

Chapter 9

SRI AUROBINDO, TAGORE & KRISHNAMURTI
ON EDUCATION - A COMPARATIVE ACCOUNT

I. SRI AUROBINDO: (1873 - 1950)

the only true education will be that which will be an instrument for this real working of the spirit in the mind and body of the individual and the nation. 131 - Sri Aurobindo.

Sri Aurobindo's education is basically rooted in spirituality. As he believes that there is an under-current of spirituality behind every thing animate and inanimate things. Man being so far the most perfect creation of nature, and very near to its own basic nature of spirituality, which he is destined to attain today or tomorrow. Sri Aurobindo's education is a constant thrust towards that goal, the only destiny of mankind, and so it is found that his education is aimed at developing man in everyway "All that is in

the individual man", so that man can stand on that spirituality genuinely. And this "Spirituality", defines Sri Aurobindo, 'is the control of life by the spirit'.¹³²

Sri Aurobindo's philosophy of education is an obvious outcome of his metaphysics and so certain relevant points from his metaphysics may be cited to give a real perspective of his view on education. Sri Aurobindo believes that, -

The Brahman or the Absolute reality involves and evolves in the creation ;

Man so far is the highest form in this creative evolutionary process ;

He is destined to become superman, the end of the evolutionary journey ;

Superman or the supramental being is all freedom, all enlightenment, all wisdom, it is the essence of man etc.

Sri Aurobindo's life task is to unfold this mystery of creation in himself as well as to hasten this process in humanity. Education to him is an important step in this direction.

Thus man is seen by Sri Aurobindo in a very wide perspective, with enormous potentialities, with extreme optimism. For him, man at present is in the

transition period, gradually upgrading from lower to higher consciousness. He therefore gave education the task of bringing out (educere = to bring out) the inner truth, beauty and goodness of man. His invocation to spirituality in education should be seen in quite contrast with the ordinary belief in daily worshipping, of chanting mantras, of fasting as well as of marking the body with tilaks and so on.

This thrust towards spiritual seeking is of course nothing new particularly in India as Sri-Aurobindo himself observed, :

"India has seen always in man the individual a soul, a portion of the Divinity enwrapped in mind and body, a conscious manifestation in Nature of the universal self and spirit. Always she has distinguished and cultivated in him a mental, and intellectual, an ethical, dynamic and practical, an aesthetic and hedonistic, a vital and physical being, but all these have been seen as powers of a soul that manifests through them and grows with their growth, and yet they are not all the soul, because at the summit of its ascent it arises to something greater than them all, into a spiritual being, and it is in this that she has found the supreme manifestation of the soul."

of man and his ultimate divine manhood, his paramartha and highest purushartha." 133

This idea about India and his tradition almost totally reflected in Sri Aurobindo's own philosophy of education. By Indian tradition he means Vedic (Upanishadic) truths, which will serve as the foundation of education; "That is the principle on which we must build", 134 says Sri Aurobindo.

"The true basis of education", Sri Aurobindo thinks, 'is the study of human mind, infant, adolescent and adult', 135 rather than striving to establish any perfect system. For mind is "The instrument of study" and without understanding the nature, limitation of that instrument, education would merely become a blind pursuit and possibly ends up in futility. The defects in European education, as Sri Aurobindo finds out is that, the European education is based on an insufficient knowledge of human psychology. So a comprehensive understanding of human psychology can only provide a comprehensive philosophy of education, and it is implicitly implied that Indian seers (Vedic risis) have that psychological grasp, and that true education can be given only on their visions.

To concretize that Indian tradition of education, Sri Aurobindo puts forward his educational principles (principles of teaching), which nearly encompass his philosophy of education entirely e. g.

"The first principle of true teaching is that nothing can be taught, - the teacher is not an instructor or task master, he is a helper and a guide'.

"The second principle is that the mind has to be consulted in its own growth. The idea of hammering the child into the shape desired by the parent or teacher is a barbarous and ignorant superstition There can be no greater error than for the parent to arrange beforehand that his son shall develop particular qualities, capacities, ideas, virtues or be prepared for a pre-arranged career. To force the nature to abandon its dharma is to do it permanent harm, mutilate its growth and deface its perfection.'

"The third principle of education is to work from the near to the far, from that which is to that which shall be. 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. They mould him not the less powerfully because insensibly, and from that then we must begin... A free and natural growth is the condition of genuine development...." 136

Sri Aurobindo's principles have enormous implications in Education, because in-brief he uttered nearly all relevant truths. A short discussion in this effect can bring out the whole picture.

His first principle deals with true teachers who can only able to teach in a true education. A true teacher understands that his performance is only to help or guide students in the process of his understanding and not imposing anything forcibly, any lesson, any idea against students' will. Sri Aurobindo therefore subscribes to Vedantic view that, education is the manifestation of the inner truth of man, and not that it (education) is only a process of introducing new and newer information as the empiricists maintain. So the Idealistic trend in Sri Aurobindo is quite palpable; yet his Idealism maintains that man being a creature of the nature, which formally keeps within himself the truths of every mystery of the nature in a microcosmic way, because there is an essential unity

between man and the nature, the truths of the nature are also in a way truths of man. This is not merely an intellectual understanding but out of an inner awakening and superior consciousness. Furthermore the whole Vedic philosophy stands behind this supposition that man is fundamentally the Brahman itself (pūrnamadah pūrnamidan pūrnātpūrnāmudacyate...etc.) and the understanding of the inner Brahman is therefore an understanding of the essence of the cosmos, - past, present and future of it. The material world only presents a truth in its different configuration and concatenation ; when the manifestation of oneself is an endeavour to know truths in their essential - fundamental - basic forms. That is presumably Sri Aurobindo's view on the meaning of education.

A teacher as a true teacher helps students to bring out their inner divinity, by supplying favourable information, by arranging and placing lessons in such a way which can effect the whole man - the mind, heart and the body or in other words, the intellect, emotion, senses and nerves. The teachers' task is to encourage, to move, to initiate, to awaken a slumbering heart of a child ; so its a terribly

responsible job because teacher actually engineers the whole future(society).("One must be a saint and a hero to become a good teacher" - The Mother).

In education the teacher - student relationship is a very vital issue and Sri Aurobindo is quite aware about it, as he says, "...the educationist has to do ...with an infinitely subtle and sensitive organism... he has to work in the elusive substance of mind and respect the limits imposed by the fragile human body" •137 However Sri Aurobindo's First-principle provides here an answer .A teacher is a friend and a guide.SriAurobindo decries any insistence on the prevailing egoistic pursuit where a teacher teaches from a high pedestal, always aware of his seperate self ;where students are mere receivers of information and are always praised for successful pouring out of bookish knowledge.

Sri Aurobindo's Second-principle implies e.g. each and every individual is an unique creation of nature with a particular bent of mind, understanding and attitude.This individual uniqueness should be respected and keenly attended in a good education. Because in it lies the secret of nature and perfect satisfaction to a particular individual.This is unlike

the modern trend of imposing everything by external agents and thus nearly destroying any individual initiative and creativity in a child.

As it naturally follows from the above invocation to individual uniqueness in education that Sri Aurobindo will always discourage any pre-arranged career for children. For parents's persistence on the prearranged career of their children often help a child to lose everything creative of his own. He becomes a second hand human being, living another's life, which is bound to be narrow, interestless and miserable. This should serve as a warning to parents and teachers of every time and place.

Sri Aurobindo's Third principle also have important implications e.g. an education aims at "To work from the near to the far" implies that a child should be educated first with material and physical matters and then gradually towards abstraction. It also indicates that a child should be taught first with his near and known environment, and then gradually the national and international environment - of science, politics, society etc., would be taught.

The principle also lays faith on a free and natural growth of a child, which advises parents and teachers that a child should not be obstructed in any way by external imposition, by authority, by pressure etc., rather helped or encouraged, in his natural growth. In all these there is an implied assertion that a great truth is playing in the course and creation of the Nature, because Nature is teleological (evolutionary) for Sri Aurobindo. Therefore an unhindered and well protected growth for a child in education is the best in every way, for then he lives his own life and not of others'.

Sri Aurobindo has a view ~~on~~ on the Art of teaching, as he said "To lead him (a child) on step by step, interestingly and absorbing him in each as it comes, until he has mastered his subject is the true art of teaching".¹³⁸ He always favoured a comprehensive knowledge for children unlike the modern trend of "teaching by snippets". He observed that "much of the shallowness, discursive lightness and fickle mutability of the average modern mind is due to the vicious principle of teaching by snippets".¹³⁹

As to the education of a child a teacher needs to understand the nature of a child and according to that he needs to give him interest so that the child can unfold. Sri Aurobindo draws a picture of the nature of a child in general.

As he said,--

"Every child is a lover of interesting narrative, a hero worshipper and a patriot' ...

'Every child is an inquirer, an investigator, analyser, a merciless anatomist' ...

'Every child has an insatiable intellectual curiosity and turn for metaphysical enquiry' ...

'Every child has the gift of imitation and a touch of imaginative power.'" 140.

All these qualities need to be attended to give child knowledge of history, science, philosophy and art, for these qualities serve as germinal forces behind the development of different subjects. A teacher therefore have been entrusted with the enormous task of awakening a total child having those natural gifts of qualities.

However Sri Aurobindo's education is an Integral one, giving equal emphasis on intellectual, moral and physical aspects of man, and bringing them under the command of the spirit. Only in the

awakening of the spirit the true integrality can be achieved in life.

Education of the body :

"If our seeking is for a total perfection of the being', Sri Aurobindo says, 'the physical part of it cannot be left aside; for the body is the material basis, the body is the instrument which we have to use...."¹⁴¹ It is conspicuous from the above saying that the body has a very important part to play in Sri Aurobindo's metaphysics nay its a reemphasis of the old saying, - sariran khalu dharmasahanam, or no spirituality without a good health. The education of the body thus involves once whole organisms - senses, nerves etc. It helps knowing them, their proper functions and above all keeping them perfectly fit to act and to receive appropriately. Plays and games, which also come under this education have their importance not only spiritually but socially as well. Referring to Games and Sports Sri Aurobindo says in one of his messages, "They are also fields for the development of habits, capacities and qualities which are greatly needed

and of the utmost service to a people in war or in peace, and in its political and social activities, in most indeed of the provinces of a combined human endeavour." 142

Education of the mind :

As Sri Aurobindo is already quoted saying that - the true basis of education is the study of the human mind ; mind serves as the instrument of any knowledge and so to know the full nature of this instrument is an indispensibility before going at the external world; for an instrument always determines the kind of knowledge it can afford. Man's world is largely a world of its own making, indeed a Kantian touch.

Mind, for Sri Aurobindo, has four layers - the Citta or storehouse of memory, the Manas or mind proper, the Buddhi or intellect and the Prajnana or intuition.

The Citta or storehouse of memory, is the foundation of all other layers. It has two kinds of works - as a passive reservoir of all memories, and as an active selector of necessary memory. This active part of the memory needs a proper training

and improvement in education; when the first one i.e. the passive reservoir acts in its own.

The Manas or the mind proper, is said to be the sixth sense of the Indian psychology. It has a very important task of receiving sensations from our five senses, translating them into images and making them available for thought. It is thus the supplier of materials for thought.

The Buddhi or intellect : It being the real instrument of thought. It has two different types of faculties e.g. Creative & Synthetic, and the Critical & Analytic etc. The first type is the master of the knowledge and second the servant. The servant touches body of knowledge while the master penetrates its soul. Yet both are essentials to the completeness of reason, and they therefore 'to be raised to their highest and finest working power' in education.

The Prainana or intuition, though not yet developed in man but is bound to emerge in the evolutionary process of perfection. This intuition, as Sri Aurobindo describes, "...involves in sovereign discernment, intuitive perception of truth, plenary inspiration of speech, direct vision of knowledge to an extent often

amounting to revelation, making a prophet of truth".¹⁴³

The task of a good teacher is not to stifle the growth of this element of genius in a child, rather to help 'the growing soul into the way of its own protection.'

Education of the Heart or Moral education :

Sri Aurobindo clears out the essence and importance of the moral education saying,-

"In the economy of man, the mental nature rests upon the moral, and the education of the intellect (buddhi) divorced from the perfection of the moral and emotional nature is injurious to human progress."¹⁴⁴

But the education of the heart cannot be done through the education of the mind i.e. through books and sermons etc., because they (heart & the mind) are categorically different. To deal with man's moral nature three things need to be properly attended, they are, - the emotions, the formed habits and associations (sanskaras) and the nature (svabhava). A good moral nature can only be formed by right emotions, the noblest association, the best mental, emotional and physical habits, expressions of his true nature through right actions etc.

Here too Sri Aurobindo laid faith on the child's own unique way of growth and perfection. In the education of the heart, a child needs only, "Watching, suggesting, helping, but not interfering". 145

Sri Aurobindo's view of education of a child therefore takes into consideration all the three parts - body, mind and heart, together. This integral approach in education is a must, because they (body, mind etc.) are not essentially separate, on the contrary they are intimately connected. Only we, out of various influences, see education fragmentarily and thus producing unhappy men and women on the earth. Sri Aurobindo's 'A System of National Education' is a manifesto in this regard, for the present as well as for the future.

Sri Aurobindo's scheme of education can only be found to be in actual practice under the name of 'Free Progress System' in 'Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education' at Pondicherry. Under the guardianship of the Mother, the scheme of education had been categorized into Five-heads, to bring out the fuller import of it. Those different categories are - Education of the physical, the vital, the mental,

the psychic, and spiritual.

However, Sri Aurobindo has seen education not for its own sake but for the sake of a very lofty purpose. Education is a step towards perfection, the supramentalhood of man. An appropriate education can hasten this evolutionary process and an inappropriate education will only create delay in the cause. Sri Aurobindo's Integral-education is, for many, a right road to quicken the transformation of man from the conflict ridden consciousness to a higher consciousness of integral life and living.

II RABINDRANATH TAGORE : (1861 - 1941)

The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence. 146

- Rabindranath Tagore

The poet's education is not for making poets only, though it has a predominance of poetic imagination. It is to make a total-man. But what is a total-man? Does he resemble somebody who has great control over his body, an expert in physical fitness? Does not he go much deeper and higher than the mere physical? Tagore's view of education and his concept of total man, are neither like a psychologist's nor like a scientist's or a philosopher's view in the traditional sense, but that of a poet of Vedic kind having intuitions, lofty imaginations and musical words.

As it has been already said, any philosophy of education is ultimately grounded on a philosophy of man and his reality. So is the case with Tagore also. His idea of man is not unfamiliar to Indian mind.

It refers to the picture of the Vedic and the Upanishadic man; the difference lies only in expression and in spatio-temporal dimensions.

Nevertheless, Tagore has a philosophy of life and living which he himself lived and preached. Its salient points are :

Man is a meeting ground of the finite and the infinite; yet most men like to live in finiteness - in self interest and discrimination; whereas to live in the infinity means to live in harmony and unity, beyond all selfishness; the fullness of life, which is the only religion of man, is to live in this infinity.

There are metaphysical presuppositions in Tagore's philosophy. The concept of 'Universal man' which is very important in his philosophy, is possibly taken from the Rg Veda. As Tagore himself quoted, -- "pādoasya viśva bhutaṅi trpādosyanṛtaṅ divi", meaning, the Universal-man has only one fourth in the world; while His greater (three fourth) part lies beyond in infinity.

Tagore's theory of education as his philosophy of life, puts emphasis on the fullness of life, on the happiness of living ("saḍā thāko ānande", - Tagore), on the quality of selflessness - sensitivity and awakening of the whole man (body-mind & heart), on the

love of nature and living beings.

Tajore was completely dissatisfied with his own school life, utterly disenchanted with the British system in education, and on many occasions he expressed his clear views against it. Against the lack of freedom in the modern schools and its consequences Tajore said, "The old machinery of the educational department did not grant freedom for the acquisition of truth; but by a system of reproduction, examinations and general drudgery it led to the loss of individual initiative."¹⁴⁷ He accused the modern trend of creating a disharmony between child's life and Nature and thus permanently establishing a psychological dichotomy between the two, which are supposed to be actually essentially united. Tajore says, "From our very childhood habits are formed and knowledge is imparted in such a manner that our life is weaned away from nature and our mind and the world are set in opposition from the beginning of our days." The result is, as he continues, "...the greatest of educations for which we came prepared is neglected, and we are made to lose our world to find a bagful of information instead".¹⁴⁸ Emphasis on mere information not only

establishes disunity but it also creates disintegration within the set up of man, which is by nature united and integrated. In modern education, as Tagore observed, "We devote our sole attention to giving children information, not knowing that by this emphasis we are accentuating a break between the intellectual, physical and the spiritual life".¹⁴⁹ This is thus a misplaced emphasis, the shallowness of modernity. The pursuit of Discipline in schools 'which refuses to take into account the individual' is another matter of concern for Tagore. A method (of discipline) is extolled and before its alter children are treated as dead trees, to be cut into symmetrical conveniences. With it comes the increasing dependence on the bookish knowledge, as a result the book comes between "Us and our world" and obstructs 'all our direct touches of truth', the straight communication with "Gods' creation".

It thus becomes evident that Tagore decries the present (traditional) education because, it denies freedom to the learner, encourages disharmony and disintegration, imposes discipline and lays greater emphasis on books rather than on direct contact with

the world. In brief it becomes an inculcation of dead habits, not joyful participation in living relations.

Tagore once said, "I believe in a spiritual world - not as anything separate from this world - but as its innermost truth."¹⁵⁰ Understanding and the unravelling of this "Innermost truth" in individual life may be said to be the only ultimate objective of education according to Tagore. The nature of this truth is perpetual newness (ciranabīnatā) ; it is therefore living and dynamic. Education should represent this dynamism and vibrancy in itself; otherwise it would lose significance. So naturally where mechanicalness and method dominates over life and soul of man, that cannot be right education for Tagore. He says, "I for my part believe, in the principle of life, in the soul of man, more than in methods"¹⁵¹ This life and dynamism is found in nature, in the close observation and identification of oneself with the play of nature; and so this has a great role in Rabindranath's ideal of education. It is his inner desire that, 'our childhood should be given its full measure of life's draught, for which it has an

endless thirst'. It was his mission, Tagore once said, "To bring life into the schoolroom again".¹⁵² The object of education he believes 'is the freedom of mind which can only be achieved through the path of freedom'.

Tagore firmly believes in the Upanishadic truth of SANTAM - SIVAM - ADVAITAM; the supreme principle runs through the human world and the starry heaven as the Supreme unity. Man understands this unity with sympathy and intuition, with identification of himself with reality, in nature, and mankind. The necessity for realizing this supreme unity in one's life, is greatly reflected in Tagore's various thoughts and activities concerning education. The Visvabharati of his vision was founded on the hope - "Where the world becomes united in a single abode" (yatra vísva bhavetyekaniḍam). However this is not an intellectual unity; rather a spiritual unity, which needs a total awakening of body-mind-heart of man. That can only be possible when education is established on freedom and love, which are the two sides of the same coin.

In the educational institution at Santiniketan, Tagore adopted - "The ideal of developing the human personality in an atmosphere of freedom and fellowship, through the impulses of a life lived in Nature and in close touch with the varied creative activities of the human mind."¹⁵³ This, in other words, is an education 'to live a complete life'. This 'completeness' is an awareness not only of mental fertility but also of the basic necessities (scarcities) of life in respect of health, nutrition, industry, culture and so on. At Sriniketan, Tagore tried to build up an effective centre for rural development, satisfying the basic needs of life and culture.

A complete living demands a complete education which should take into consideration certain other important issues as well e.g. the nature of a true teacher, his relationship with his students, the school-curriculum and so on. Tagore was well aware of all these.

In one of his writings Tagore clarifies his idea on the nature of a true teacher. He writes in the negative, "A teacher can never teach unless he is still learning. A lamp can never light another lamp

unless it continues to burn its own flame". He further says, "The teacher who has come to the end of his subject, who has no living traffic with his knowledge, but merely repeats his lessons to his students, can only load their minds; he cannot quicken them". Most teachers, on the other hand, become dry and uninspiring that because they have 'no communication of life and love'. In one of many bengali writings, Tagore speaks of the positive qualities which a true teacher must have in his school (Santiniketan). He says, "Here will assemble those teachers whose vision extend beyond the limitation of the outer, who are insightful, who are inquisitive, who take keen interest in the knowledge of the universe and who take delight in direct experience." ¹⁵⁴ (translation mine). A teacher of course is not everything in education; he requires students. In Tagore's ashram students were desired to fulfil some of his hopes. He says, "From the very beginning I had the desire that the children of the ashram would become increasingly interested in making relationship with their immediate surroundings; they would enquire, examine, and collect." ¹⁵⁵ (trans. mine) Tagore wanted to develop a sympathetic, an inquiring

and investigative mind in his students, But that requires something more nay relationship between a teacher and his students, which only makes an education more complete and meaningful. In this network of relationship teachers, who are more knowledgeable and responsible, have a very significant role to play. To make possible a true and lasting relationship, a teacher must have in his heart some childlike qualities such as curiosity, freshness etc. As Tagore observes, -

"The (so called) teacher, in whom (the affective intensity and sensitivity of) the child has dried up completely, is unfit to take charge of (educating) children. The relation of the teacher and the taught needs not only proximity but also intimate association and likemindedness, without which there would not be sincerity in the give-and-take of education." (tr. mine)

A teacher needs to bring love and joy to the student and not the drudgery of rules. Mutual satisfaction is the test of success in education. A true teacher would affect the mind of a child through his heart, 'so that the child could feel the glow within him and every new fact come to him like a revelation'; a child's heart opens up, like petals of a flower, by the contact of a true teacher.

Tagore was always aware about the facilitating conditions of education. In his ashram (Brahmacarya - ashram) he always encouraged of attention, observation, meditation, cooperation, taking part in the ashram-activities, play etc., among students. From the very beginning he introduced sense-training and nature-study as essential subjects in ashram. The Educational principles of Santiniketan ashram, include the following :

"From the very beginning the students should be helped to improve their sensitivity."

'Arrangements should be made for students so that they can regularly use their power of observation in the ashram as well as in the villages outside the ashram, and can note them down the results. Their experiences on the trees and plants, animals and birds should be completed within this specified region.'¹⁵⁷

Tagore's institution (ashram) was thus meant to be a place for development of imagination, feeling, and sensitivity contributing to harmony and fulfilment in individual and social life.

Interestingly enough, the ancient Indian Tapovan culture in education had always a great appeal for Tagore. He admired it as an ideal and was highly influenced by it in putting his ideas into practice.

Tapovan (forest -colonies), which represents the true spirit of harmony with the nature, spiritual aspiration and a most comprehensive and living relationship between Guru and Sishya etc., was always a model institution for him. He has said : "This ideal of education through sharing a life of high aspiration with one's master took possession of my mind."¹⁵⁸ With this idealized picture of a system in a bygone-world in his mind, Tagore tried to build up his Santiniketan ashram to help preparation "For a complete life of man". He was nevertheless aware of the impossibility of establishing a forest dwelling (tapovan) in the changed atmosphere of the twentieth century. Therefore, he wished that his ashram 'must be the same in truth, but not identical in fact.'

Tagore conceived his Santiniketan to be an ashram amidst nature and silence; a place 'for the highest end of life', where childrens' minds and senses are free and awake to enjoy Nature's glory; 'where the young and the old, the teacher and the student, sit at the same table to partake of their daily food and the food of their eternal life.' Tagore aspired that, education in such an atmosphere would prepare man for

the Fullness of life.

Spirituality, we all know, is a very important dimension in Tagore's life and education. It may be said to be the task of each and every individual to be conscious of spirituality, to realize the supreme unity in man and nature. Intellect only analyses; it never sees anything wholly. Intelligence (bodh) is necessary to realize the impartiteness of spirituality. For Tagore, "The conscious union by intelligence is complete union'....'It should be kept in mind that, ...the education of intelligence should be given foremost place in our school."¹⁵⁹ Knowledge of mathematics, science and the arts, may be necessary in maintaining a comfortable bodily existence, but the fullness of life can only be^o achieved through intelligence.

Tagore says, "It is the fullness of life which makes one happy, not fullness of purse."¹⁶⁰

Spirituality is the very essence of the fullness of life .

Rabindranath measured the upliftment of man not in terms of material and mental quantity but in terms of spirituality. Himself being 'an angel of surplus', he found that only realization of the truth - santam, sivism & advaitam, in one's life and action is of greatest value ("ye dhruva padadichecha bāndhi viśvatāne melāba tāi jīvana gāne" etc. - Tagore). Education is a constant effort in this direction; it is a passage leading to the ever widening horizon of life and reality.

III CRITICAL CONSIDERATION :

A Critical-consideration essentially demands a wider and deeper study of the subject concerned from different levels e.g. Philosophical, Actual and General etc. The Philosophical-aspect considers the cogency and the relevance of any concept in the general framework; The Actual-aspect delves in the scientific, experimental and implemntational aspects of it; The General-aspect deals with other implied issues of far reaching (futuristic) consequences for humanity. So it may be found that often the two - Actual & the General aspects, remain criss-crossing and overlapping, because the General (aspect) is a mere extension of the Actual-aspect. In a way all the three - Philosophical, Actual and the General-aspects, are very closely knitted, they have only differences in shades of a colour.

(A) The Philosophical consideration :

The philosophy of education is enlightened by the three greats - Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath and Krishnamurti, in three different ways. They played three

different parts in their worldly play, Sri Aurobindo as a Vedic-risi, a visionary ; Rabindranath, a man of literature ; Krishnamurti, a world-teacher. So differences among them particularly in regard to the treatment of the subject (of education) are not very difficult to find out.

Sri Aurobindo and Rabindranath are goal-oriented in their approach in education, while Krishnamurti is fact-oriented, without any specific goal, or aim. Krishnamurti thinks that, it is the constant momentum towards becoming both in the material as well as in the psychological levels that brings personal and social misery. For him, there may be a goal when knowledge of any worldly matter e.g. driving a car is concerned, but there should not be any such goal in the psychological realm (e.g. the good & bad reactions of driving a car). This psychological realm refers to the network of human relationship - of love and goodness, of sensitivity and awareness, which goes deeper than the necessary memories (essential knowledge) of life. But Sri Aurobindo and Rabindranath have clear preferences towards goal-orientation of life and education. The goal being in conformity with Vedic

and the Upanishadic pronouncements - that the individual self is basically pure (nitya suddha buddha mukta - swabhava etc.) and it is nothing but the Brahman itself; the Brahman being santam-sivam-advaitam and so on. The goal of education, as it is already said is to help bringing out that inner eternal part (purity) which an individual shares with the Brahman. This points to another very fundamental difference between Krishnamurti on one side and Sri Aurobindo and Tagore on the other. In Krishnamurti, Understanding (and liberation through it) is an instant and sudden affair, unlike Sri Aurobindo and Tagorean beliefs and the common belief too. For Sri Aurobindo & Tagore, human life has a goal; man must have a preparation for it and a gradual attainment of it. In Krishnamurti, on the other hand, setting of any goal and preparation for it brings conflict in life (it negates one's own life), and ~~farther~~ further there is no gradual attainment of the goal. However it is common to all, though implicit in Sri Aurobindo & Tagore and explicit in Krishnamurti, that the attainment of any truth is sudden, and there is a categorical difference between truth and the process towards it.

In Sri Aurobindo and Rabindranath, it is already said, the Vedic and the Upanishadic thoughts and aspirations are presupposed, where education is aimed at relation (yoga) oneself with the Brahman. On the other hand Krishnamurti is more interested in finding out the facts of life and to investigate if there is something basic (fundamental) in us. Education to Krishnamurti, is to establish this spirit of investigation. So when Sri Aurobindo and Tagore made a more or less idealistic approach to education, Krishnamurti rather made a Skeptical approach: "We must doubt everything", Krishnamurti says, 'so that out of the agony of doubt certitude is born. Do not doubt only when you are tired or unhappy - anybody can do that. Invite doubt in the moment of ecstasy, for then in what remains you will discover the true and the false."

(Rene Fouere's The Man and His Teaching p.6)

When Sri Aurobindo and Tagore started with authority (of the Vedas), Krishnamurti decries everything so called authoritative in regard to life (any theory of life), and likes to start afresh, from a scratch from each and every individual as a starting point. If anything is presupposed here (in Krishnamurti) it is

an eagerness to live happily without any contradiction and pain. For Krishnamurti, "Truth is a pathless land". His accepted principle is "Atma dipa bhava" or be a light unto yourself. "To follow another," says Krishnamurti, 'no matter who it is, is to deny the understanding of yourself.'¹⁶¹ So he was found to have occasionally despising the Guru dominated Indian religio-cultural tradition.**

Rabindranath puts his educational philosophy as a literary genius. No where, to my knowledge, education has been so poetically and majestically expressed. Sri Aurobindo, on the other hand, puts his education with a philosophical precision and a great metaphysics at the back. In his writings it seems a great seer with enormous insights and realization opens up the doors of the inner kingdom of man. Krishnamurti started his philosophy factually (objectively). He advanced from very near to far, from what is given to the source and mystery of the given, like an excavator, a modern Socrates; for according to

**However for many critics, Krishnamurti himself stands as a Guru, the World-teacher; He is a flower of a long Theosophical tradition (authority), and in a way satisfies in him the theosophists' dream (idea) of the coming of the Messiah. - A

Krishnamurti "First step is the last step". When Krishnamurti decried metaphysics he represents the spirit of Logical-positivism, although his search ended up in a quite different level (from the Positivists), where Analysis as a method is criticised and thrown away completely. "Analysis is real paralysis" for Krishnamurti.

Sri Aurobindo and Rabindranath can be identified as Idealists, with a stint of appropriate realism in their philosophizing, unlike Platonean or Berkelean Idealism. Sri Aurobindo and Rabindranath's Idealism is based on the supposition of Man - Nature identity. Truth lies in the understanding of this relationship. For them no one is self-sufficient, rather everyone is interdependent as man effects nature, nature also effects man. Here relationship is fundamental, which acts as an awakener, enkindler as a match-stick. Krishnamurti is a skeptic having a positive approach to life; His principle - never to conclude but investigate, guides his life and teachings. It is this skeptical-attitude against any authority that help his philosophy to remain always free from bogging down, or stagnate. But unlike

any skepticism of the epistemological kind. Krishnamurti is more concerned in questioning the traditional beliefs and values. He seems to be more phenomenological (presuppositionless) in method than anything else when he denies any presupposition of scriptural authority or of social value. Thus Krishnamurti tries to reach to an eternal, a fundamental life (life of essences or eidetic life). His philosophy of education is an endeavour in this effect, nay to introduce a life of self-questioning and discovery.

But whatever be their differences, their educational philosophies have most stunning similarities.

Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath and Krishnamurti all are unanimous in believing that a child as a flower needs a total blossoming in its own natural way. When Sri Aurobindo supplied the so far told and untold (metaphysical) stories of this blossoming, Rabindranath paints its ethereal beauty and splendour, and in Krishnamurti, the meaning (implications) of the blossoming (flowering) is unfolded in its entirety.

In the treatment of education, there is undoubtedly a realistic philosophical mind in Krishnamurti than others. He was very much specific and modern (non-metaphysical) in his pronouncements; His process was through Dialogue, which effects in the gradual unfoldment of the inner beauty (synthesis) of man by pointing out the most deplorable state of affairs in each of us. In education this is Socratic treatment, which is said to be the best so far.

However, Krishnamurti's treatment cannot be called as Socratic entirely. There are fundamental differences. A. D. Dhopeswarkar finds, -

"The purpose of Krishnamurti's discussions is not to reach a conclusion but to raise the mind to another dimension of thinking ~~at~~ and feeling. Krishnamurti's is not the Socratic method of driving the opponent to a preconceived conclusion; he does not want conclusion; but only insight. Nobody can impose understanding on another; it must come from within or not at all." 162

Andre Niel's observation in this context is, -

"The know-yourself of Krishnamurti goes much deeper than with Socrates. Socrates aimed at bringing to the surface certain ideas ~~which~~ which were hidden in the mind, while Krishnamurti

wants - each man to realize his own being, where the ME is no more in opposition to the not-ME*, where in the "struggle for life" the struggle goes and life remains." 163

The philosophy of Natural Flowering in Education is common to all the three (Sri Aurobindo & others), which presupposes an idea that man cannot be fundamentally harmful, only the situation (socio-political) makes him so. This process of natural flowering only can bring out - what is good in a man. However, questions can be raised, Why American youths, with so much freedom in their system, are so unruly and frustrated in their behaviours? The simple answer is, they are not naturally flowering with love and freedom. They receive only some quotas of love from their parents and their freedom is curtailed by authority and situation.

Let us hope that Rousseau's Back to nature call in education (Naturalistic philosophy) and John Dewey's education as a "process of continuous reconstruction of experience" (progressive education) had effected the educational ideas of Sri Aurobindo and others, consciously or unconsciously, because in them there is a vigorous emphasis on that direction. Further, their philosophies are also reinstatements of Existentialist

truths - of authentic freedom and uniqueness.

However, flowering is a holistic affair. For flowering a plant needs everything - air, water, light, earth etc; absence of any one of them implies a crippling growth. So is the case with the flowering of a child. A natural being, as the child is, needs all - air, water & so on; along with it a child further, needs freedom and care (love), so that the more subtle and finer element that nature has bestowed on him nay, mind and heart can extend and expand to the full. The absence of any one of them or exaggeration of any in the attempt of shaping a man (man being mental) already produced enough misery. It is ~~the~~ this naturalistic (holistic) treatment of man (man as a gift of nature), which is the essence of their (Sri Aurobindo & others) educational philosophy. Man, because of his great mystery and enormous potentialities, is always a challenge to himself. To many, he is also physiologically the last in the nature's evolutionary journey. However, when modern man's education is aimed at careerism, comfort and job-security, then Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath and Krishnamurti tried to establish education for happiness and harmony. The modern-attitude leads to the Man-Nature dichotomy, the latter attitude

(of Sri Aurobindo & others') to identity and friendliness. It may be that the images of Rousseau and others could be found to be present at various steps in their (Sri Aurobindo & others) treatment of education, yet they never lost their originality. Above all the element of spirituality is an additional dimension in their education.

They all are unanimous on a single and most fundamental point is that, the only purpose of education is to develop a total-man. There is but very little difference in meaning and content among Sri Aurobindo's Integral education, Rabindranath's Education for Complete living (paripurnabhāve bāndhār śikksā) and Krishnamurti's Right kind of education; They presumably refer to a similar kind of life. As for Sri Aurobindo it was integral-living, for Tagore it was Fullness of life and for Krishnamurti it was life of Intelligence. There may be differences among them in interpreting the terms e. g. Sri Aurobindo planned a great metaphysics of optimism out of an Integral man, bringing all sorts of yogic and mystic connections to it. Tagore interprets a Total-man from a highly imaginative and

esthetic standpoint. Krishnamurti on the otherhand interpreted it with insights in mechanical as well as in non-mechanical terms.

Further, their addition of spiritual dimension to education is unlike any traditional effort. To Krishnamurti spirituality refers to that part of life which is beyond time; to Sri Aurobindo it refers to "...the control of life by the spirit"; to Tagore, spirituality is the kingdom of surplus in man. And to make this job, - of establishing education on spirituality possible, they all emphasized on meditation in their schools. For meditation is silence, and silence helps uniqueness to unfold.

In education, this reference to spirituality is in other words implies their earnest desire to change the present level of consciousness in man. Because, for Krishnamurti, "The present world crisis is a crisis of consciousness."¹⁶⁴ Sri Aurobindo wants "a radical change of consciousness" and for Tagore, man needs to stand beyond the boundary of his limited self ("apanhote bahirhoe baire dara"). Thus selflessness, the essence of spirituality and change is variously present in all of them.

Freedom being one of the main concepts in education, which when properly understood brings out fuller implications of Sri Aurobindo, Tagore and Krishnamurti's whole philosophy of education. By freedom, they are more concerned with "Freedom of the mind" (Tagore), or the "Psychological freedom" (Krishnamurti) or "The power to expand and grow towards perfection" etc. (Sri Aurobindo). In education, freedom should be in the beginning and then only it can be at the end. It is freedom that can give rise to one's creativity, one's identity. It is only in this way that a child can pour out himself pleasantly and completely. Freedom denies fear of competition, authority, jealousy, violence and so on. It decries rigorous discipline and imposition of any ideological oppression.

Man, it is variously said, is most creative when he is in himself and is free. And creativity can only make him a first hand individual, only gives him real meaning and worth of his life. Educational philosophies of Sri Aurobindo, Tagore and Krishnamurti aim at this direction through a constant emphasis on Looking - Listening and Learning in education.

Interestingly enough, all of them have emphasized on such education which helps to unfold one's uniqueness and individuality. Their education therefore is more individualistic than socialistic. To them, an individual is the ultimate unit of a society and the ultimate-agent for any social change. Any system which coerces inquisitiveness and uniqueness of a child is bound to receive criticism from them. It is the flowering of a child, which receives the highest priority in their education, because round which every other thing e.g. discipline, conventions or any system rotates. Here system thus receives a secondhand value because it serves as a denial of freedom. Sri Aurobindo's "three principles of teaching" (mentioned earlier) is a clear reference to this truth. Tagore similarly thinks, "There cannot be any artificial system regarding education which is a matter of inner manifestation."¹⁶⁵ Krishnamurti is a constant fighter against the tendency to systematize individual life or education. "There is no path to truth", observes Krishnamurti, "Truth must be discovered, but there is no formula (no system) for its discovery. What is formulated is not true."¹⁶⁶ Education must concern with the discovery of truth. So, in brief, their

educations may be named as Systemless system or Surrendering to the Truth alone.

Life is a harmonious combination of body-mind and heart; it moves always together and have always an inherent potentiality to response wholly or integrally. But in the process of human civilization this natural balance get disturbed and a partial development either of body or of mind or heart has taken place. Our traditional education helped this process tremendously. This uneven growth of individual produced a sordid result bot for himself and for the human society eventually. Any education which takes the fuller developmant of life into consideration should obviously emphasize on the integral-education of the physique, heart and mind - as is the case with Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath and Krishnamurti.

However it needs to be specifically mentioned that in Tagore's Santiniketan there is always a greater thrust towards the education of Heart (esthetic education), which has been introduced through singing, dancing, painting, preparing new and newer festivities (e. g. Halakarshan, Vasanto utsav etc.) through art, poetry and literature. This may be that

Tagore himself is a symbol of emotion and feeling (of heart), and presumably one's life of feeling (not of sentiment) is more close to a life of activity and fullness. Tagore sings, when I see the world through my song, then I recognize it really, I know it perfectly ("gāner bhitar diye jakhan dekhi bhubankhāni takhan tāre cini āmi, takhan tāre jāni"). The song resembles the truth that only a life of feeling (sensitivity & love) can give a vision of reality. This vision is nearly repeated in Krishnamurti, when he maintains, '...to receive it (truth), the heart must be full and the mind empty.'¹⁶⁷ It is indeed a great achievement on the part of Rabindranath that in his life time he was nearly successful in concretizing a most lofty ideal of education, - of a university where nature whispers through trees, birds and flowers, and individual aspires for greater knowledge and freedom. The Santiniketan then represents the true spirit of its principle, "yatra visva bhavet eka nidam" or where the world gathers to unite. Like Tagore Nature has taken a great part in Krishnamurti's Teachings too. His advises 'Live close to nature' because "The mind losses its sensitivity whenever there is no communion

with nature." 168 Without sensitivity there cannot be any learning, and without learning education is meaningless. In a letter written to the schools, Krishnamurti showed the place of Nature in his perception of truth :

"When you wander through the woods with heavy shadows and dappled light and suddenly come upon an openspace, a green meadow surrounded by stately trees or a sparkling stream, you wonder why man has lost his relationship to nature and the beauty of the earth, the fallen leaf and the broken branch. If you have lost touch with nature, then you will inevitably lose relationship with another. Nature is not just the flowers, the lovely green lawn or the flowing waters in your little garden, but the whole earth with all the things on it. We consider that nature exists for our use, for our convenience, and so lose communion with the earth. This sensitivity to the fallen leaf and to the tall tree on a hill is far more important than all the passing of examinations and having a bright career." 169

On the nature of a true teacher there is seemingly an overall similarity among Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath and Krishnamurti. A teacher, by Sri Aurobindo, is only 'a guide and helper'. He is helping his students to bring out whatever true and noble is in him, and that by his own life and living. For Rabindranath, "Education can only become possible by a teacher and not by any system." 170

A teacher who is himself living, energetic, innovative can only be capable of teaching a moving and living mind of a child. "Human mind is always moving, and only a moving mind can understand another mind which is also moving."¹⁷¹ A teacher must represent this spirit of movingness in him. On the other hand, for Krishnamurti, "The true teacher is inwardly rich,"¹⁷² because teaching is a way of life for him and not a mere technique or a vocation. A true teacher therefore encourages his students towards freedom and at the same time corrects his own life too. It means a true teacher should always be living and dynamic, which is the very essence of teaching. Though the numbers of such teachers are always very rare and that is particularly in the present culture.

There is another very fundamental element that binds together all the sayings of Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath & Krishnamurti (on education) is that of Love, which is selfless. Love and sympathy and not coercion of any kind on the child that guides Sri Aurobindo's education. To Krishnamurti, love and freedom are stepping stones of education. Tagore is an ardent worshipper of the Brahman as 'raso vai sah'. His

education essentially becomes - an education of love ("premer 'sikkṣā"). Thus, Sri Aurobindo & others, all have touched this love-chord in man, the fundamental and final chord that greatly effect life and education.

Love particularly selfless-love has a special chemistry. It is a state of mind and not a reaction (e.g. not a reaction of hatred). It implies total attention and no psychological fragmentation. In this state of mind, a man responds completely and without any inner constraint. This love is timeless as well as cannot easily make a man tired. During that state of love there is a sense of identity between the observer and the observed and the utility-consciousness gets only a secondary preference or no preference at all.

Love has an enormous space-creating capacity in mind as well as in heart, which widens one's vision and brings out individual creativity. It implies freedom for only in freedom one can create. Thus Love and Freedom become two essential pillars of education nay of individual flowering. Love and freedom are two facets of the same reality; one perfects and gives meaning to the other; they are mutually dependent terms. So it is meaningless to search which is prior and ultimate,

because it is out of love that freedom is established, and it is also through freedom love is expressed. Both are true.

Tagore observes, "The love that is the highest truth being the most perfect relationship."¹⁷³ Education is basically a matter of relationship - with oneself, with the society, with the world; so it must take love (and freedom) into top priority. For Krishnamurti, this (nature of) love is neither a memory nor a thought; "It is only when there is no image that there is love."¹⁷⁴

Nevertheless there is a possibility of ~~mis~~ misunderstanding and of unintelligent use of these concepts of love and freedom etc. in education. The traditional education based on authority and to conform is an example in this effect. Everywhere the principle of life is forgotten or overlooked, and a mechanical system, the immediate necessity, as short sighted philosophy of life and living has taken place.

Whatever be the advancement in education with the introduction of modern equipments like microscope, telescope, computer etc, so long the element of real love and freedom is absent in the process (of education) the main aim of education nay, the flowering of goodness will bound to falter.

However the fact remains that, the approach everywhere finally shapes the result(end); and difference of approach must lead to difference of results. This is also the case in Sri Aurobindo & Rabindranath on one hand, and Krishnamurti on the other. Apart from their in-depth similarities (in regard to their teachings), it seems true that Krishnamurti's approach generates more freedom and stability as it proceeds; because freedom (or liberation) is always tied with one's approach-mechanism, and Krishnamurti remains always burden-free like a clear - sky.

(B) The Actual consideration :

R.K. Narayan, an eminent writer and the Rajya-sabha member, once made an insightful observation on the plight of children in the name of modern education. He found that the hardship of a child starts right at home when straight from sleep the child is pulled out of bed, gets ready for school, even before its faculties are awake. "He or she is groomed, stuffed into a uniform, and packed off to school with a loaded bag has

become an inevitable burden for the child."¹⁷⁵ R.K.'s investigations further showed that an average child carried six to eight kilogram of paraphernalia of modern education like a packmule. As a result, they develop a stoop, hang their arms forward like a 'chimpanzee' when walking, some suffered spinal injuries. Things were not much better when the child returned from school. Mother or tutor was waiting for special coaching or home-work. For the child, the day has ended, with no time left for play or dream. "It is a cruel, harsh life imposed on her". So R.K. pleaded, "To think out and devise remedies by changing the whole educational system and outlook so that Childhood has a chance to bloom rather than wilt in the process of learning."¹⁷⁶ This is briefly the story of our modern alices without their wondrland.

However this is but one side of the whole tragedy, the otherside is no less grim, which deserves immediate attention; It is the Emotional child abuse, or the bruises made to children that don't show. Researches conducted abroad suggest that the effects of emotional child abuse may be as devastating as those of physical abuse. It's been seen that emotionally

abused children suffer an even greater decline in mental and psychological development as they grow older than do physically abused children, because emotional abuse involves nothing else than the systematic destruction of the child's self-esteem. It resulted in utter sadness, depression or mischievous behaviours on the part of the children. According to Dr. Anita sengupta, a psychologist, these contrary children are "Victims of the age, family dynamics and parents' ambitions." ¹⁷⁷ Very often it is seen that parents want to achieve something through the child, mostly their own failed dreams, or things that they have missed in their own lives. Thus starts the battle for the child who get caught in the crossfire between the parents, the education system, ambitions and the ever present bogey of the child's future.

Our world is a world of increasing contradictions and our children are poor victims of this adult arrogance. Contradiction lies in our sayings and behaviours, we ~~rarely~~ rarely behave what we actually preach. This contradictory behaviour has reflected in the world affairs too. The Telegraph - newspaper of 2nd september'90 reports,-

"Everyday 40,000 children are dying in the world for want of inexpensive medicine ;

"The cost of fighter plane can be enough to equip 50,000 village dispensaries;

"Just half percent of world's annual military expenditure can pay for all the agricultural machinery required to make poor countries self-sufficient in food by the year 2000; ..."etc.

So in this world of contradictions it is most unlikely that we can have a sane child. None but we have created this monstrous society and the monster now is moulding us according to its needs, a Frankensteinian effect ! However the most stunning fall outs of this society are that many poor ~~even~~ children, both in the developed and underdeveloped parts of the world, are earning livelihood by physical labour or by prostitution. Children in the flesh-trade roaming in the streets of various metropolis in India and elsewhere in the world (including Great-Britain), are the most harrowing of all experiences of the social inhumanity. In our Adult world, children are seen wearing gas-masks in Israel to protect themselves from the possible chemical weapon attack by Iraq during the Gulf-war (1991)! The point is, adults have the power to deliver childhood from darkness, yet they are not doing it.

There is another aspect of educational reality - that every society and every government maintains certain approach towards Making(educating) of its - citizens. The Vedic-India has Tapovan-culture, the present India pursues a British trend. 'The authorities of Fascist Italy imposed their political credo - "Believe, obey, fight", and "Missolini is always right", upon all pupils and students and monopolized all media of public expression."¹⁷⁸ The rules of the erstwhile Soviet union prohibited the teaching of religion, upon Marxian economics, and other doctrines deemed to be inconsistent with communist ideology. However these different and sometimes conflicting approaches though brought changes in the society only superficially but not deeply. In actuality they adversely effect human-unity.

China's commitment to Socialistic ideals in education, even by utmost repression (e, g. students massacre in Tianenmen square on 3- 4 June, 1989), is well known. Japan, on the other hand, is following her traditional approach of disciplining a child in every possible way, even at the cost of child's extreme unwillingness. When Western-democracies cherish

freedom in their education by giving more priority to the intellectual and the mechanical part of it. Today this particular approach (western-approach) has a tremendous effect on the world over.

These different approaches to education, which mostly based on the immediate necessity of man, raised some pertinent questions related to Human-existence. These questions are mostly based on - the Network of Man - Machine - & Education, which may be posed in the following manner e.g. -

What is really the aim of education ?

What can Intellectual & Mechanical approach to education bring for the world ? or,

Whether the aim of education is actually to produce a complex-man of science or an Integrated man of culture ? and so on.

Krishnamurti foresees the danger involve in the modern scientific and technological development. He expressed his concern in the following way,

"When genetic engineering and the computer meet, what are you ? As a human being what are you ? Your brains are going to be altered. Your way of behaviour is going to be changed It all ends up either in war or in death. This is what is happening actually." 179

Human society now is thousand times more complicated than what it was at the time of its birth. This complexity is however increasing, and science is in a way helping this process. It (science) encourages more intellectual pursuit, mathematical genius and in a way helping to bring up more complex men and women. This approach is quite contrary to help emergence of an integrated (total) man, who is harmonious within and without.

There is a greater possibility of developing genetic engineering to bring superior human beings to handle the existing and the emerging complex-society. Already there is heavy demand for such beings in the sophisticated technology of space, weaponry, medicine and so on. However this would have a chain reactionary demand or demand ad-infinitum. The problem is, a super-computer indeed can solve super-mathematics in a superlative haste but it would give birth to super problems as well like the problem of computer pollution or computer spying and so on. The genetic-engineering as a mechanical education can possibly produce an Atavistic man, who is technically superb, but he's no integration of mental-emotional and physical aspects of his being, and has no appreciation of beauty.

Integration means harmony within oneself as well as with the surroundings. It refers more to the changing space, time and situation (changing values) than genetic-inheritance. So from a sperm of Tagore or Russell another Tagore of so cannot be produced. Further there is always a sense of aim, a purpose involved in the mechanical (genetic) process, which always limits a product (an individual). Whereas, an integrated man is not a product, he cannot be moulded under any system. Integration in an individual solely grounded on love and freedom, so he (an integrated man) is beyond the mechanical world of knowledge. Knowledge without self-integration has a poisonous effect. As Krishnamurti observes, -

"Knowledge has created the machine and we live on knowledge. We are machines; We are now separating the two. The machine is destroying us. The machine is the product of knowledge; we are the product of knowledge. Therefore knowledge is destroying us, not the machine." 180

So the ending of knowledge is in a way the ending of the possibility of future destruction.

True integration is based on the spirit (soul), for Sri Aurobindo; on the surplus in man, for Tagore and on intelligence for Krishnamurti. In the philosophies of Sri Aurobindo and others, Integration plays a very

significant role. They used the term 'Integration' not in the sense of mere combination or aggregation of different individual aspects. Integration, for them, is based on spirituality i.e. a spiritual life can only be perfectly integrated. Therefore education for them is a constant effort in this direction, the spiritualization of life. Though this is quite contrary to the aspiration of the western approach in education through constant emphasis on information and intellect. There is however an implicit tragedy lies in this particular approach (Intellectual-approach) as Krishnamurti summarizes the whole sense, "The man who knows how to split the atom but has no love in his heart becomes a monster." 191

Today the world needs a Religious mind, as Krishnamurti clarifies it, "A mind that has no belief, that has no dogma, that has no fear, that has absolutely no authority of any kind, because it is a light to itself." 182 The world needs sympathy more than anything else. Religious mind is a fusion both of sympathy and of scientific spirit. The religious mind does not concern itself with the partial; it is concerned with the total entity of man. Only science or scientific

attitude can not include the totality of life, because it sees everything partially and analytically. Only a total-approach which a religious mind can comprehend, has an individuating effect. Krishnamurti viewed, "It is far more important to understand the manner of our approach to any problem, than to understand the problem itself."¹⁸³ Religious mind is the approach; a total-approach to life. Right-education is both a study of approach and of cultivation of a religious mind.

Today a new approach or an approach from totality is needed. "A new approach, as Krishnamurti describes, 'is not the cultivation of technique - which does not mean you deny technique - but the creating, or helping to create an integrated human being first, whose experience will in turn create the technique.'¹⁸⁴ It also supposed that this approach can only effectively deal with any situation - immediate, global or eternal, whatsoever. It denies nothing but gives everything e.g., intellect, emotion etc., its due share in life. It will further result in a total overhaul of the existing value order, because in neither encourages sensual pleasure nor any utilitarian motive of careerism or ambition etc.

Sri Aurobindo, Tagore and Krishnamurti's education is more for happiness than pleasure; more for quality than quantity; more for intelligence and intuition than intellectualism alone. In brief, anything which awakes a total man and neutralizes his selfish life is the essence of their educational views. So it can be seen that they devalued everything which strengthens lives' ego-orientation like competition, comparison, discipline, ambition, excessive specialization etc, and on the other hand encouraged anything that helps lives' integration e.g. learning, looking, listening, leisure, and so on. In this process, freedom and love * serve as the backbone on which the whole body of their educational philosophies operate.

Does this mean that they have succeeded in their educational pursuit ? Though it is more a practical than a theoretical concern, but isn't it the case that the practical success justifies a philosophy to a very great extent ?

Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education

(founded in 1952) under the efficient stewardship of the Mother tried to concretize Sri Aurobindo's philosophy of life and education. An extract from one of the Centre's circular dated 16.6.71 says, -

"It is necessary to reiterate that our aim is to work for the manifestation of the Divine consciousness in the physical life. Our education is so organized that the students can receive the necessary training to participate by their voluntary decision in the realization of this aim.

"The pursuit of a degree, diploma or certificate is inconsistent with the aim that is placed before us,...

"Therefore, henceforth no certificates will be issued to the students of our Centre of Education." 185

Indeed this is a challenging task and the Centre has creditably followed it even against many waves of troubles. There are several aspects which make the Centre's education complex and they are, - short of space, short of materials, short of suitable teachers etc; Psychological complexity in regard to students, for each student has individual peculiarities, individual tastes etc. Then there is complexity concerning the deeper side i.e. the spiritual content in education. There is another difficulty derived from parents' and guardians' of students, who have their own notions and ambitions, hopes and desires. Nevertheless Sri 'Aurobindo International Centre of Education' has a continuous success story,

and "it was due to the predominance of spiritual force", recounts a professor; He further elaborates, "Here children breathe spirituality, live spirituality, soar in the sky of spirituality, no religion, mind you. No religion is preached here, no teaching, no sermon, but there is something very marvellous, constituting a powerful factor - a discipline is there, not outer but inner, it might be termed a spiritual discipline." 186

But one thing is clear that there cannot be any yardstick of measuring that particular kind of success which the Centre practices. We are limited only to the material success of the school, and it's been found that the Centre too is suffering from various conflicts generated from authority, ambition, desire etc. of the daily world. Nevertheless, the overwhelming spiritual atmosphere there along with blessings of late Sri Aurobindo and the Mother of the Centre gave it (the Centre) comparatively an easy running. And in this process it also develops its own identity and culture.

Rabindranath Tagore's Santiniketan would presumably be the only experiment with education in such a wide scale. From Santiniketan school to the foundation of Viswabharati University, the journey was arduous.

However Tagore founded the ashram and himself faced many problems of great proportions regarding its running. He was a bit more closer, more associated with his education than others, Sri Aurobindo or Krishnamurti. Tagore was in the administration, sometimes in the teaching and above all he himself stood as a symbol of his educational ideals. But now, barely fifty years after his death, Santiniketan has changed for the worse.

Sri Sisirkuman Ghose, once closely associated with the ashram, sarcastically describes Santiniketan's present state of affairs, -

"Now, it is little more than a tourist spot and a campus of problem ridden visionless ordinary men, teachers, students and workers. Most of its workers are drones. Today no one expects much from the place. Entertainments have replaced enlightenment. We have been hypnotized by Tagore, we have yet to earn him. Now Tagore is but a pagoda tree and the institution a glorified Housing Corporation." 187

Tagore's Santiniketan, once an abode of peace becomes an abode of conflict, for it has nearly buried Tagore's ideals. There are reasons for it ; They are e.g. -
Annexation of Viswabharati under Calcutta University -

regulation, Centralization of University, Entry of politics and so on. These decisions taken by the administration (sometimes supported by Tagore himself as one of the members) under great pressure though saved Santiniketan physically, but has taken away its uniqueness nearly completely.

In Krishnamurti-schools too the same social forces of disruption are also found to be working-. The forces of authority, ambition, careerism, competition etc., can be very clearly visible in the faces of many of the parents, students and also in school-teachers. This is in many ways frustrate the main purpose of the process which is "Flowering". Krishnamurti himself was well aware of all these. He once asked, - "After forty years, what have we produced? You all have given a great part of your life to this and what has happened?" ... and in great anguish he continues, 'we all started out together to build something deep, something lasting, something worthwhile there (in America) as well as here (in India). But there it is not flowering either.'¹⁸⁸ Nevertheless, Krishnamurti-schools and Sri Aurobindo Centre have their own success stories, when Tagore's Santiniketan has failed

nearly. Krishnamurti once made a warning, "Government control of education is a ~~ma~~ calamity. There is no hope of peace and order in the world as long as education is the handmaid of the state or of organized religion." 189 The present lost glory of Santiniketan for many, is much due to the government control of it, which means political intervention. And politics today being the greatest disrupting force nearly everywhere. Flowering and politics cannot go together hand in hand. Krishnamurti-schools and Sri Aurobindo International Education Centre tried to keep the govt. control and politics away as far as possible. This however helped them a great deal.

(C) The General Consideration :

A change of life, from selfish to selfless though indispensable to cope with any situation, yet it is a mysterious phenomena, quite unpredictable, which involves neither any scientific (mathematical) necessity nor any other (necessity). It rests completely on one's inner-urge, one's genetic code, on favourable-situation etc. Education can create at least a favourable situation for flowering, but it cannot in any way necessitate

it(flowering). Flowering is categorically different from knowledge and information. For example, our knowledge of many scientific truths or of historical facts and of human behaviours could not so far help us to flower. Interestingly in history tortures of imperialism, world wars, dictatorial regimes etc, all went hand in hand with the accumulation of knowledge. Tagore posed this point, though indirectly, in one of his famous songs, - why there is no awakening (flowering) of the inert soul ("keno jāgenā jāgenā abasa parān"). This flowering though indispensable but it is not at anybody's beck and call.

The educational institutions of Sri Aurobindo, Tagore and Krishnamurti are meant to provide a favourable weather for flowering. Although the inner-urge for freedom which is an essential element for it (flowering) cannot be created anew, but its momentum can at least be increased through a favourable school environment. Further, the prevailing socio-political situation anywhere helps heavily the successful germination of a truth, of education or of life. Situations among them vary so much that in most cases they remain highly unpredictable. It seems that David Hume voiced

the same feeling when he denied any necessity in the facts of the world.

"Man is a transitional being; he is not final....," Sri Aurobindo once said. This transition is from the mental level to the level of super-consciousness. It is a passage from gross to fine, it is 'the logic of Nature's process.' Sri Aurobindo believes that man has to realise the fundamental futility of intellectualism, of materialism and ego-centricism through the process of evolution. This is the natural, the inevitable and only the best course for man. Only a conscious cooperation with this law of the nature can make man truly happy. Education, for Sri Aurobindo and others, is a preparation to the direction.

Interestingly the present situation round the world is dramatic. Political colours of various countries are quickly changing, leading to the change of their economy and social values. Science is striking at the very root of earlier believes by bringing new and newer challenges before mankind. Any intellectual theory, of communism or of capitalism, is found to be shortsighted before life and reality. Today the most important development is, there is visibly a great momentum in regard to freedom and human rights in different

parts of the world.

No doubt this is a very creative time marked by some drastic changes in human thinking. Today mankind is bound to think globally and act globally. Ecology, environment, pollution or so needs a global attention and a global standpoint. This increasing interest in globalism of the present generation, however laudable it may be, will bound to falter because of individuals themselves. Still men are self-seekers, they only move when there is a clear sign of their interest being served. This is in-short an Intellectual-globalism, a theory in search of more interest and more security.

Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath and Krishnamurti also talked about Globalism (Internationalism), but that is not a theory. It is not an imposed-globalism but an inward-globalism, which refers to a change of approach, a change of heart. It only truly emerges when there is love, integration and intelligence in an individual. Education is entrusted with that great task of changing hearts. In an article 'A True National Education', Sri Aurobindo indicates how education will pave the way for internationalism (globalism).

He comments, -

".... that alone will be a true and living education which helps to bring out to full advantage, makes ready for the full purpose and scope of human life all that is in the individual man, and which at the same time helps him to enter into his right relation with the life, mind and soul of the people to which he belongs and with that great total life, mind and soul of humanity of which he himself is a unit and his people or nation a living, a separate and yet inseparable member." 190

One of the basic characteristics of Rabindranath's creation - in literature, art and poetry, is an unflinching faith on the underlying unity of man. His Santiniketan is an effort in that direction. In a letter written from America Tagore wrote, -

"I want just a small place where I shall try to build up a community of men and women who will recognise no geographical boundaries. They will know only one country and that country will comprise the whole world. They will know only one race and that race will cover the entire human race." 191

Tagore is a champion of Internationalism and to him it (internationalism) means, "Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls." On the other hand, in Krishnamurti's philosophy there is always an effort to see an individual globally or in the global perspective. Krishnamurti occasionally uses aphoristic statements and in one of such statements he uttered, "You are the world," and again, "You are responsible for the whole of mankind;"¹⁹² which in a way reflects his perspective, his internationalism. Krishnamurti's internationalism also involves a great responsibility because "It is a sense that we are all together, that we are all human beings, not divided, not broken up, not belonging to any particular group or race, or to any idealistic concept, but that we are all human beings living on this extraordinary earth."¹⁹³ And Krishnamurti desires that his schools should develop children to take up this global responsibility.

The educational philosophies of Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath and Krishnamurti need to be brought under focus because it is sincerely believed that their philosophies along with the other major happenings in the world e.g. scientific discoveries,

political changes, global issues, even theoretical bottlenecks - all are going to help, directly or indirectly, the enlightening process of the mind.

However there are problems like mass-education, free-education etc, which have not yet satisfactory answers. In practice, Sri Aurobindo Centre and Krishnamurti-schools are all drawing children from high income groups, thus eliticism made an indirect entry. Yet the cost of a total-education, modern and esthetic, today is so great that this compromise between good spirit and the mammon may seem to be inevitable and tolerable upto a point in the circumstances. However, everything depends on the thrust of a particular institution, and possibly those institutions are not yet fallen.

Considering the hapless condition, both in quantity and quality, of our education scenario : where hundreds of primary schools have no basic amenities for them like toilet, drinking water, black-board and proper sitting arrangements ; many of them have no proper building and most appallingly have no roof over the head to protect children from rain and heat etc., to talk about implementing visions of

Sri Aurobindo, Tagore and Krishnamurti in education is like talking unrealities. Not only that, some children of their schools also reflect the same attitude, the same bent of mind like other worldly people, and it seems that is nothing remarkably different in them. However, this is nothing unlikely as it is already said that flowering is an unpredicable phenomena. It may be further argued that there is a clear possibility of increasing one's contradiction in such an institution when to him, a student or so, neither flowering (intelligence) has taken place nor the actual world is in a position to accept him. This fear still persists and should I say, it frustrates the cause in many ways.

Nevertheless, a proper understanding of the educational philosophies of Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath and Krishnamurti brings out certain truths very clearly; and we may say that at deeper layers they are one. They did not deny or negate the reality; they started from a point of positive-transient in order to reach to a point of positive-eternal. Like guiding stars among non-descript masses of men, they were most integrated, free and global. Their philosophies are in a way a saga of paradise lost and of paradise regained.
