

## The Evolution of Humanity and Self- discovery through the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo

Dr. Meghna Singh<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor English, Government Degree College, Hansaur, Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh, India

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### Abstract

The profound vision of Aurobindo which is, amalgamation of universe and all the cosmic divine energy of nature; transcends the boundaries of terrestrial realm to reach the supraterrrestrial stage. All the five elements *vayu*, *agni*, *jal*, *prithvi*, *nabh* together generate a super power to manifest the supramental divine energy transforming the whole world. The journey of self from the very nature towards superconscious state of the Ultimate attainment is experienced upon earth. In study of the ideal, the Integral Yoga of Aurobindo emphasizes on evolution, focusing on unification of the world order with the Absolute. This unity facilitates the descent of the Supermind, which can transform mental, vital, and physical dimensions of life. The paper is an endeavour to throw light on the Integral Yoga of Aurobindo which aims to create a new center of activity within individuals, promoting a superhuman nature. A distinctive aspect of Aurobindo's approach is the transformation of material into a higher state through synthesis of yoga and gnostic self-perfection. Initially, the being experiences life through ignorance, characterized by pleasure and pain, gain and loss. This state inevitably leads to a deeper evolution towards self-discovery, revealing the divinity within earthly existence and the true potential of mind, which is a reflection of the Supermind. The path of knowledge, action and devotion is the triple power incorporated in the Integral Yoga for manifestation of the involved spirit in matter for evolution. The Supermind exists beyond nescience and strengthens our current evolutionary state. From this point, our nature seeks to attain both self-knowledge and knowledge of the world, aiming to understand the purpose of existence. As the embodiment of truth-consciousness, the Supermind possesses inherent knowledge and has a direct path towards the Infinite goal. The urge inherently present in the core of nature inspires humanity for the divine-attainment.

**Keywords-** Integral Yoga, Evolution, Supramental, Supermind, Transformation.

### Introduction

The great supramental divine energy of *the Sat-Chit-Anand* permeates the firmament as a whole. The nature is the supreme power of the supramental force, in charge of creating and preserving the human spiritual values. The journey of every individual in itself begins from the very state of that realization, which according to Aurobindo is in the process of revelation for a higher attainment. The seer reverberates that nature has brought forth the life-force and continuously thriving for the growth and sustenance of every being on earth. The profound vision of Aurobindo which is, amalgamation of universe and all the cosmic divine energy of nature; transcends the boundaries of terrestrial realm to reach the supraterrrestrial stage to involve and evolve for the ascend and the descend.

All the five elements *vayu*, *agni*, *jal*, *prithvi*, *nabh* together generate a super power to manifest the supramental divine energy transforming the whole world. The journey of the self from the very nature towards superconscious state of the Ultimate attainment is experienced upon earth. In study of the ideal, the Integral Yoga of Aurobindo emphasizes on evolution, focusing on unification of the world order with the Absolute. This unity facilitates the descent of the Supermind, which can transform mental, vital, and physical dimensions

of life. The paper is an endeavour to throw light on the Integral *Yoga* of Aurobindo which aims to create a new center of activity within individuals, promoting a superhuman nature. In analyzing the topic, my effort would be to discuss the deliberations of Aurobindo which reiterates the subtle impact of nature on human nature to manifest the superhuman nature.

In Aurobindo's framework, *yoga* is a holistic integration of the self with nature and a deep communion with the Divine. According to Kireet Joshi:

Sri Aurobindo defines *Yoga* as the methodized effort towards self-perfection by the expression of the potentialities latent in the being and a union of the human individual with the universal and transcendent Existence we see partially expressed in man and in the Cosmos. (Joshi, 1).

This practice involves aspiration, self-consecration, and a dynamic inward and outward focus, ultimately leading to a transformative experience where the inner and outer lives become harmonized. The goal is to achieve a supramental consciousness, which serves as a channel for divine action upon earth. Aurobindo highlights the importance of seeking evolution through the synthesis of knowledge, devotion, and selfless service and thus Kireet Joshi describes:

In the synthesis of *yoga*, one can begin with any one of these processes, but in the course of the development, it can be seen that in the integral view of things all these processes tend to unify and the total conscious being comes to be concentrated on the integral object of synthesis. This method of all-receiving concentration consists of a natural organization of the highest processes and movements of which the nature is capable. (Joshi, 2).

Each of these paths—complement the others, guiding humanity towards a greater understanding of the Absolute and the manifestation of divine qualities in all aspects of life. By rearing them, individuals can transcend material limitations and experience a profound connection with the Supernal beauty and bliss that exists within every soul and the cosmos as a whole. Aurobindo contends:

Nature, then, is an evolution or progressive self-manifestation of an eternal and secret existence, with three successive forms as her three steps of ascent. And we have consequently as the condition of all our activities these three mutually interdependent possibilities, the bodily life, the mental existence and the veiled spiritual being which is in the involution the cause of the others and in the evolution their result. Preserving and perfecting the physical, fulfilling the mental, it is Nature's aim and it should be ours to unveil in the perfected body and mind the transcendent activities of the Spirit. (Aurobindo, 20).

Aurobindo's Integral *Yoga* represents a great journey towards spiritual evolution, seeking to homogenize the higher realms of consciousness with the material world. Integral *Yoga* unfolds in three key dimensions: the initial self-transcendence and communion with the Divine, the descent of this divinized consciousness into all aspects of being, and the realization of humanity as a central expression of the Absolute, flowing like a stream of water which is, evolution. This approach acknowledges a dual evolution: one that uplifts the spiritual vision and another that reflects the natural progression of mind, life, and matter. Integral *Yoga* aims to infuse the divine-consciousness into these lower realms, transforming the terrestrial nature of existence. Kireet Joshi remarks:

The divine life in the divine body, the eventual advent of Integral *Yoga* the supramental supermanhood, and the evolution of the next species, is the goal that has been envisaged for the integral *yoga*, and

since this yoga is not only the yoga for the individual but also for the collectivity and for the advancement of the evolutionary process, its goal includes radical consequences for the collective life of humanity and even for the solution of the contemporary problems of humanity.(Joshi, 7-8).

Aurobindo highlights that this process involves an inward journey, where the soul seeks to transcend its lower nature and align with the Supreme. As Kireet Joshi enumerates:

In the Vedantic methods, the attempt is to draw back from manifested Nature (Prakriti) so as to awaken the Conscious Soul (Purusha), and then, the Purusha can uplift the individual who is entangled in bondage to the manifestations of Prakriti in the mind, life and body.(Joshi, 4).

The prophet's vision of spiritual transformation emphasizes an intangible connection between the individual and the Divine, as a pivotal force for the supramental manifestation, in the world. His approach to *yoga* transcends traditional practices, aiming not only for personal elevation but also for the infusion of infinite consciousness into earthly existence.

Aurobindo describes the intuitive voyage of the being. The first step in this transformative path is vow for renunciation, where individuals completely devote themselves to the Supreme. This involves sublimation of desires for personal achievements and allows the actions to flow from divine will. Through surrender, practitioners open themselves to blessings of the divine, facilitating their journey towards higher consciousness and a more subtle spiritual existence through an inner transformation that allows to realize divine presence within and around us. Aurobindo emphasizes that total dedication to the Supreme brings forth celestial blessings, guiding us on our path towards *moksha*. The second step in this journey involves recognizing and experiencing the divinity that resides within oneself. By observing and overcoming obstacles, we free ourselves from chaos and confusion. Aurobindo mentions that when efforts seem insufficient, embracing self-surrender becomes essential. This act of faith unveils the hidden kingdom of God within, allowing the individual to realize their divine essence. According to the seer, the third aspect of *yoga* involves recognizing divine energy and experiencing the luster of powerful existence. Through the lens of eternal awareness, we discern the underlying unity of existence—the same soul manifesting in various forms. This realization, the understanding of the Self in all, marks a significant milestone in spiritual evolution. Thus Aurobindo explains:

The child of immemorial ages, preserved by its vitality and truth into our modern times, it is now emerging from the secret schools and ascetic retreats in which it had taken refuge and is seeking its place in the future sum of living human powers and utilities. But it has first to rediscover itself, bring to the surface the profoundest reason of its being in that general truth and that unceasing aim of Nature which it represents, and find by virtue of this new self-knowledge and self-appreciation its own recovered and larger synthesis. Reorganising itself, it will enter more easily and powerfully into the reorganised life of the race which its processes claim to lead within into the most secret penetralia and upward to the highest altitudes of existence and personality. (Aurobindo, 6).

Aurobindo asserts that cosmos is a manifestation of the higher Being, imbued with intelligence and joy. The apostle contends that matter, often viewed as a dense reality, is ultimately a manifestation of consciousness. Beyond the physical realm lies the Supreme, characterized by bliss, beauty, and eternal peace. Through the awareness and enlightenment the realization for spiritual evolution is experienced by humankind. The quest for integral fulfillment requires striving to recognize the energy within, allowing divine power and wisdom to facilitate transformation. The path to integral wisdom involves a deep evolutionary shift in

consciousness, where knowledge transforms into a lived experience of unity and divinity, guiding humanity toward its highest potential.

Aurobindo's Integral *Yoga* emphasizes that this evolution is not merely a personal endeavour but a collective transformation of humanity itself. The integral intelligence that emerges through this process encourages a transcendence of the mundane towards a deeper understanding of the Absolute. This evolution becomes a harmonious interplay of psychic experience and the latent spiritual essence within us, paving the way for a new realization of divine life. As S.K. Maitra mentions, realization of the supramental consciousness is a manifest presence within the universe. Life serves as the canvas for the revelation, urging us to unveil the enigmatic power that resides within our existence. Embracing this reality means accepting the challenges and struggles that come with transforming our earthly experience into the reflection of higher consciousness.

Aurobindo envisions a divine life as a synthesis of spiritual elevation and material existence. This involves attaining higher consciousness—a state that integrates physical, moral, and intellectual beauty into a greater spiritual vision. The realization of the divine form, he asserts, is innate to our being. As part of the Supreme soul, humans are inherently connected to this higher reality. The Mother emphasizes that knowledge of the Absolute existence comes through the identification with the Truth and the Real. This recognition is not just a philosophical concept but a transformative practice that leads to a profound union with the supreme essence. In this state, the illumined soul recognizes itself as part of the universal entity, disclosing the enigmatic expedition towards the Reality which is both a personal and collective unfolding of consciousness.

Ultimately, the path of Integral *Yoga* is about embodying the higher-realization in the world, fostering a metamorphosis of earthly consciousness, communion with the divine nature that permeates all existence. This journey calls to manifest the inner divine self within and express it in our lives, transforming both the individual and the collective experience of humanity. Aurobindo emphasizes that the upliftment of terrestrial existence arises when God-consciousness transcends divisive forces, establishing a unified cosmic entity. This transformative journey begins with human awakening and progresses through the stages of creation, ultimately culminating into the supremacy of the inner spirit over external matter. He describes this evolution towards a higher supramental status characterized by a profound spiritual light and power. In this context, matter becomes a vehicle for higher consciousness, receiving transformative energy from the divine realms. This process lays the groundwork for a fundamental psychic transmutation, enabling the individual to ascend to higher planes of existence while allowing spiritual energy to descend into their being, resulting into a supramental manifestation. Aurobindo articulates a mutual relationship between humanity and the Divine: as children of God, inculcating divine nature to establish a supramental consciousness upon earth. The apostle asserts that with developed higher faculties, individuals can transcend ignorance and embrace the light of higher knowledge.

The path of divine understanding is marked by an inner awakening that reflects outwardly as a divine life manifesting within our physical existence. Aurobindo remarks that the Bliss is attained through realization of truth-consciousness, encompassing mind and life. He posits that evolution is travelling of the being through material nature, then the fullness of being, consciousness, and life represents the ultimate goal towards which humanity is evolving. This journey involves a reciprocal movement: the self progresses towards the Absolute while the Almighty reveals itself within the self. The initial state of life, characterized by ignorance, pleasure, and pain, ultimately leads to a deeper understanding and self-discovery of the divinity embedded within the

material world. Aurobindo envisions this evolution as a movement towards the realization of the inherent power of the self, transcending the barriers of ignorance and moving towards knowledge and expansive awareness of the supramental. Through this transformative journey, humanity can fully realize its divine potential, integrating spiritual truths into everyday life. The supermind is a higher state of consciousness, distinct from nescience, prevailing in our current existence. The supermind represents a profound truth-consciousness, guiding beings towards self-knowledge and understanding of existence. Its function is not merely to understand reality but to manifest a divine life through a progressive journey of truth—moving from one understanding to a greater one, lighting the path towards eternity.

Aurobindo asserts that the cosmos is a manifestation of the higher Being, imbued with intelligence and joy. The Integral *Yoga* propounded by the saint serves as a powerful guide for concord with the Superhuman nature, creating the path towards more harmonious and elevated way of being in the world. He reiterates that matter, often viewed as a dense reality, is ultimately a manifestation of consciousness. Beyond the physical realm lies the Supreme, characterized by bliss, beauty, and eternal peace. The awareness in an individual, illumines the understanding of world, recognizing both its subtlety and potential for evolution. According to Aurobindo, the universe will transform with the best of natural forces and elements, develop into an eternal glow to rise like mountains and flow like oceans. In this way a unison would be established in all the forms of nature which the apostle enumerates to be the state of fearlessness and an effort to incessantly strive for attaining God-consciousness.

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