills.
Immeasurable, unmoved the Witness sits:
He is the silence brooding on her hills,
The circling motion of her cosmic might.*

*I have broken the limits of embodied mind
And am no more the figure of a soul.
The burning galaxies are in me outlined;
The universe is my stupendous whole.*

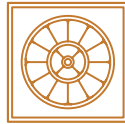
*My life is the life of village and continent,
I am earth's agony and her throbs of bliss;
I share all creatures' sorrow and content
And feel the passage of every stab and kiss.*

*Impassive, I bear each act and thought and mood:
Time traverses my hushed infinitude.*

Richard



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*The physical being itself
can be the seat of
perfect existence, knowledge
and bliss.*

With my blessings

