

ARVINDO GHOSH

Introduction

He is a major figure in the history of Indian Renaissance. He is recognised through out the world for his moral, intellectual and spiritual accomplishments.

Rabindranath Tagore has stated that through Arvindo Ghosh India would express its message to the world. Romain Rolland calls him as a great synthesiser. He has synthesised the genius of Asia with the genius of Europe. He has synthesised the western system of philosophy with Indian Vedantic tradition. He has integrated rationalism of Hegel, intuition or vitality concept of Bergson and the experience of imperialism of Utilitarians. According to him, one system of knowledge is not sufficient to unfold the complete reality. One requires 'Integral reason for it'. It means logical integration of intuition, reason and experience.

Important Works

New lamps for old (here he has criticised moderates and their strategy.

Human Cycle = here he highlights rise and growth of civilisation.

The Ideal of Human Unity – Integral humanism

This is the ultimate end of his philosophy.

The life Divine → Metaphysical philosophy.

Objectives of his Political Philosophy.

This objective was to achieve Swaraj for India. Not only this, he wanted to justify the necessity for swaraj for India for the benefit of the world. He has established that the liberation of India is ordained by God. There is a spiritual message in Indian liberation movement. His philosophy ends with the concept of ideal of brotherhood.

His criticism of Moderates

Aurobindo Ghosh has criticised moderate in the series of articles titled New Lamps for old published Indu Prakash. He criticised moderates for their merchancy

for believing in liberal democracy for giving important to materialism and individualism.

Aurobindo Ghosh participated in the movement related to the partition of Bengal in 1905. He felt that **Swaraj is necessary condition for India's development.**

Foreign domination is never conducive for national development. If swaraj for India is not there, it will harm the onward march of mankind. Anything less than swaraj is insult to Indian past as well as future.

Aurobindo's Political Philosophy

His concept of Individual

The concept of individual is the essence and entire political system. Indian according to him comprise of three parts:

Essence

India comprise of three elements (1) **spirit the eternal element**; (2) **Soul** – the developing element; and (3) **body** – hangable, brittle and which ends.

According to him, even material ends are important to India neglected this aspect. **Spirit or God is the ultimate, destination of life of man.** Everyman has to develop his soul for this destination. It is achieved with the **realisation of universal transcendent spiritual reality.** This will emerge man will realise the integral humanity.

His conception of relation between Individual and Communism

Indian **is not subordinate to community or state.** Man is not to loose himself in the mass rather man has to find and express the truth which is inherent in him and man should help community in seeking this truth. Perfect community exist by perfection of its individuals. The spiritually liberated man can contribute for the good of community. Thus **he did not like either excessive individualism as propounded by utilitarian or completely submerging Indian to community as advocated by socialist or communist.** He want man to discover his real existence. This is to realised by all. This will result into realisation of over all unity.

Individual and State

Aurobindo is an individualist. He calls state as a **soulless machine.** He disapproves the organised and all powerful state which suppress the Indians.

Sphere of State Activity should be limited

State perform the following functions:

- (1) Provide all facilities for co-operative action.
- (2) Remove obstacle.
- (3) Prevent those action which are harmful and waste.
- (4) Remove available injustice.
- (5) Secure to everyone just an equal chance of self-development.

His Ideas of Law and Liberty

- (1) His conception of liberty is negation of idea of negative liberty.
- (2) When liberty is seen as a device to satisfy ones natural impulses without taking account. Similar impulses of others. It passes difficulty for all.
- (3) Free running of many in the same field had to chaos and colition.
- (4) Liberty glorified under capitalist system leads to the encouragement of commercial spirit and our corruption.
- (5) Dissatisfaction with the liberal model lead us to another extreme that in state socialism. It forces individual to give up freedom.
- (6) Regulated liberty is good and theory but bad in practice. It results into totalitarians.
- (7) Liberal model of liberty is mechanical. When we deny the best machinery it is results into cohesion of minority and dissendents.

Mechanical liberty falsify individual. It sets him against the society. If falsify nature of soul. It neglects the spiritual and ethical aims.

Such a motion of liberty shows that the real meaning of liberty has not yet been understood. Real liberty means

- (1) Freedom to obey the law of our existence. It is a situation which allows natural self-fulfilment.
- (2) Perfect freedom is inner freedom. It is a freedom of inner soul.
- (3) Deepest meaning of freedom is the power to move towards perfection

- (4) Freedom is not simply fulfilment of mental and emotional need but flowering of divine element in human.
- (5) Concept of freedom is superior to all other concepts.
- (6) It neither sub-ordinates individual to collectivity nor collectivity to individual. Rights are the claims for fulfilment of swadharma.

Rights are inalienable and confirmed by society. Law of state is because of ___ imperfection. Once we become perfect the law of state will not be required. Law is an external aid to solve internal problems.

However this method is momentary. It will break down ultimately. It is anti thesis of the principle of natural growth.

Free law must develop from within. Free law is not a check on liberty

His Theory of Passive Resistance

Instead of moderate method of prayers, protest, petition, Aurobindo Ghosh suggested the adoption of passive resistance. Parliamentary methods or expansion of legislation councils are not going to liberate India. He suggests organised National Resistance to the alien government. Passive Resistance is not satyagraha. Non-violence is not the basis of passive resistance. He gives three causes for state to adopt:

- (1) Aggressive
- (2) Course which is less than arm revolt
- (3) Armed revolt

Choice 'IL depend upon the circumstances of a nation. Above courses are not passive.

Passive Resistance has three courses.

- (1) Break and unjust cohesive law. It is not only justified but it also duty to do so.
- (2) To resist in just executive order or cohesive interference.
- (3) Boycott of foreign goods and those who use foreign goods

- (4) Non-Cooperation with tyrannical government. According to him if Indians stop teaching in government school, working in government offices, serving in police the British administration cannot continue for a day.

Theory of Nationalism

Like individual Nation has a soul. The soul of nation grows like a soul of Indian. Nationalism is not simply an intellectual concept of political programme. Nationalisation is a religion coming to us from God. Indian community, Nation, and world are integrated in a harmonious manner.

There is activate pre-disposition behind Indian Nationalism. It is God's wish that India becomes awakened and awaken the mankind. Nationalism survives in the strength of God. Hence it cannot be defeated or crushed. Nationalisation is not simply a pursuit of collective political interest but it is realisation of universal spirit or God. Indian Nationalism is different from European Nationalism. We are not looking for mere physical or material changes. We are looking for expansion and extension of our consciousness it is not a narrow nationalism which faces the form of imperialism and endangers peace. It is self-transcending fraternisation Nationalism ultimately aims at caution of world union – free grouping of mankind. It is to be based on realisation of unity in diversity and diversity in unity.

Aurobindo's Ideal of Human Union

His ideals on human unity appeared in Arya between 1910-1918 in 35 serials. Later on it was published in the book form in 1919. It is a major political philosophical treatise on politics written by Indian thinker.

Sources of Influence

He takes inspiration from Indian tradition of guru-politician and Hegelian of stages in history.

Views of Aurobindo

- (1) Unity of mankind is the ultimate end of all of our action.
- (2) This objective is a part of nature's eventual scheme and it will come.
- (3) Unity of mankind cannot be achieved by administrative or economic means.

This ideal can be reviewed only by creating an enduring foundation. This foundation is to be a new religion of humanity. It shall emerge from inner laws of human life. It is the law of nature that everything move towards larger and larger aggregation. It is the ideal of human unity which is going to be the ultimate culmination of process. It does not happen at once. Nature is slow and patient in her action.

Nature takes up the idea. Drop the negative ideas and go forward with better ideas.

Mankind has created many civilisation but each civilisation has been a step towards the ultimate destination. There are two forces existing in nature at a same time. It is a force of integration. Second is the force of collision. It is the force of integration which will emerge victorious.

The sentiment of integration is emerging. Hence it is in its nascent form. It is vague at present. It is not strong enough to check centrifugal forces.

New religion of humanity is emerging. War will force man to unite in self-defence. There are two choice between man-defence and suicide. If human reasoning cannot find her way nature will find way to bring the desired end.

His view on War

Aurobindo discusses about war and how to abolish it. He disagrees that terror or horror can abolish war (deterrence). Unless the Y of man changes war will not be abolished permanently. Man has to develop fellow feeling with all man. He has to develop a dominant sense of unity. He has to regard others not only as his brothers but also as a part of himself. Then only wars can be abolished.

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