

**INDIA ON THE MARCH:
AN EVOLUTIONARY APPROACH TO
THE UNFOLDING OF INDIAN CONSCIOUSNESS**

A Proposal Idea

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Editors' Note: The following proposal-in-progress prepared by SACAR is being shared with our readers with the hope to start a meaningful conversation with some of our well-wishers and friends who may be willing to participate in some way in this ambitious endeavour that SACAR wishes to undertake in the near future. We invite suggestions, comments, questions and ideas for further developing this project, and we welcome any support our interested readers may have to offer.

Rationale

Is there another way, a deeper way to know our history, to know the past in a way that also reveals to us the nature of the present and the direction of the future? What are the inner forces and factors, the psychological drives, the movements of consciousness that have been behind the outer movements in our history? What do these movements and forces have to tell us about where we have been, where we are at present and where we are going? This approach to history, which regards history as a manifestation of an evolving consciousness, as a journey of inner psychological drives and urges in mankind and the universe, is what we need in order to truly grasp the deeper and multi-faceted meaning behind the outer events of the past, the present, and the future that is yet to unfold.

There is now a much greater acceptance of the idea that the journey of humanity and of the world, the vision of human destiny, can be best and most comprehensively understood through an evolutionary approach to the manifestation of consciousness on earth. How a nation knows its history has an impact on how it looks at its present and how it envisions its future. Indian history, which in contemporary times has been such a hotbed of debate and argument, may lose its true significance when looked at only from the external viewpoint of events and dates and people. In its truest essence, Indian culture recognizes the spirit as the truth of our being and all of our life as growth and evolution of the spirit. Sri Aurobindo reminds us, "Spirituality is indeed the master-key of the Indian mind; the sense of the infinite is native to it. ... [India] was alive to the greatness of material laws and forces; she had

a keen eye for the importance of the physical sciences; she knew how to organize the arts of ordinary life. But she saw that the physical does not get its full sense until it stands in relation to the supraphysical; ... that the invisible always surrounds the visible, the suprasensible the sensible, even as infinity always surrounds the finite." If this is the essence of India, then the Indian approach to knowing and writing its history must also be such that it moves us beyond and above the details about the physical, the visible, and the sensible. India's story must be about the evolution of the Indian spirit, the manifestation of the Indian collective-soul, its inner consciousness through its various and ever-changing external forms and events in the course of its journey across time.

Project Ideas

"India on the March" – is a project which seeks to do exactly that. We propose to study and present a story of Indian civilization and history using an evolutionary approach to the manifestation of the Indian consciousness. We will be examining the evolution of the Indian spirit through the outer and inner movements of matter, life, and mind. Such an exploration will involve a study of different domains and directions in which the Indian spirit has been manifesting itself – philosophy, fine arts, literature, natural and physical sciences, social and political thought, religion, spirituality. The influx and influences of other cultures and civilizations through the ages also become part of India's story. This exploration will yield a story of the adventure of consciousness on which India has been marching, and which is paving the direction for India's destiny.

The central question of Indian culture has been to ask as to how it is possible to realize integral perfection in the terrestrial life so that it stands in harmonious relationship with supra-terrestrial and supra-cosmic existence. The multi-faceted movements of Indian thought, will, action, imagination and creativity seeking possible answers to this central question yielded rich philosophies and metaphysics, amazing discoveries in physical and natural sciences, extensive and detailed systems of social-political and economic organization, unparalleled bodies of work in literature, arts, sculpture, architecture, music, dance and dramatic arts. This is the wealth we inherited from our ancestors, and successive generations have surely added much to this movement. At the beginning of the 21st century, we seem to have come to a point where we cannot help but ask the question – what has been the evolutionary drive behind all this movement? Where is it leading to? What and how can we contribute to this onward march?

Many great thinkers and visionaries of our times have called for a deep introspection at this time when the future of India, like the future of the world, stands at an evolutionary turn.

Our proposed project will primarily be an exploration of the entire gamut

of our achievements in natural and social sciences, psychology and sociology, literature and polity, philosophy and fine arts within the theme of the evolution of consciousness. The objective of this project is not to merely generate an enthusiasm among readers for what accomplishments made India great in the past and the present. We are guided by a search for the deeper and evolutionary meaning behind the movements of the Indian soul, so that we may gain some clarity and guidance on the present and future course of its movement.

The results will be documented in a book or a series of books that will present the Beginnings, the Journey and the Destiny of India's Inner story. We believe such a work will be the first of its kind, though we are aware of the attempts that have been made in the past to view Indian history from an inner, psychological perspective. What makes our project different from these earlier attempts is our wider lens which will allow us to look beyond and beneath the great movements in various domains of matter, life and mind that have taken place in the Indians subcontinent over time.

We hope that the book or books resulting from our research will prove to be an important resource material for young minds of India in their search to independently reflect upon and know about their and their nation's past, present and future.

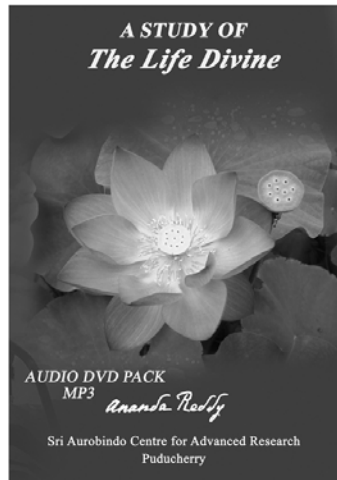
... the new world whose coming we envisage is not to be made of the same texture as the old and different only in pattern, and that it must come by other means—from within and not from without; so the best way is not to be too much preoccupied with the lamentable things that are happening outside, but themselves to grow within so that they may be ready for the new world, whatever form it may take.

Sri Aurobindo

(SABCL, vol 26, pp. 171-172)

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