

Educational Philosophy of Aurobindo Ghose and its Relevance

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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with the educational philosophy of Aurobindo Ghose, his life, work, contribution, educational ideas and educational vision. Its relevance in the present time as Aurobindo philosophy is based on harmony, synthesis, unity, integrity and humanity. At present in all parts of the world people are feeling a kind of separation and isolation. This paper is a comprehensive analysis of Aurobindo educational vision and its utility in the present global context. **Key Words.** Integral Education, Consciousness, Manas, Rajyoga

Aurobindo Ghose was a great yogi, mystic, saint, rishi, critics, revolutionary, nationalist and educationist. He was born in a well educated family of Bengal on 15 August 1872 at 05 pm. His full name was Aurobindo Ackroyd Ghose He was third among five brothers and sister. His father was K.D Ghose who was a doctor and mother Mrs Swarnlata Devi was a beautiful lady. At the age of 05 he sent to Loretto Convent School, Darjeeling but at 07 in 1879 he sent to London to get fully English education and in 1884 he admitted in Saint Paul College and in 1890 he got admission in Cambridge. Aurobindo learnt Latin, English, German, French, Italian and Spanish. He passed Indian Civil Service Examination but did not appear in Horse riding test so he was disqualified. In the mean time he met Raja of Baroda and Raja wanted his service in Baroda. Aurobindo returned India in 1893 and then went to Baroda where he joined survey department, then revenue department and then Baroda college as a French language teacher and gradually became vice principal of the college. Here he learnt Hindustani, Marathi, Bengali, Gujrati and Sanskrit. Here Aurobindo spent 14 years then returned Bengal on one year leave without pay and joined revolutionary movement. He was a leader of extremist group of Congress after its division. He joined Bengal National College as a Principal but soon Muzaffapur conspiracy took place and he was arrested and imprisoned for a year where he said that he met Vivekanad and Lord Krishna. CR Das was his advocate and he was acquitted in 1908 but his

destination was toally changed. Aurobindo now decided to do something big and he left nationalist movement and went to Pondicherry where he established Aurobindo Ashram in 1926 and did great work for humanity , here his body on 05 December, 1950 and he got Samadhi on 09 December, 1950.

Aurobindo Ghose Work:

Aurobindo Ghose when arrested and imprisoned for a year here he decided to do some work for humanity but Aurobindo was always inclined to write something and he wrote many things like his first book, a collection of poems entitled Songs to Myrtilla was published in 1895. Philosophical masterpiece of the century know as Life Divine written by him and published in two volumes in 1949 and his epic Savitri: A Legend and A Symbol written and published in 1950 based on 24000 lines in 700 pages. Arya was his commanding work in a form of 64 pages monthly review published by Aurobindo which started from 15 August, 1914 and was continued till January 1921, in this magazine his all six works except Savitri appeared like The Life Divine, The Synthesis of Yoga, Essays on the Gita, The secret of the Vedas, Hymns to the mystic fire, The Upanishads The Foundation of Indian Culture, War and self determination, The Human Cycle, The Ideal of Human Unity and the Future Poetry. The collected works of Sri Aurobindo were published by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 972 which comprises 30 volumes in 16000 pages. Sri Aurobindo established a school in 1943 which became

SriAurobindo International University Centre in 1951.

Sri Aurobindo main contribution was to make synthesis between materialism and spiritualism, develop the theory of Spiritual Evolution and Involution, Integral Reality of Monism, Integral yoga , concept of supermind and Integral Education.

Integral Education:

Once Aurobindo wrote that, ‘in fact I was never satisfied till experience came and it was on this experience that later on I founded my philosophy’. The whole work of Aurobindo life may be summed up in two phrases the integral perfection and spiritual religion of humanity. To attain integral perfection Aurobindo has found education only crucial means. His vision of education is known as integral education to which he says for the developing soul of India, to her future need, to the greatness of her coming self creation and to her external spirit. Aurobindo was nationalist and he was also in favour of education which teach culture ,history and language of the country and can develop the nation like National Education Commission which submitted its report named Education and National Development and begin with that the destiny of a nation is shaped in her class room. Aurobindo was of the opinion that for true and living education, three things required the man, the individual in his commonness and his uniqueness, the nation or people and universal humanity- should be taken into account. Education works as instrument for spirit of the mind and body of the individual and the nation. Education is a central for the growth of the soul, personalities, its powers and possibilities. Integrity of education is a process for the growth of the child, its various faculties and integrated is dependent upon child’s inclination, rhythm of progression and law of development. Integration is of various faculties, power, harmony and skills in work. Aurobindo wanted to synthesize the East and West in the philosophy of Education. Aurobindo believe that a healthy body is necessary for intellectual and spiritual development. Physical education is the realization and development of strength, balance and a sense of beauty. Beauty is an ideal which physical life has to realise. If our seeking is total perfection of the being then the physical part of it can’t be left aside; perfection of body is needed. The education of intellect does not mean to leave the social, moral and emotional nature, he points out that the attempt to make boys morals and religious by the

teaching of moral and religious text books is a vanity and a delusion, precisely because the heart is not the mind and to instruct the mind does not necessarily improve the heart. According to Aurobindo Ghose the best way of moral education is ‘to habituate himself to the right emotions, the noblest associations, the best mental, emotional and physical habits and the following out in right action of the fundamental impulses of his essential nature’. Moral and religious education is necessary; to neglect it means to corrupt the race. He suggests that the best method of moral education is by personal example, daily conversation and books read from day to day. Every child should be given practical and intellectual opportunity to develop all that what is best in their nature. Rajyoga method and Samyama or self control method should be used to correct bad habits of children. National policy on 1986 also emphasis under 8.21 that ‘as a system, which promotes an integrated development of body and mind, yoga will receive special attention. Efforts will be made to introduce yoga in all schools. To this end, it will be introduced in teacher training courses’.

Sri Aurobindo in his writing during 1909-1910 has pointed out three basic principles of teaching which is (i) the basic principle that nothing can be taught to the mind which is not already concealed as potential knowledge in the unfolding soul of the creature. All teaching is a revealing , all becoming is an unfolding. Self attainment is the secret; self knowledge and an increasing consciousness are the means and the process. Teacher work is to help, assist, guide and facilitate. (ii) It is that mind has to be consulted in its own growth. The provision to exploit the child just to achieve our cherished or shaped desire is only a crime and superstition. Pre determination by guardian, parents and teachers is that the children will develop these qualities capacities, ideas, virtues are dangerous. Every one in him has something divine have a capacity for its own perfection and strength which God offers him. The task is to find it, develop it and use it. According to him the chief aim of education should be to help the growing soul to draw out that in itself, which is best, and perfect for a noble use and the (iii) principle of education is to work from the near to the far. The basis of a man’s nature is almost always, in addition to his soul’s past, his heredity, his surroundings, his nationality, his country, the soil from which he draws sustenance, the air which he breathes,

the sights, sounds, habits to which he is accustomed is important. If anything is brought from outside then it must be offered not forced. A free and natural growth is the condition of genuine development.

Aurobindo said that ‘ the wise teacher will not seek to impose himself or his opinions on the passive acceptance of the receptive mind ; he will throw in only what is productive and sure as a seed, which will grow under the divine fostering within.’ Teacher should have a sense of accuracy and sensitiveness and education aims should be nothing less than perfection. Now in a days teacher respect decreased but National Education Policy 2020 which is approved by Govt of India on 29th July, 2020 made all possible efforts to restore the dignity of the teachers and relate teachers with the society and make them social reformer. Social values, ethics, moral and democratic principles may be inculcated through the best teachers. Aurobindo says that six senses which minister to knowledge, sight, learning, smell, touch, taste mind or manas can be developed through the physical nerves and their end-organs but manas could be developed through yogic discipline suksmadristi or subtle reception of images. He once says that Telepathy, clairvoyance, presentiment, thought-reading, character reading and many other modern discoveries are very ancient powers of the mind which hve been left undeveloped and they all belong to be manas. The manas should also be trained properly. Attention, concentration, memory, judgement, observation, comparing, contrasting and analogy are indispensable aids in the acquisition of knowledge. Imagination is the most important indispensable instrument Aurobindo says that we should not bind ourselves either in the past or modern system but only the most perfect and rapid means of mastering knowledge. According to him , ‘ every child is an inquirer, an investigator, analyser a merciless antagonist. He emphasise that the first attention of the teacher must be given to the medium and the instruments, until these are perfected to multiply subjects of regular instruction is the waste of time and energy. Mother tongue is the proper medium of education. Aurobindo also focussed on spiritual education, he says that one must know the aim of life and individual life and position in the society. Development of psychic and spiritual consciousness should be fostered.

Sri Aurobindo experimented his education by establishing a school in 1943 in Sri Aurobindo Ashram with merely 20 students, it began to grow and in 1951 it was expanded into Sri Aurobindo International University Centre. It is a centre for preparing humanity.

Conclusions:

Sri Aurobindo Ghose education vision is based on inner self, natural education, idealist way realist approach and at the same time preparing the children for future and Aurobindo very aptly emphasised the need of moral, character and religious education not only in its theoretical form but also practises and practical form. Aurobindo never says to denounce the worldly life and renounce it but he always accepted the importance of materialism as well as spiritualism. Aurobindo made very clear role of teacher as model not as a teacher as a guide as a facilitator not as a instructor. Aurobindo like Tagore developed the concept of Internationalism, international citizenship and international brotherhood. Education should be based on the principle of humanity, integrity, universality, fraternity, peace, harmony and prosperity.

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