



Sri Aurobindo (1872 - 1950)

"Man is a transitional being. He is not final. The step from man to superman is the next approaching achievement in the earth evolution. It is inevitable because it is at once the intention of the inner spirit and the logic of nature's process."

-Sri Aurobindo

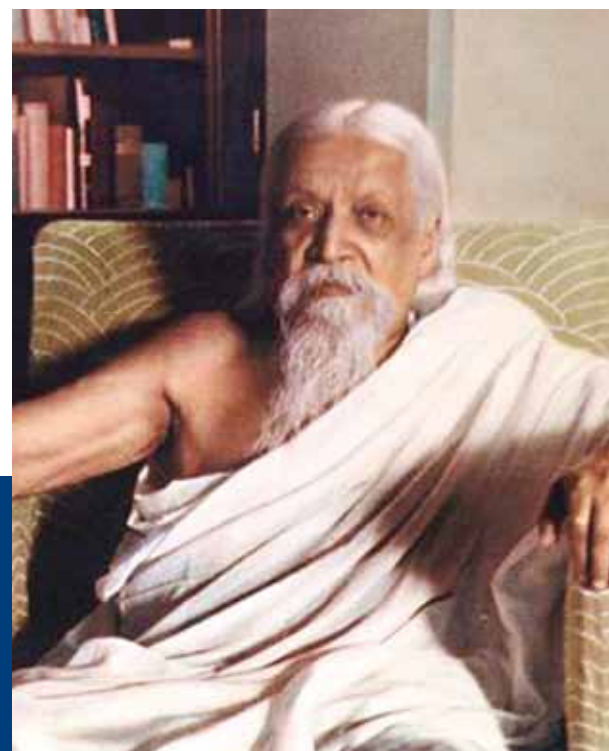
INTRODUCTION:

Sri Aurobindo was an Indian nationalist, freedom fighter, philosopher, yogi, guru, and poet. He joined the Indian movement for freedom from British rule and for a duration became one of its most important leaders, before developing his own vision of human progress and spiritual evolution. He was born in Calcutta, on 15 August 1872. The honorific 'Sri' was traditionally used as a mark of respect or worship forming an integral part of his name. In Sanskrit, the word Aurobindo means lotus. Aurobindo's father chose this name for him, thinking that it was unique, but he little suspected that, in the language of occultism, the lotus is the symbol of divine consciousness.

Aurobindo received his early education in a convent school intended for European children and in 1879 was taken by his father to England for schooling in Manchester and later at St. Paul's School, London. A scholarship from St. Paul's enabled Aurobindo to go to King's College, Cambridge, in 1889. He practically won all the prizes in Greek and Latin. He passed the first part of the classical Tripos in the first class in 1892. The same year he successfully passed his Indian Civil Service Examination.

"True knowledge is not attained by thinking. It is what you are; it is what you become"

- Sri Aurobindo



OVERVIEW:

As a teacher, philosopher & educationist

Sri Aurobindo synthesized Eastern and Western philosophy, religion, literature, and psychology in writings. Aurobindo was the first Indian to create a major literary corpus in English. His works include philosophy, poetry, translations of and commentaries on the Vedas, Upanishads, and the Gita; plays; literary, social, political, and historical criticism; devotional works; spiritual journals and three volumes of letters.

In his educational philosophy, Sri Aurobindo upheld the basic but commonly forgotten principle that 'it is the spirit, the living and vital issue that we have to do with, and there the question is not between modernism and antiquity, but between an imported civilisation and the greater possibilities of the Indian mind and nature, not between the present and the past, but between the present and the future'. In devising a true and living education, three things according to Sri Aurobindo, the man, the individual in his commonness and his uniqueness, the nation or people and universal humanity should be taken into account.

1. Accordingly, Aurobindo conceived of education as an instrument for the real working of the spirit in the mind and body of the individual and the nation.
2. He thought of education that for the individual will make its one central object the growth of the soul and its powers and possibilities, for the nation will keep first in view the preservation, strengthening and enrichment of the nation soul and its Dharma (virtue) and raise both into powers of the life and ascending mind and soul of humanity.
3. And at no time will it lose sight of man's highest object, the awakening and development of his spiritual being. A concept underlying the true and living integral education.

Integrity of education is conceived as a process of organic growth, and the way in which various faculties could be developed and integrated is dependent upon each child's



Inclination



Rhythm of progression
and law of development



Swabhava
(inherent disposition)



Swadharma
(inner nature)

Integral education is not conceived as a juxtaposition of a number of subjects and even juxtaposition of varieties of faculties. The idea is to provide facilities for varieties of faculties, varieties of subjects and various combinations of pursuits of Knowledge, Power, Harmony and Skill in works. These faculties are so provided that they could be made use of by each student and the teacher so that a natural process of harmonious development could be encouraged.

- For further reading please visit: www.sriurobindosociety.org.in