

B a b a j i ' s

# Kriya Yoga Journal

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## Sri Aurobindo: life and legacy

By José Tadeu Arantes (Acharya Ganapati)

*"There are two powers which they alone can accomplish, in conjunction, the great and difficult task which is the object of our endeavor: a firmly established and tireless aspiration that calls from below, and a supreme grace that responds from above"* (Sri Aurobindo Ghose, 1872 – 1950)

Humanity is facing a radical choice: to surpass itself, leading a spectacular leap in the evolutionary process; or resist transformation, at the risk of bringing the planet to catastrophe. Sri Aurobindo's thought is the philoso-

phy par excellence for this time. And it can help us meet the challenge.

Combining enormous erudition and genuine inspiration and a perfect mastery of both modern Western culture and ancient Indian spiritual traditions, Aurobindo wrote a work that consecrated him as one of today's greatest masters.

### Third evolutionary leap

According to Aurobindo, our planet has already gone through two great evolutionary leaps.

The first was the transition from non-living matter to living matter. To assess its importance, just imagine a purely mineral scenario, formed by rocks, sand and water. And compare it to the real landscape, covered with vegetation and populated by animals of all kinds.

The second was the transition from living matter to "mentalized" matter. And, in this case, one must consider the terrestrial landscape occupied by cities, communication networks and everything that is the product of the human mind.

According to the philosopher, just as non-living matter evolved to the point when it could receive the "descent" of the vital (*prana*) and be impregnated and transformed by it, and just as living matter evolved to the point when it could receive the "descent" of the mental (*manas*) and to be impregnated and transformed by it, also the mentalized matter, which

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## Sri Aurobindo *continued*

is the human being itself, would now be ready to manifest two even higher stages of consciousness, which he called “overmental” and “supramental”, corresponding to the “descent” and “anchoring” of two higher instances: *vijnana* and *ananda*.

On August 15, 1925, on his 53rd birthday, Aurobindo declared to his disciples that the conditions for the third jump were fully ripe. But that there was, within humanity, an enormous resistance to change. “The more the Light and Power spill over us, the greater the resistance. You can see yourself that there is something pressing down. And that there is tremendous resistance”, he said.

We know what happened next. The resistance was too strong. The evolutionary leap could not take place. And the enormous accumulated potential was diverted to the greatest military conflict in history, World War II, with tens of millions of deaths and an incalculable destruction of material and intellectual resources.

For Aurobindo, the “supramental revolution” was not a project for the distant future. But a process that was already underway and whose end he considered imminent. From this point of view, the current global crisis, with all its consequences (environmental, economic, social, political, cultural etc.), stems from the fact that this transition has not yet been completed. And, on the other hand, it is the very condition for such completion to take place.

The factors at play now seem much more favorable than they were in the 1920s. But the success of this gigantic collective enterprise depends on individual effort. Effort towards advancing one's own consciousness; to guide thoughts, words and actions by conscience; and to call others to compose the necessary critical mass.

From this point of view, all the difficulties we face or will face need to be put into perspective. For, as painful as they may be, they offer the promise of a happy ending, equivalent, on a planetary scale, to the baby's titanic struggle to emerge from the intrauterine dimness into the clear light of day.

### Exceptional talents

Sri Aurobindo was born in Kolkata (Calcutta), In-

dia, on August 15, 1872. And he died in Puducherry (Pondicherry), then a French territory embedded in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, on December 5, 1950, at the age of 78. Exactly 75 years after his birth date, on August 15, 1947, India gained its independence from British colonial rule. For Aurobindo, this coincidence of day and month was not a fortuitous fact.

His mother, Swarnalata Devi, famous for her beauty, was called “The Rose of Rangpur”. His father, Krishna Dhun Ghose, a physician and generous beyond the limits of his means, was a man of peculiar thought and behavior. Like other Indian intellectuals of the period, he felt a deep distaste for the condition of his country under the yoke of a foreign power. But his proposal for this depressing situation was for India to copy, in minute detail, the British way of life. His Anglophilia went so far as to add to his son's first name an English second name, Ackroyd, for the simple fact that, at the time of his birth, an English lady, Miss Annette Ackroyd, was present. Thus, Aurobindo was registered as Aurobindo Ackroyd Ghose.

Continuing his bizarre Anglophile project, Dr. Krishna sent his three eldest sons, Benoy, Manmohan and Aurobindo, to study in England. Aurobindo, the youngest of the three, was only seven years old at the time. he stayed away from the country and family until he was 21.

In addition to his older brothers, he also had a younger sister and brother: Sarojini and Barindranath. Manmohan, who in England would become a poet and would come to frequent the artistic circle centered by Oscar Wilde, would later become a prominent name in modern Indian literature. Barindranath, nicknamed Barin, became a journalist and revolutionary.

Benoy, Manmohan and Aurobindo went to live in Manchester, under the tutelage of the Reverend William Drewett and his wife, with strict paternal guidance that they had no contact with Indian culture. Aurobindo was educated initially by his tutor. Later, at age 12, he moved to the Reverend's sister's home in London to attend St. Paul's School. His intelligence was remarkable and his talent for

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languages and literature exceptional. In addition to English, he learned French, German, Greek and Latin, and it seems he also knew some Spanish and Russian. He read Shakespeare, Shelley and Keats, among other authors. And, despite all the attempts made by the reverend's sister to convert him to Christianity, he defined himself, at puberty, as an agnostic.

Bankrupt, the father suspended the children's allowance when Aurobindo was 15 years old. The Reverend Drewett having moved to Australia, the three young men, penniless, moved into an unheated attic above the South Kensington Liberal Club. The destitution was such that the three of them owned a single overcoat. So, during the winter, when one went out, the other two had to stay at home. Despite this adverse condition, Aurobindo's intelligence continued to flourish. He won awards for literature and history. And, at age 18, on the recommendation of historian and writer Oscar Browning, a famous enthusiast for educational reform, he received a scholarship to King's College, University of Cambridge.

At Cambridge, exactly what Dr. Krishna feared happened. Young Aurobindo made contact with Indian colleagues and got information about India. As a result, he joined the "Lotus and Dagger" secret society, which carried out subversive activities against colonial power.

Let us remember that all of this took place during the Victorian era, characterized by one of the longest reigns in history, which spanned more than 63 years, from Queen Victoria's accession to the throne on June 20, 1837, until her death in on January 22, 1901. It was the emblematic period of British colonialism.

To meet his father's expectations, Aurobindo applied for admission to the Indian Civil Service (ICS), in charge of the colonial administration. Participating in this institution, a predecessor of the enormous bureaucratic apparatus that is still one of India's trademarks, was the dream job of all upper-class youth. Aurobindo scored excellently in the theoretical tests, but deliberately sabotaged the exam by not appearing in the practical riding test. With his subversive activity already known to Brit-

ish authorities, this gave the examiners a pretext to disapprove of him.

At the same time, in London, Aurobindo met the Maharaja of Baroda, Sayajirao Gaekwad III, who was visiting the capital of the Empire. Enchanted by the young man's talents, the Maharaja offered him a job in his principality. Later, Gaekwad would brag about having hired an ICS man for just 200 rupees a month.

In 1893, at the age of 21, Aurobindo finally returned to India with his brothers. At the same time, a ship sank off in the coast of Portugal. Misinformed, the father assumed that the wrecked ship was the one on which the children were traveling. Impacted by the false news, he collapsed and died. Thus, upon arriving in his native country, Aurobindo found himself fatherless and his mother irreversibly immersed in schizophrenia. Before that, however, when he saw Indian land from the ship's rail, he had his first spiritual experience, with vast calm and peace descending upon him.

### **Revolutionary activity**

In Baroda, Aurobindo became the Maharaja's private secretary and ghostwriter, as well as a French professor and later vice-rector of Baroda College. Secretly, he participated in the revolutionary movement for independence. He immersed himself body and soul in Indian culture. With his incredible ability for languages, in a short time he learned Sanskrit, Hindi, Bengali and Marathi. It seems that later he also learned Gujarati and Tamil. Now, in addition to Homer, Horace and Dante, he also read the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Vedas, the Upanishads, the classical poetry of Kalidasa (5th century AD) and the modern poetry of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay (1838 – 1894), between others.

In 1901, he married Mrinalini Devi. They lived together for a year, but then, due to his political and spiritual involvements, they lived apart, communicating by letters. Seventeen years later, in December 1918, Mrinalini received a correspondence from him, saying that he had obtained the siddhis (yogi powers) and they could now be together

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again forever. But that was not the decree of Fate. Around the same time, she contracted malaria and died while preparing to meet him in Puducherry (Pondicherry).

Long before that, however, Aurobindo had another spiritual experience when, visiting a temple of Kali, he saw the image of the deity as a living goddess. At this time, to increase his mental acuity and capacity for action, he began to practice pranayama, yogic breathing.

With its vibrant intellectuality, Bengal, Aurobindo's home state, was the epicenter of revolutionary activity. The decision of Lord Curzon, the British Viceroy of India, to divide the territory of Bengal added to the unrest. Without revealing his real intentions to the Maharaja, Aurobindo took a year of unpaid leave, and joined the movement. He left Baroda College for Bengal National College at a fifth of his previous salary: just 150 rupees a month.

In 1906, he became the secret editor of the weekly *Bande Mataram*, which, under the motto of *Swaraj* (Complete Independence), became the organ of the revolutionary movement. The name of the weekly, *Bande Mataram* (Mother, I salute you!), was derived from the title of a poem, composed in Bengali and Sanskrit by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, which became the cry of the crowds against British rule in India, and was later partially transformed into the lyrics of Indian national anthem.

All opposition to British colonialism was concentrated in the Indian National Congress. Along with Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Aurobindo led the left wing of the party in the historic schism of 1907, when the radicals split from the moderates.

To intensify his revolutionary activity, Aurobindo decided to devote himself more deeply to Yoga. "I learned that Yoga gives power. And I thought: why not get that power and use it to free my country?", he would say later. To that end, he asked for initiation from the yogi Vishnu Bhaskar Lele. Instructed by Lele in an introductory technique, with just three days of practice, he reached the "Silent Consciousness of Brahman", a stage that advanced yogis take decades to attain.

Anchored in the Silent Consciousness, he spoke

at a national meeting of the revolutionary movement. At this time, he also began to receive instructions from an Inner Voice.

In 1908, a bombing was committed against Judge Kingsford, famous for the cruelty of his sentences. As in many other terrorist acts, the judge in question escaped, but two innocent English ladies, who had nothing to do with the history, died in the explosion. Barin, Aurobindo's younger brother, took part in the action. And Aurobindo himself, though not involved, was accused of being the mentor.

British authorities mounted a massive police operation to hunt down suspects. In the judicial process, which became historic, the prosecution presented 5,000 material evidence (bombs, revolvers, acid, leaflets etc.) against 36 defendants. Barin and Ullaskar Dutt were sentenced to death. Aurobindo was imprisoned in solitary confinement in Alipore Prison in Kolkata (Calcutta). Later, the death sentence against Barin and Ullaskar was commuted to life imprisonment, and both were given amnesty in 1920. Aurobindo was released after a year in jail for lack of evidence.

During the trial and in Alipore Prison, Aurobindo had decisive spiritual experiences: first, the encounter with the "spirit" of Vivekananda; then, the perception of the Immanent Divine, in the form of Krishna, who presented himself in everything and everyone.

### **The connection with Ramakrishna and Vivekananda**

Sri Aurobindo never met Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836 – 1886) on the physical plane, as Ramakrishna died when Aurobindo was still a teenager in England. But he received three messages from him by hidden means. The first took place in Baroda, when Aurobindo was the Maharaja's private secretary. "*Arabindo, mandir karo, mandir karo*" (Aurobindo, build a temple, build a temple), Ramakrishna told him.

Later, in his informal conversations with the disciples, Aurobindo stated that it was this first occult contact with Ramakrishna that led him to Yoga: "Barin at that time was trying automatic writing

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(...). On another occasion, a spirit, claiming to be that of Ramakrishna, came and simply said 'build a temple'. At that time, we were planning to build a temple for political sannyasis and we called it Bhavani Mandir. We thought he meant this, but later I understood how to 'build an inner temple'. This gave me the final push for Yoga. I thought: great men can't be chasing a chimera, and if this super-human power exists, why not use it for action?"

Ramakrishna's second message was transmitted shortly after Aurobindo's arrival at Puducherry (Pondicherry). The words were not recorded, but the guidance was for him to build the "Higher Self" into the "Lower Self", plus Ramakrishna's promise that he would communicate once more when the sadhana (Yogic training period) was nearing its end. .

The third message was given on October 18, 1912: "Make complete *sannyasa* (renunciation) of karma. Make complete *sannyasa* of thought. Make complete *sannyasa* of the feeling. This is my last statement".

Due to these three hidden episodes, Aurobindo always claimed that his spiritual path was a continuation of the path of Ramakrishna. Another reason for this was that he was visited and instructed in Alipore Prison by the spirit of Vivekananda, the chief disciple of Ramakrishna.

The occult contact with Vivekananda was mentioned several times in Aurobindo's conversations with his disciples. On one such occasion, Aurobindo said: "Vivekananda came and gave me the knowledge of the Intuitive Mind. I had no idea about it at the time. He also didn't have it when he was in the body. He gave me detailed knowledge, illustrating each point".

Another record of the conversations, dated 1926, has the following phrase from Aurobindo: "Then the incident occurred of Vivekananda's personality visiting me in jail. He explained to me in detail the work of the Supramental – not just the Supramental, but the Intuitive Mind, the mind as organized by the Supramental. He didn't use the word Supermind. I named it later. This experience lasted about two weeks"

In this conversation, Nirodbaran, one of Auro-

bindo's disciples, asked: "Was it a vision?" And the master replied: "No. It was not a vision. I wouldn't have believed in a vision".

In another talk, from 1939, Aurobindo stated: "I had no idea of Supermind when I started and for a long time this was not clear to me. It was Vivekananda's spirit that first gave me a clue towards the Supermind. This clue made me see how the Consciousness of Truth works in everything".

– "Did he know about the Supermind?", asked Nirodbaran.

– "He didn't say Supermind", replied Aurobindo. "Supermind is my own word. He just said to me: 'this is this, that is that' and so on. That's how he proceeded, pointing and pointing. He visited me for 15 days in Alipore Jail, and, until I could grasp the whole thing, he came, teaching me and imprinting on my mind the work of Higher Consciousness, the Consciousness of Truth in general, which leads to Supermind. He didn't leave me until I had all this in my head".

– "Can gurus come in that way and give teachings?", asked Nirodbaran.

– "Why not? This is a traditional experience from ancient times. Many gurus give initiations after their death (...). But I had another direct experience of Vivekananda's presence, when I was practicing Hatha Yoga. I felt his presence standing behind me, looking at me. This later exerted a great influence on my life".

The contact with Vivekananda and the ubiquitous vision of Krishna profoundly transformed Aurobindo. Years later, he would say: "I spoke of a year in prison. It would be more appropriate to speak of a year of living in the forest, in an ashram, in a hermitage. The only result of the British Government's wrath was that I found God".

### **Refuge in Puducherry (Pondicherry)**

After his release, Aurobindo began editing two

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new publications: *Karmayogin*, in English, and *Dharma*, in Bengali. He also began to give new meaning to the struggle for independence, recognizing India's spiritual role on a planetary scale.

Based on an article published in *Karmayogin*, "To my Countrymen", the British authorities decided to arrest him again. Informed of the plan, Aurobindo received an *Adesh* (Divine Command), ordering him to flee to Chandernagore, then a French enclave. There, another *Adesh* sent him to take refuge in Puducherry (Pondicherry).

He understood that India had already awakened and that independence had become inevitable. He also understood that his own mission had moved from being political to becoming spiritual. He arrived in Puducherry (Pondicherry) on April 4, 1910, at the age of 38, being received by patriots. He never left the town.

Years earlier, a spiritual man had prophesied that a "yogi of the north" would come to Puducherry (Pondicherry), who would practice *Purna Yoga* (Integral Yoga), and would be recognized by three affirmations. Integral Yoga is the name of the system developed by Sri Aurobindo. As for the three statements, there are several interpretations. For me, they are related to the three words that synthesize the Aurobindian Integral Yoga: Aspiration, Detachment and Surrender.

Aurobindo lived his first four years at Puducherry (Pondicherry) with a few disciples, in intense spiritual practice, and great financial hardship. At that time, he used to say that he knew that, in the end, God always provides. But that God had decided to play at providing later and later.

The situation changed radically when, on March 29, 1914, in the company of her husband Paul Richard, arrived at Puducherry (Pondicherry) the one who would become the main disciple of Sri Aurobindo: Mirra Alfassa, later known as "Mother". French, the daughter of an Egyptian mother and a Turkish father, Mirra was born into a very rich family: her father was a banker. With authentic spiritual and artistic gifts, she experienced, from early childhood, numerous unusual states of consciousness, and, as an adult, she attended a circle in Paris that included several Impressionist artists.

For about a decade, Mirra had been dreaming with a dark-skinned Indian whom she considered her master and called "Krishna". Upon finding herself in the presence of Aurobindo, she discovered that he was the "Krishna" of her dreams. She also experienced a sudden and prolonged silence, during which no thoughts entered her mind.

On August 15, 1914, the day of Aurobindo's birthday and India's future independence, with the financial support of Mirra and Paul, the *Arya* monthly, written and edited by Aurobindo, was officially released. The monthly, published in English and French, was printed regularly for six and a half years. The articles published in it by Aurobindo would later compose his greatest works: *The Life Divine*, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, *On the Veda*, *The Upanishads*, *Essays on the Gita* etc.

In 1915, due to World War I, Mirra returned to France. Then she accompanied her husband on a four-year business stay in Japan. In 1920, she returned permanently to Puducherry (Pondicherry). A year later she and Paul divorced and Mirra devoted herself entirely to Sri Aurobindo's spiritual cause.

As a woman and a foreigner, Mirra had to face, in the early days, the silent hostility of Aurobindo's other disciples. But, step by step, her strong presence asserted itself.

On November 24, 1926, which became known as "Siddhi Day", the Overmental Consciousness, in the form of Krishna, descended entirely on Sri Aurobindo's physical body. During the meditation and *darshan* (blessing provided by the vision of the Guru's form) that followed, the 24 disciples present had various types of spiritual experiences.

"Krishna is not the Supramental Light", Aurobindo later explained. "The descent of Krishna means the descent of the Overmental Divinity, preparing, though not being itself, the descent of the Supermind and *Ananda*".

Next, Aurobindo placed Mirra, now called "Mother", at the head of the Ashram and went into seclusion. He only left his apartment three times a year, on February 21, "Mother's" birthday; August 15th, his birthday; and November 24th, anniversary of

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"Siddhi Day". On these dates, together with the "Mother," he gave *darshan* to disciples and visitors.

Under Mother's direction, the Ashram grew enormously. Considering that he himself could be the gateway to the descent of Supramental Consciousness and its anchoring on Earth, Aurobindo devoted his time and energy to super-advanced yogic practices. But he did not fail to respond in writing to the disciples' questions. Good-humoredly, he likened the "cataract of letters" received and answered by him daily to the "plague of prasads (offerings) and admirers" that flocked every day to another Indian saint of his time, Sri Ramana Maharshi.

Part of the letters written by Aurobindo are now edited in three volumes under the title *Letters on Yoga*. And it makes excellent introductory material for the study of Aurobindian thought.

### War effort

On November 24, 1938, while preparing for *darshan* on the anniversary of "Siddhi Day," Aurobindo tripped over a tiger-skin rug and fractured his right femur, just above the knee. The world was rapidly moving into World War II. And the political climate had reached a state of maximum tension. Aurobindo interpreted the accident as an "attack by Hostile Forces". And, under medical advice, he remained bedridden for eight weeks.

At the beginning of the war, he just followed the events, with great attention. But, on the brink of the British Air Battle, he publicly declared his support for the allies, gave money to the war effort and, above all, engaged himself, in the occult plane, in a personal war against the *Assuric* (demonic) Forces which, in his opinion, held Hitler in power and, in battle after battle, were giving him a victory that seemed irresistible.

His position was misunderstood and criticized by the Indian Congress and even by some disciples, who, because of their anti-British fervor, were supporting Hitler. Aurobindo and the "Mother" tried to explain to these mistaken ones that what was really at stake was not the clash of two imperialist power blocs, but a confrontation of cosmic dimensions between Light and Dark. And that, if

the Nazis won the war, the world would suffer an unprecedented setback in its evolutionary process.

In March 1942, the British government enlisted the help of Indian nationalists to fight the Japanese forces, which were at the gates of India. In return, it offered a plan for independence. Aurobindo publicly welcomed the British offer. And he sent a personal emissary to persuade the Indian Congress. In his opinion, in addition to fighting the most dangerous enemy, the Indians would have the possibility of achieving, at the same time, independence and unity between Hindus and Muslims.

However, under Gandhi's influence, the Indian Congress refused the British offer. When he learned of the refusal, Aurobindo said: "I knew they would not accept". And the "Mother" commented: "Now the calamity will befall India".

Her words were prophetic. When, after the end of the war, India finally gained its independence, and, with pomp and circumstance, Lord Mountbatten, the last British viceroy, handed over power to Jawaharlal Nehru, the partition of the territory between Hindus and Muslims forced 14 million people to leave their homes. One million deaths were the result of conflicts between supporters of the two religions.

Although the project of Supramental's descent was aborted by the resistance of a yet unprepared humanity, Aurobindo continued his spiritual practices. In his apartment at the Ashram, he walked in a circle for seven hours a day, raising his consciousness to higher and higher planes. And he wrote at night, from 6 pm to 6 am. Thanks to the excellent relationship of my teacher, Satchidananda, with the current leaders of the Ashram, I was privileged to visit this apartment on three occasions. In the place where Aurobindo walked, the ground is slightly sunken, due to the wear and tear caused by his steps.

On December 5, 1950, Aurobindo entered *Mahasamadhi* (conscious abandonment of the physical body by an accomplished yogi). Countless crowds of admirers, Indian and foreign, flocked to the Ashram. His body was exposed for public *darshan* for four days without showing any signs of

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deterioration. Then, by decision of the “Mother”, he was buried in the Ashram garden, where he remains until today.

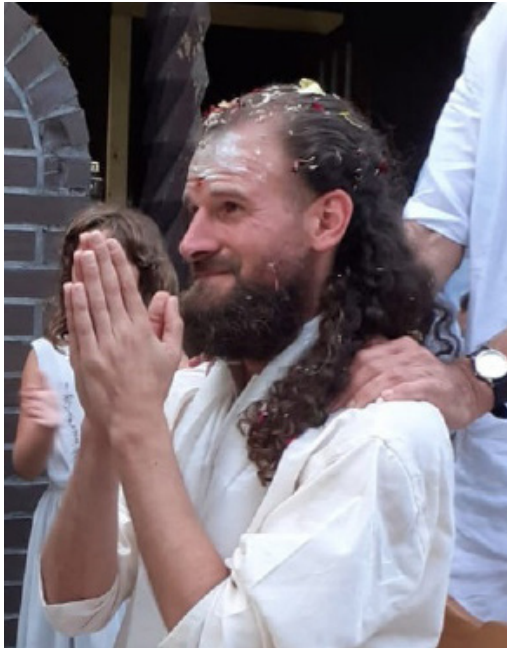
The project of the Supramental Revolution also subsists. It is up to our generation and the following ones to take it forward.

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## Chaitanya joins the Order of Acharyas, July 11, 2021

By M.G. Satchidananda

Chaitanya (Christian Ebner) was born in Lower Austria. He was a student at the University of Applied Sciences in Vienna; however, his studies took him to Finland, and it was during that very long winter that awoke in him unknown inspiration and significantly contributed to the ripening of his character.



This Nordic winter proved to be a transformative period. He returned to Vienna for his graduation year, changed. He best describes this change as feeling empowered and more alive. That following graduation year was rich with up-lifting encounters, all which lead him to experience meditative states of consciousness. Christian unmistakably, felt a call to dedicate his life to a higher purpose. In summer 2008, at the age of twenty-four, he decided to abandon his former plans for his life and begin a journey into the unknown. His travel took him West.

After some months under the open sky, homeless and out of reach even to family and close friends, he felt ready to let life lead. He had arrived at a state of being, free of societal constraints or fear. Surrendering to the flow of events, he lived with ease, fulfilled and inspired by just living in the moment. It seemed to him that every day he was a different person, a new person. Life began to feel like a cosmic adventure. He looked for and followed the signs revealed to him. He felt excited for each new day, awake, not looking back, only moving forward.

After about a year of wandering, he discovered a whole

new world in Peru. It was there he began to systematically cultivate the spontaneous states of bliss through a dedicated meditation practice. His first, ten-day silent Vipassana retreat was a homecoming into a natural state of desirelessness and unconditional fulfillment. That intensive practice established his confidence in and dedication to meditation.

During this period, he met somebody to whom he bonded strongly and who gave him the first introduction to Yoga. She was his first Yoga teacher, and he is forever grateful for all her empowerment and all she offered throughout the years of their relationship. She truly was a warrior and inspired him greatly. Through her support he quickly and “unintentionally” found himself in a position where he also had to teach others.

Together, they founded and lead a Yoga school and social project located just outside Cusco in the heart of the Peruvian Andes. During the five years of his involvement with the project they served many Peruvian children with free basic and artistic education, free vegetarian food and free Yoga classes. It also became a school and refuge for hundreds of volunteers and spiritual seekers. The experiences of those years remain a treasured memory.

At precisely the right time, Christian encountered the name and form of Babaji through a Kriya sadhak, he met. Soon after, in 2014, he received the blessing of initiation into Babaji's Kriya Yoga, while in Germany, from Acharya Satyananda. Satyanandaji has become over the years not only a true mentor, but a brother and a friend. Jai Gurubai! Kriya Yoga was yet another significant, unforgettable event of life. He knew that he had found an integral and authentic Yoga tradition to which he felt deeply connected from the very first moment.

The initiation marked again, a change in the course of his life, and soon he felt compelled to leave Peru and his partner. During the fall 2015, he visited the Kriya Yoga Ashram in Canada. There he received mantra diksha from M.G. Satchidananda. He chose the mantra for complete surrender to Babaji. This event was indescribably beautiful, the bliss was overwhelming. He decided to stay at the Ashram for the winter dedicating himself to intensive sadhana and seva. In spring, he returned to Austria seeking a new beginning, at his very roots.

After several weeks living in a forest hut and teaching yoga in nearby communities, he met Katharina, his life partner. It was a magical and fateful encounter. It was clear from the beginning that they had the blessing and responsibility to start a family.

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## Chaitanya *continued*

This encounter happened just before his departure for the Yoga Teacher Training with Durga Ahlund and M.G. Satchidananda in the summer of 2016. As Satchidananda offered him to stay for some weeks at the Ashram in Badrinath for Tapas and Seva, he did not hesitate and soon commenced a three-month pilgrimage to India, with periods of intensive practice in Rishikesh as well as in Badrinath. The height of bliss and the graceful power of the mountains were unspeakable. He felt that he had truly received darshan of the Holiness of the Himalayas and felt guided and protected throughout.

Not long after his return, in summer 2017, Katharina gave birth to their first daughter, Leela Theres. He witnessed her birth and clearly remembers the bliss and inexpressible awe he felt when he looked into her eyes for the first time. The following period was perhaps not surprisingly, particularly challenging. It was very difficult to balance intensive sadhana, family and household duty, weekly yoga classes for several different groups, regular

silent meditation retreats, plus religious studies at the University in Vienna. Regardless, he did not get distracted from the path and strengthened his commitment to the tradition by participation in the third initiation in the summer 2018. A year later, M.G. Satchidananda invited him to fulfill specific conditions for induction into the Order of Acharyas. The following years were dedicated to the fulfillment of the rigorous requirements, which he completed in 2021.

By Gurus Grace and support finally Chaitanya was able to create a Kriya Yoga Ashram, "Kriya Mandiram," AT-3250 Wieselburg-Land, which was founded as a legal association in May 2021 in Lower Austria. The ashram is meant a haven for Kriyabans and the like, where one can dedicate oneself to sadhana without disturbance, and where regular classes, initiation seminars, retreats and satsang take place. Chaitanya hopes that Kriya Mandiram will become a place where Yoga sadhana, family life and sangha can co-exist as one harmonious whole.



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## Order of Acharyas: Annual Report and plans for 2022

DO HELP US BRING BABAJI'S KRIYA YOGA  
TO PERSONS LIKE YOU ALL AROUND THE WORLD

**This is a good time to consider making a donation to "Babaji's Kriya Yoga Order of Acharyas", to enable us to continue to bring Babaji's Kriya Yoga to persons who otherwise would not be able to receive it.**

**In the past 12 months, since September 2020 the members of the Order of Acharyas did the following:**

- Brought more than 50 initiation seminars to more than 500 participants living in 10 countries including Brazil, India, Japan, Sri Lanka, Estonia, Spain, Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, the USA and Canada.
- Sponsored and helped organize weekly online

Satsangs via Zoom in India, North America, Brazil, Germany, Sri Lanka, and France, and daily sadhana meetings via Zoom in India.

- Maintained an ashram and publishing office in Bangalore, India. It published and distributed most of our books and tapes throughout India.
- Maintained an ashram in Badrinath, India.
- Kept the staff of our 2 ashrams in India and our webmaster employed during the pandemic with their full salaries;
- Published the Japanese language digital editions on Amazon.jp the *Voice of Babaji*, the *Kriya Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* and the *Siddhas*, and *Enlightenment Its Not What You Think*.

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## Order of Acharyas *continued*

- Sponsored free public classes weekly in Babaji's Kriya Yoga, and kirtan events at the Quebec ashram.
- Completed the training of one new Acharya in Austria. Trained Acharya Brahmananda to give the 2nd initiation.
- Finance the construction of a new ashram in Colombo, Sri Lanka.
- Publish the book *Babaji and the 18 Siddhas* in Malayalam, Kannada, the book *Voice of Babaji* in Kannada; the book, *Footsteps of Ramalingam*, in French and other European languages.
- Complete the training of 4 Acharyas in Australia, Brazil, France, Canada and Italy.

### In the year 2021 - 2022 the Order plans to do the following:

- Bring initiation seminars to most of the above-named countries,
- Conduct free bi-weekly public asana and meditation classes at our ashrams in Quebec, Bangalore and Sri Lanka.

The 33 volunteer Acharyas of the Order and many other volunteer organizers need your support to fulfill this program for the year 2020-2021. **Your contribution is tax deductible in Canada and the USA.** Send it by December 31, 2021, if possible, and receive a receipt for your 2021 Income tax return. Use your credit card!

## News and Notes



Acharyas resume initiation seminars. Nearly all of the Order's Acharyas have either resumed initiation seminars since June 2021, or have are planning to offer them from September onwards. Satchidananda offered the 3rd initiation at the Quebec Ashram in French to 12 francophone initiates. Satyananda gave a 1st and 2nd initiation in Austria in early July. Nagaraj and Vasudeva have offered 1st and 2nd initiation seminars in Japan. See our website Calendar page for scheduled seminars in your country in 2021 and 2022.

### Quebec Ashram initiation seminars with M. G. Satchidananda.

1st initiation: September 3-5 and October 15-17, (English),  
2nd initiation: October 1-3, 2021; 3rd initiation: July 22-31, 2022.

**New MP3 Versions of our 3 Albums.** We have now created MP3 versions of our 3 Albums: 'OM Kriya Babaji Stuti Manjari', 'Devotional Songs and Chants from the Kriya Yoga Tradition', and 'Awakening from the Dream'. Once you purchase them, you will have instant access to them through Gumroad.com and will be able to listen to them on your Phone, Tablet, PC or other devices. <https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/email/bky-monthly-promo/>

[english/bky-mp3-audio.html](https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/bky-mp3-audio.html)

India: <https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/email/bky-monthly-promo/indian/bky-mp3-audio.html>

**Receive our new Babaji message cards!** They inspire and remind you of Kriya Babaji and the wisdom of our tradition. We will send them to you via Whatsapp 2-3 x per week in 6 languages as per your choice. Simultaneously, we will post them in English on Instagram ([instagram.com/babajiskriyayoga](https://www.instagram.com/babajiskriyayoga))

For more information [Click here](#) to Download PDF.

**Online satsang meetings, Yoga classes, questions and answers.** Many of our Acharyas are offering their support to initiates and non-initiates through online streaming Hatha Yoga classes, as well as satsang meetings through cyberspace communications like Zoom. However, other Kriya Yoga techniques which are taught during initiation seminars cannot be shared during these. Their purpose is to encourage participants to meditate, and secondarily to give some inspiration. Questions from initiates about the Kriya Yoga techniques will be answered only in a personal-

*Continued on Page 11*

## News and Notes *continued*

ized one-to-one setting, where confidentiality is ensured, either by email or a phone call or in person.

**Use Zoom to join online Kriya Hatha Yoga classes, meditation and satsang meetings.**

**In Europe for initiates: Sunday Satsang.** 12.00 GMT + 1 (14.00 Central European Time) duration: 60 to 90 minutes. **Daily Satsang – Babaji's Kriya Yoga Sri Lanka:** Every day (Monday to Saturday) 5 p.m. India Standard Time (12.30 to 13.30 GMT + 1). For details: <https://kriyayogasangha.org/babajis-kriya-yoga-online-satsang/>

**In Sao Paulo, Brazil:** for initiates: Satsang every day, 6:30 p.m. (São Paulo Time Zone). Hatha Yoga class every Friday, at 8:00 a.m. for everyone. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5184926117?pwd=UnFVWmdSZC9PK0JoN0xPTGMxd3pSQT09>  
ID: 518 492 6117 Password: babaji

**At Flora des Aguas, Cunha, Brazil:** Monday to Friday: 6:30 am to 7:30 am: Kriya Hatha Yoga and classical Yoga asanas: 7:30 am to 8:10 am: Pranayama, meditation, reading and Vedic mantras. Contact: [fabifsamorim@hotmail.com](mailto:fabifsamorim@hotmail.com). In Portuguese.

**In India: Sunday Satsang.** 12.00 GMT + 1 (14.00 CET) duration: 60 to 90 minutes. <https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/pdfs/events/english Intl-satsang-info-text-sunday.pdf>

**New! Stream or Download into your mobile phone, PC or tablet the New Video: Babaji's Kriya Hatha Yoga: Self Realization through Action with Awareness,** 2 hour 5 minutes, **in 20 segments, with M. G. Satchidananda and Durga Ahlund.** For more details and to view 9 minutes of sample segments go to: <https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/bookstore-gumroad.htm>

*"This is an earnest, unique and inspiring presentation, suitable for experienced beginners and intermediates."* – **Yoga Journal.**

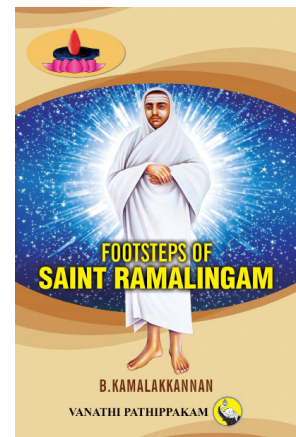
**COVID-19 and Initiation Seminars in Babaji's Kriya Yoga.** As authorities in many countries are now relaxing conditions which have been designed to restrict the movement and assembly of persons, and as the risk of infection from the COVID 19 Delta variant continues to be very high, the Board of Directors recommends physical "social distancing" as a corollary to the very first yama or social restraint: ahimsa, to do no harm.

We recognize that conditions vary widely between various countries and even cities. However, the virus does not care in what country or city you are in. It has consistently demonstrated itself to be more dangerous than expected. Studies confirm that 'aerosols' exhaled by normal breathing, and not just only small droplets expelled by a cough

or sneeze, contribute to spreading the virus in rooms (unlike outdoors). Consequently, one person in a closed room or airplane can quickly infect dozens of other persons within a few minutes, irrespective of governments lifting the restrictions due to economic pressure.

**Footsteps of Saint Ramalingam**, by B. Kamalakkannan, 120 pages, published July 2014. Price US\$7.50 or CAD\$8.40 including gst.

The inspiring life story of Ramalingam Swamikal, Tamil Nadu's greatest 19th century Siddha, including many little known facts about Ramalingam's life, prophecies, photographs and teachings, which the author has investigated in painstaking detail. Ramalingam attained the deathless state of soruba samadhi. He is revered universally for his great sanctity, conquest of death, and inspiring songs, sung by millions to this day. Like Tamil Siddhas before him, he worshipped the "Supreme Grace Light."



In chapter 18 entitled "Root Cause of Enmity" the author presents facts and compelling arguments which explain why Ramalingam was persecuted in various ways by orthodox Saiva Siddhantans who condemned him for teaching that Siva was to be found within through meditation on the Supreme Grace Light, *Arutperun Jyoti*, and that through this the soul's sins or fetters could be dissolved, and one could unite with the Lord.

The author reveals that before disappearing in his room on January 30, 1874, Ramalingam said:

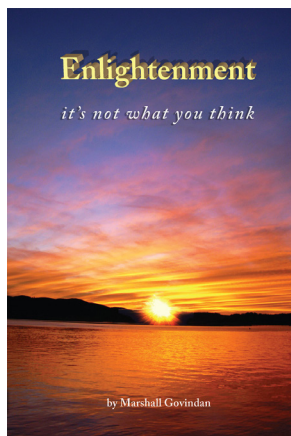
1. The shop was opened. But there was none to buy. So the shop was closed.
2. I am going to close the door of my room. You believe that God is now in the flame of the lamp. Therefore, you worship the flame of the lamp without wasting your time. You do meditation before this flame of the lamp keeping in your mind what I have stated in the 28 Poems commencing with the word "*Ninainthu, Ninainthu*".
3. that he "would remain invisible for two and a half *Kadigai*." (1 kadigai = 60 years.  $2.5 \times 60 = 150$  years.  $1874 + 150 =$  the year 2024 A.D.)

**In preparation for Ramanlingam's return in 2024, the author of this book has given to the Order of Acharyas publishing rights for it in all foreign languages, and sent the original files containing its rare color photos.** A French translation has already been completed and will be published in the coming months.





Order your English copy here: [https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/bookstore.htm#ramalingai\\_book](https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/bookstore.htm#ramalingai_book)



**Enlightenment: It's Not What You Think** reveals how you can replace the perspective of the ego – the habit of identifying with the body, emotions, and thoughts – with a new perspective: the Witness, that of your soul ... pure consciousness. With compelling logic, practices for everyday life, and guided meditations, the book explains how you can free yourself from suffering, enjoy inner peace, and find intuitive guidance. The essays in this

book explore the descriptions of enlightenment in various spiritual and wisdom traditions, the process of becoming enlightened, and how to overcome the inner obstacles to the achievement of that goal. 192 pages 6 x 9 inches, soft-cover June 2016. Price: USD\$16.00, CAD\$14.96 in Canada (inc gst).

"With this work, *Enlightenment*, Govindan delivers the gifts of siddha masters to our doorsteps. Here, he delineates succinctly and clearly the time-tested techniques of these masters for eliminating obstacles—our deepest afflictions of fear, doubt, and all forms of grief and sorrow which obstruct the incessant flow of our intrinsic luminosity and happiness. Enlightenment is a must-read, for it is practical, simple, and meaningful... It is a decisive tool we can use for finding life's purpose." – **Pandit Rajmani Tigunait, Ph. D**; Spiritual Head, Himalayan Institute; Teacher, author, humanitarian, and visionary spiritual leader. [https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/bookstore.htm#enlightenment\\_book](https://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/bookstore.htm#enlightenment_book)

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**Subscribe to the correspondence course, The Grace of Babaji's Kriya Yoga.** We invite you to join us in this adventure of Self-exploration and discovery, drawn from the books dictated by Babaji in 1952 and 1953. Receive by mail, each month, a lesson of 18-24 pages developing a specific theme, with practical exercises. For details go here: [http://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/bookstore.htm#grace\\_course](http://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/bookstore.htm#grace_course)

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