

On the Veda

Presentation by Dr. Vladimir Yatsenko

“The Veda was the beginning of our spiritual knowledge; the Veda will remain its end.”

Sri Aurobindo

Sri Aurobindo on the Veda

“At the root of all that we Hindus have done, thought and said through these many thousands of years, behind all we are and seek to be, there lies concealed, the fount of our philosophies, the bedrock of our religions, the kernel of our thought, the explanation of our ethics and society, the summary of our civilization, a small body of speech, Veda.

From this one seed developing into many forms the multitudinous and magnificent birth called Hinduism draws its inexhaustible existence. Buddhism too with its offshoot, Christianity, flows from the same original source. It has left its stamp on Persia, through Persia on Judaism, through Judaism, Christianity and Sufism on Islam, and through Buddha on Confucianism, and through Christ and mediaeval mysticism, Greek and German philosophy and Sanskrit learning on the thought and civilisation of Europe.

There is no part of the world’s spirituality, of the world’s religion, of the world’s thought which would be what it is today, if the Veda had not existed. Of no other body of speech in the world can this be said.”

The Vision of the Veda

- The Vedic Rishis are not aspirants but rather in-spirants, we may say, they are not evolutionary, but involutory beings, - says the Mother. They bring the higher consciousness down to us for the transformation of our nature through the process they called *yajña*, the sacrifice.
- ‘Man is a transitional being’ – says Sri Aurobindo. The Veda says that man is “the ever-advancing pilgrim”.
- The Sacrifice was envisioned as a constant transformation of our earthly nature by the Spirit and its forces, called Gods, who were invoked and brought down into the body. The sacrifice was ‘making our nature sacred’. It was seen as the Path, the Journey, the Battle with opposing forces, who tried to oppose us in our advancement. ‘*Abhi syāma pritsutir martyānām*’, ‘May we withstand the oppression of mortals’ – exclaims the Rishi.
- Human beings are evolutionary beings, they are the souls, the psychic beings in the language of the Integral Yoga. They evolve, change, and progress. The concept of the Evolution of Consciousness is a fundamental contribution of the Veda.
- It is only in the Rigveda that the Rishis speak of the *descent* of higher consciousness. The Gods are invited to come down into our lower hemisphere of mind, life and body, and through us to rise to the Supreme Throne from which they can behold both realms of *Diti* and *Aditi*, of finite and infinite Consciousness.

Sri Aurobindo on his search for the Veda

- “I seek a light that shall be new, yet old, the oldest indeed of all lights.
- I seek an authority that accepting, illuminating and reconciling all human truth, shall yet reject and get rid of by explaining it all mere human error.
- I seek a text and a Shastra that is not subject to interpolation, modification and replacement, that moth and white ant cannot destroy, that the earth cannot bury, nor Time mutilate.
- I seek an asceticism that shall give me purity and deliverance from self and from ignorance without stultifying God and His universe.
- I seek a skepticism that shall question everything but shall have the patience to deny nothing that may possibly be true.
- I seek a rationalism not proceeding on the untenable supposition that all the centuries of man's history except the nineteenth were centuries of folly and superstition, but bent on discovering truth instead of limiting inquiry by a new dogmatism, obscurantism and furious intolerance which it chooses to call common sense and enlightenment;

“I seek a materialism that shall recognise matter and use it without being its slave.

I seek an occultism that shall bring out all its processes and proofs into the light of day, without mystery, without jugglery, without the old stupid call to humanity, “Be blind, O man, and see!”

In short, I seek not science, not religion, not Theosophy, but Veda—the truth about Brahman, not only about His essentiality, but about His manifestation, not a lamp on the way to the forest, but a light and a guide to joy and action in the world, the truth which is beyond opinion, the knowledge which all thought strives after—*yasmin vijnate sarvam vijnatam*.

I believe that Veda to be the foundation of the Sanatana Dharma; I believe it to be the concealed divinity within Hinduism,—but a veil has to be drawn aside, a curtain has to be lifted. I believe it to be knowable and discoverable. I believe the future of India and the world to depend on its discovery and on its application, not to the renunciation of life, but to life in the world and among men.”



“The world is one in all its parts, every being in it contains the universe in himself. Especially do the great gods contain all the others and their activities in themselves, so that Agni, Varuna, Indra, all of them are in reality one sole-existent deity in many forms.

Man too is He, but he has to fulfill himself here as man, yet divine through the puissant means provided for him by the Veda.”

Sri Aurobindo