

The Integral Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo



A Commemorative Symposium
Edited by
Haridas Chaudhuri
and
Frederic Spiegelberg

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Sri Aurobindo has given to the world a new creative idea, and a fresh dynamic approach to the basic problems of civilization. His philosophy of life is an all-embracing synthesis in world thought such as integrates the highest cultural values of East and West. It lays the foundation for the art of integrated living which aims at "the out-flowering of the Divine in collective humanity".

The Integral Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo is a symposium edited by Dr. Haridas Chaudhuri and Dr. Frederic Spiegelberg. Dr. Spiegelberg is Professor of Asiatic and Slavic Studies at Stanford University, Northern California. Dr. Chaudhuri is President of the Cultural Integration Fellowship, and Chairman of the Department of South Asia at the American Academy of Asian Studies, San Francisco. It was on the nomination of Sri Aurobindo himself that the American Academy invited Dr. Chaudhuri in 1951 to join its faculty as Professor of Indian Philosophy.

This symposium consists of articles contributed by thirty eminent scholars who have discussed different aspects—philosophical, psychological, ethico-religious, political, etc.—of Sri Aurobindo's contribution to civilization. Contributors include Dr. Charles A. Moore of Hawaii University, Dr. Pitirim A. Sorokin of Harvard University, Dr. Hajime Nakamura of Tokyo University, Mr. Ninian Smart of the University of London, Dr. Satischandra Chatterjee of Calcutta University, Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan of Madras University, Dr. S. K. Maitra of Benares Hindu University, Dr. Indra Sen of the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre, Pondicherry, Swami Sivananda of Yoga-Vedanta Forest University, Rishikesh, and others.

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THE INTEGRAL PHILOSOPHY
OF
SRI AUROBINDO

A Commemorative Symposium

EDITED BY

HARIDAS CHAUDHURI
FREDERIC SPIEGELBERG

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SRI AUROBINDO AND THE SOUL QUEST OF MAN

NATHANIEL PEARSON

Sri Aurobindo, the great Indian philosopher who died in 1950, opens out new realms of spiritual truth in his great work *The Life Divine*. He saw and wrote from a universal vision which traversed many paths of knowledge, and this makes it difficult for the reader to follow the main theme without becoming lost in an intricate maze of by-paths. Nathaniel Pearson, who has been a member of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram for the last six years, has made an intensive study of *The Divine Life*. His book deals with the first twelve chapters, which are of fundamental importance, and provides a clear and illuminating exposition of the basic metaphysical principles of Sri Aurobindo. He was in close personal contact with the great spiritual teacher and was able to have his views corrected according to the actual meaning they were intended to convey.

The three steps to spiritual knowledge with which he deals are the fundamental stages studied in the twelve chapters. The first step is to establish the Divine Unity of all things; the second is to reveal the soul of man as forming the basis of a higher development; and the third is the knowledge of the Divine Nature.

Nathaniel Pearson shows how the new spirituality propounded by Sri Aurobindo bridges the gap between the ancient and the modern knowledge, particularly in the scientific field. In his refreshing approach to the subject of modern man in search of a soul he has subjected some of the current scientific theories to critical examination. His book is an important introduction of the significance of Eastern spiritual thought to the West, and is enriched by a broad vision and a genuine sympathy for the subject matter.

'Mr. Pearson writes well and seems to have thoroughly absorbed Aurobindo's views; and he manipulates the formidable mass of "other-worldly" terminology with dexterity and precision.'—*Philosophy*

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