

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

This dissertation is an analysis and interpretation of Shri Aurobindo's philosophical views on both the subtler (the Absolute) and the more tangible (the Relative) aspects of existence and reality as developed primarily in his Magnum Opus "The Life Divine". Here he expounded in detail his theories on the nature of Brahman, the methodology of creation and of the momentous journey of humanity. His qualifications for this task are based on his history as a scholar, intellectual and mystic.

Shri Aurobindo (1872-1950) was an Indian brought up as an Englishman but he became an Indian political patriot because of the repressive British regime in India. He did not stop at politics; he realised a subtler dimension underlying the field of activity of the relative domain. This is a field of unbounded consciousness. He learned the methodology for contacting this realm of wisdom and of experiencing that component of the All, and wrote extensively about that from especially 1910 until his death in 1950. His philosophical masterpiece "The Life Divine" first appeared in instalments in a monthly journal "Arya" which he published from 1914 to 1921.

He was a down-to-earth, pragmatic idealistic realist. He studied, and he knew of, the conflicting views about reality in Indian philosophy, one being that only the relative (the world of the materialist) is real, and the other that the Absolute (the province of the ascetic) is the only reality. He argued that both these aspects of existence are real, each on its own level. He integrated the apparent contradictions of the gross and the subtle into a holistic philosophy and said that humanity should develop in such a way that that holism became a normal everyday experience. This implies a growth of different facets of our being; it also implies that we possess those different aspects, albeit undeveloped. One of these parts operates beyond the field of logic, in the supramental arena. He obviously knew both these parts well, proof of which is the way he used them. Having that type of expertise, his warning that logic presents and describes only an insignificant and insufficient part of what is, should be taken seriously. This part that is beyond logic can only be comprehended by developing a further facet of our as yet unknown potentiality. He knows that humankind can attain and live in these

further reaches. He detailed the roadmap to this region; this legacy is for all and is contained in his books.

2. A RELIGIOUS STUDIES ANALYSIS

In order to understand the thought and experiential worlds of Shri Aurobindo, I examined some cardinal facets applicable to all scholarly religious research. A framework of the distinct analytical steps set out by Prof J S Krüger is followed in this outline: 1. The research material, 2. Introspection, 3. Understanding the intended meaning of his work, 4. Theory formulation or seeing patterns, 5. Evaluation, 6. Religious thought, 7. Mysticism and 8. Morality.

The various elements of the outline overlap and are interrelated. Although all aspects mentioned are explicitly or implicitly dealt with and are mentioned below, this study is primarily concerned with the first three sections.

1. In religious science the understanding of a particular subject (here Shri Aurobindo) is tied to the consideration of the facts concerning him. These facts arise from the collecting of the data, the interaction of the different components, and the appreciation and eventual evaluation thereof. This process changes the data and results in the creation of the facts. The milieu in the case of Shri Aurobindo is shaped by the following data. He was born an Indian in 1872, his father was an anglophile and consequently he received his schooling in England, he started his career as a teacher and radical politician in his home country that was ruled by the British, and he became a mystic, philosopher and writer nearly by accident. He was a Hindu but his spiritual life and development was virtually beyond organised religion.

The research material that I used were mainly empirical data in that it contained detailed factual historical information concerning Shri Aurobindo gleaned from a variety of sources, but mainly from his own works. Further work done by others in the form of books and articles on him and his work, some more critical than others (and consequently perhaps more valuable, as alternative viewpoints with the creation of yet deeper insights are presented vigorously), were examined and mentioned or discussed. The material consulted is original and pure, in the sense that it was all written in English and that it is the actual work of the original authors.

2. In doing a study in religious science, the student that does the work should have as broad a background knowledge as is possible. The student too is a dynamic and constantly changing and interacting citizen of the universe. His duty is to observe and interact with what is available and presented to him, entering to the extent that he can into the spirit of the data at hand. This process is a subjective activity involving and requiring the student to access

the internal constitution of the subject of study. His interaction with the data produces facts which he then has to treat objectively and neutrally. To the protest that objectivity is not possible, could be responded by stating that supreme subjectivity is arguably the essence of objectivity, the true marriage of the observer and the observed. This produces the truth of the facts.

In this study I have observed the given data, and after internalising the data, I reproduced the facts as I see it. Inevitably, the end product, the facts, differed from the input data. This is because the sieve used (in the form of myself) to distil the essence and the meaning or true intention of my subject, was arbitrary in a way, not through intention but by virtue of my own history, and my ever-changing growth and development, which was effected even during the study done on Shri Aurobindo. This degree of discrepancy between my views of him and his philosophy, and that what he truly is and thought, is present despite my best intentions to enter into the spirit of the meaning of my subject. To objectively, neutrally and empathetically describe what I perceive and feel subjectively, implies an honesty that can only come from a lifetime of dealing with the realisation of the inevitable variance and divergence of *my* views and perceptions and of that of another person dealing with the world of the subtle spirit, and furthermore, of the appreciation of the limitations of concepts such as words to convey accurately any profound, or even mundane, insights. However empathetic my insights (which insights again is the result of years of reading of and introspection on this basic subject matter of the domain of esoteric reality, with a bias towards the wisdom of the thinkers of the "East"), it is no guarantee that I will touch and retrieve the essence of the philosophy of Shri Aurobindo. Suffice to say that it was my intention and wish to reveal or uncover and present this very essence gleaned by my reading of him, which reading lead me to believe that his philosophy is profound and important.

3. In a study such as this, I as an honest student have to understand the subject. The veil between my subject matter and me must be rend, and I must appreciate that particular you, your point of view and your universe. I must realise that you are constantly changing, you are not an absolute entity but a continuous process and that the you of yesteryear is not the same as the you now. Therefore, what is important here is you, your explicit intentions as well as your involuntary and unconscious inclinations, your inner world of attitudes, thoughts, feelings, motives. To achieve total true results is impossible. The safe and shallow way of observing your externalities and to report that is insufficient and unacceptable. It is in the subtle internalities where the truth

and understanding is to be found. My commitment to the truth, not only mine but yours too, makes for traversing a fine, tenuous and delicate route, the intended destination being the convergence of our minds. In a subtle and gentle way this is how I can interpret the elusive existential you.

In my study of Shri Aurobindo, to allow justice to be done to the representation and interpretation of his thoughts and intentionality, I approached his work with a sincere desire to understand him. My success will depend on the degree of my ability to fathom his thought and being. A true comprehension and insight of his total approach to his subject is arguably not possible, as our different ways of experiencing life and reality may at best approach convergence but never meet. However, in accepting the social responsibility of attempting to interpret his work, I adopted an as near as possible existential understanding approach, having already participated in an intense dialogue over time with this very field of his, as well as with commentators and exponents thereof. This hopefully resulted in me representing him as honestly as possible, and interpreting his intentionality fairly and correctly, communicating empathetically what he thought, understood and meant in his work.

4. His background influenced his life. Historically, he knew the hard social and political conditions of the Indian people. His solution was gaining political independence and spiritual development for his people. Through this work he discovered his cultural and religious roots. His spiritual life resulted in him becoming an important new Vedanta exponent. His theoretical work is a classical example of the observing of the correlations between various factors and the creation of a relevant explanatory system.
5. In religious studies, evaluation and critique is legitimate, but not necessary. My main emphasis in this study was not evolution or critique, but where it does appear, it is related to the material that I dealt with.
6. The cognitive dimension of religion relates to think religiously, but it is not necessary to develop ones own alternate view or to take part in his thinking process within a paradigm that he set in motion. It includes the following two sections about mysticism and morality.
7. Mysticism is that field of beyondness which is in fact present in reality. Its essential characteristic is that of higher states of consciousness. This is integrated in this study.
8. Morality deals with the how-to part of ethics of, in this instance, a religious philosophy, and again, this is not treated separately, but is incorporated in this study.

3. THE STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

The research problem will be addressed systematically in this dissertation as follows:

1. **Chapter 2** is his biography, outlining his life and education in England for thirteen years, from his seventh to his twentieth year. He read widely and was a brilliant scholar mastering classical and modern languages, history and philosophy. He returned to India to devote himself in turn to education (1893 - 1901), politics (1902 - 1910) and a writing and reclusive life, concentrating on philosophy and mysticism (1910 - 1950).
2. **Chapter 3** deals with a scheme of "The Life Divine". We present the index, a brief overview, and a short summary of all the chapters.
3. **Chapter 4** examines the cycle of involution and evolution, which are the core aspects of Shri Aurobindo's cosmology and his view of creation. Involution covers the stages of descent from the Original Godhead to Matter through the following steps: Sachchidananda, Supermind, Overmind, Intuitive Mind, Illumined Mind, Higher Mind, Mind, Life and Matter. The return leg, Evolution, is the ascent from Matter through all the stages in reverse order back to the Godhead.
4. **Chapter 5** examines the destiny of the individual in the universe. Man evolved from matter through life to mind and consciousness, after his involution stage that originally started at Brahman. Man's present position on the ladder of evolution is only temporary as he is destined to scale the heights to Himself in the form of Brahman.

4. THE RECEPTION OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF SHRI AUROBINDO

Shri Aurobindo is not all that well known in Western philosophical circles. Of six encyclopaedias I consulted (both hardcopy and on the web), only that of Columbia has an entry about him. Books and Journal articles by and about him are also relatively scarce. I took note of the Journal articles but for this study, I concentrated on books.

Considering the high quality of his thinking, it is difficult to understand his relative obscurity. I asked this question to Dr Salmon, who is a scholar interested in Shri Aurobindo. He apparently has had the same question himself, and he replied that after discarding a view that people needed to have an extensive background in Vedanta to understand him, which didn't make sense to (him), since (he) knew

people with no intellectual background who understand Sri Aurobindo very well, "I finally got an answer that made sense - one academic told me that all the people he met who talked about Sri Aurobindo were true believers." This makes sense to me, given the propensity of scholars not wishing to be seen to be involved in an emotional way with a subject that they are studying.

A book consulted but not discussed in detail in the dissertation, and that deserves mention is "The Integral Philosophy of Shri Aurobindo: A Commemorative Symposium", edited by Haridas Chaudhuri and Frederic Spiegelberg, published in 1960. It took the form of essays from 1 to 30 pages in length. To indicate the type of thinking and the quality of the philosophers that involved themselves with the philosophy of Shri Aurobindo, the "Index", and "Notes on the Contributors to This Volume" are included as appendixes.

The available books seem to fall into three categories. The first are books that appear to be antagonistically critical of Shri Aurobindo and his philosophy. The representative example that I chose is "Aurobindo's Philosophy of Brahman" by Stephen H. Phillips. The second category is that of authors that accept the philosophy of Shri Aurobindo, but that does little more than quote him. My chosen book here is Robert McDermott's "The Essential Aurobindo". The last group are authors who are empathetic towards Shri Aurobindo, but they write presenting their own views and interpretations. My choice here is "Worthy is the World" by Beatrice Bruteau.

5. "AUROBINDO'S PHILOSOPHY OF BRAHMAN" BY STEPHEN H. PHILLIPS.

Phillips is professor at The University of Texas at Austin in the Department of Philosophy, teaching Indian philosophy, epistemology, ethics, philosophy of religion, and Wittgenstein. He specialises in Indian Philosophy.

Looking at this book from a possible Aurobindian standpoint could be interesting as Prof Phillips raises many valid and mainly unanswered questions. In Shri Aurobindo's absence, I will be defending his perspective. Here I will quote him fairly extensively as that will give insight into the way he saw and defined various key fundamentals in his philosophy. I will be presenting some possible answers to questions and statements by Phillips and in turn be asking Phillips some probing questions. The two thinkers have very different departure points. Shri Aurobindo writes about his subjective experiences in a subjective way, whereas Phillips requires objective and

verifiable answers.

The core issue under contention here is that Phillips wants to gain objective knowledge and proof of the validity and correctness of the views of Shri Aurobindo. The reason why this difference of approaches of Phillips and Shri Aurobindo is important is because, if Phillips is correct, then the very basis of Shri Aurobindo's philosophy is defective or unfounded, and hence all his work is invalid. Phillips proceeded as an objective Western scholar, embracing the scientific ideal, using the tools of objective logic of the West. This science demands amongst others that knowledge must be able to be validated and empirical, and science determines *what* type of inquiry is valid. Science, in its philosophy regarding what is valid, holds a rigid uncompromising position. However, upon examination, the reality of science crumbles somewhat at the edges, i.e. under the subheading 'Science and Spirit', Keepin writes - "Thomas Kuhn has eloquently shown that scientist's preference for one paradigm over another is determined by a host of non-scientific, nonempirical factors." This is hardly an absolutely objective logical basis for an approach of enquiry. Further, regarding the "objective" scientific approach, Phillips has as basis a constructivist model regarding the experience of mysticism. This means that mystic experiences are structured by culture and belief. Firstly, to be consistent, he then should face and account for the dilemma of Kremer as stated in his question: "An even more challenging question is, if my way of knowing, even scientific knowing, is culture-bound--how do I come to terms with the fact that scholarly inquiry may be creating as well as reporting reality?" This question implies that not only mystic experience but *all* experience are structured by culture, hence, there is no such thing as objectivity or objective science. Secondly, the contributors to Forman's "The Problem of Pure Consciousness" have persuasively denounced this constructivist model, ably presented by Katz, and which forms the basis for the approach of Phillips. Some of these contributors are mystics in their own right.

In reading some of the objections of Phillips, it seems that Wilber's statement "...many philosophical debates are not really a matter of the better objective argument, but of the subjective level of those debating" is applicable. I find a parallel for this in the writings of Katz, who does not have personal experience of mystical states, but who argues that one can understand such a state by reading descriptions thereof, even if you have not experienced it yourself.

"Aurobindo's Philosophy of Brahman" contains five chapters and examines 1. The

epistemology of mysticism, 2. Shri Aurobindo and the Indian tradition, 3. Brahman "Experienced" and conceptualised, 4. Brahman and the Universe: Divine Life, and 5. A general appraisal. However, what seems to me to be the essence of the book is the introduction. Here Phillips outlines his methodology of analysis of Shri Aurobindo's work.

Observing the way Phillips deals with the work of Shri Aurobindo, Russell comes to mind in the following quotation: "Philosophy is to be studied, not for the sake of any definite answers to its questions, since no definite answers can, as a rule, be known to be true, but rather for the sake of the questions which enlarge our intellectual imagination and diminish the dogmatic assurance which closes the mind against speculation; but above all because, through the greatness of the universe which philosophy contemplates, the mind also is rendered great, and becomes capable of that union with the universe which constitutes its highest good." We could also quote Russell commenting on the philosophy of Parmenides: "Parmenides divides his teaching into two parts, called respectively 'the way of truth' and 'the way of opinion'." Shri Aurobindo writes in the spirit of the way of truth that Russell refers to, and exceeds that, whereas Phillips seems to prefer the way of opinion. In his views Shri Aurobindo postulates details (acquired, according to him, from his mystic experiences) that are normally not accessible using logic. Shri Aurobindo is familiar with both logic and mysticism; he deals with both alternatives in his work.

Phillips encounters a very profound thinker that is completely at home with logic. Because he (Shri Aurobindo) has moved beyond logic to acute subjective realities, it probably is a new and strange world for Phillips. Not only does Shri Aurobindo know, and have mastered those rules, he has transcended them. And he writes accordingly. Shri Aurobindo is a mystic, and Phillips says that he himself is not. This point is important as that explains the way he analyses Shri Aurobindo. In Katz's "Mysticism and Language" Phillips wrote a chapter subtitled "Can Nonmystics Understand Mystic Claims and Reports?" There he states that nonmystics can understand mysticism through analogy. The portrait of Phillips that emerges is one of a person standing on the outside looking in, wishing to be convinced (of the existence of the mystical world), but on his terms and without any real expectation that that can or will be done. He concedes - "My contention is that the nature of and limitations on our ability (as nonmystics) to understand these reports carry important consequences for our ability to understand the more abstract claims and, indeed, much "religious" language in general." He also states that he himself is not a mystic and classifies someone as a mystic who has mystical experiences. This statement could imply that he accepts that mystical

experiences can (or, less definitely, could perhaps) or does exist. If he were to accept and act upon his own statement, he would probably approach the problem of not understanding, and probably not therefore accepting Shri Aurobindo's methodology, differently. There is ambivalence in his thinking, as he elsewhere indicates that he has doubts about the ability of a human being to experience mystic states. For example, he writes in a paragraph with the heading "The value of mystic experience": "If divine life, or something like it, were attainable - a difficult question" This is not a statement expected from a person open to conviction. Phillips, in " "Mutable God": Hartshorne and Indian Theism", p. 9, (offloaded from the internet) referring to an experience of pure consciousness, (which lies at the heart of mysticism, as that is probably the first step on the ladder to the mystic world) says: "(1) Is it, all things considered, really conceivable that there be a "knowing," or an "awareness," that has as content nothing other than the "self-knowing" together with a hedonic tone of non-relational "bliss?" " Of course this is not only conceivable, but easily attainable. However, the only way to verify that is to experience it. So we can say that he did *not* consider all things. If he did, he would simply have considered the most obvious thing, namely that those higher states of consciousness can and does exist, despite any alternative logical postulates. Many reputable people have attested to that. From his point of view, we have him doubting the existence of such a state or experience because he has not experienced that himself. In this instance *he* is the arbiter as to the existence of such a state. What he in effect is saying is that because *he* does not know, it does not exist. He also states on p.11 of the article (Hartshorne above): "*Also, there must be an epistemic route from experience to theory, as well as a route back.*" That would be great for mental security and validation that all is still within the limits of his particular type of order, that of the logical mind. But in crossing the mental borders and delving in the supramental, this luxury is absent. Finally, he poses a telling and central question in this book: "*under what conditions might a mystic experience constitute a reason to believe in the objective truth of particular mystic claims?*" This question, to Phillips, is entirely logical and reasonable. He is however dealing with human consciousness, which, according to Nalimov, cannot be possessed, controlled or understood logically. It "stubbornly escapes this demiurgical goal. It possesses an amazing treasure: meanings that do not obey formal logic. Logic does not operate with meanings; it only reveals connections within symbol systems."

The introduction to the book of Phillips is important and is dealt with extensively as this outlines his entire approach to the type of philosophy that Shri Aurobindo

writes about.

1.1. **Introduction.** This section is discussed at some length as it sets the tone for the rest of the book. Here Phillips outlines his most central concepts and theses, as it is applicable to the mysticism in the works of Shri Aurobindo. He states his approach and some basic views he holds. Phillips correctly states that Shri Aurobindo *"is motivated in particular by the nature of certain mystic experiences."* There is no problem with this statement. It is not clear why it is important enough to mention it. Phillips then states: *"Aurobindo would have us believe that he is a "mystic empiricist," relying on these Upanishads only insofar as he feels is empirically justified."* Shri Aurobindo makes it quite clear throughout his works, and in particular in "The Life Divine", that he has had mystical experiences. He (Shri Aurobindo) also acknowledges the early Upanishads as the intellectual source of many of his ideas about Brahman, and comments on the similarity between the mystic experiences related in these early Upanishads, and those of his own. Phillips then continues saying that Shri Aurobindo's reading of them differs markedly from the readings of other Hindus. Also, he says that Shri Aurobindo professes that he is an empiricist, and tries to dissociate himself from Hindu and all religious apologists. Phillips desires to know what is Shri Aurobindo's precise relation to Indian traditions and to examine whether in spite of himself, he might be propagating traditional Hindu doctrine. He notes that Shri Aurobindo's concept of Brahman is an *"experience concept"*, based on his mystic experiences which then provide the experiential grounding for his central claims.

I believe that the various points raised above are central to the approach of Phillips to the works of Shri Aurobindo. I will first quote the relevant aspects in italics and then comment thereon.

1.2. *Phillips states that his book examines the most central concepts and theses, especially its ties to mysticism, of the works of Shri Aurobindo.* Phillips intends to deal with the works of Shri Aurobindo, which essentially are mystic in nature, using a logical approach where scientific proof is required and where only subjective statements will not suffice. This becomes clear as his book progresses. This methodology is arguably not the correct one. He is now examining a book with a strong component of mysticism and if he could speak as a mystic, his treatment of the book would be different and I believe authoritative. As it is, he is not a mystic;

he only has a conception, but no firsthand experience, of mysticism. His treatment of Shri Aurobindo's book has as departure point his (Phillips's) suspicions of the worlds and matters mystic. Examples abound and we will look at some. Phillips's question, "*Under what conditions might a mystic experience constitute a reason to believe in the objective truth of particular mystic claims?*" This is a reasonable question from his point of view. However, he is referring to someone else's subjective supra-logical spiritual experience. We shall analyse the components of the question. To "*Under what conditions*", he has been given the answer in the work of Shri Aurobindo. The conditions required would be internal, with him experiencing the mystic state himself. As to the part "*might a mystic experience constitute a reason to believe in the objective truth of particular mystic claims?*" the following. It is virtually impossible for a normal "waking consciousness mind" person to know what sort of reality is being experienced by another person in a normal "waking consciousness mind". This is evident if we consider the person we have just dealt with. Did we really know what transpired in his/her mind whatever he said? The answer is no, despite our illusions. When we now wish to explore the mind of a person operating in higher states of consciousness, it is not only more difficult; it is impossible. We can talk about understanding, and we can talk about concepts, but the blunt fact is that it is not possible for the average outsider to perceive what is actually happening in the mind of another person, much less so if that mind operates in higher states of consciousness. There is one exception. That is when a person proficient in higher states of consciousness is communicating with a peer. Regarding measurements of higher states of consciousness, it has been attempted and we find that the most sophisticated measuring tools available are non-definitive and crude at best. An example is the research of brainwave functioning done at Maharishi International University. There, changes in states of consciousness gave readings of greater coherent brain wave functioning. It says something, but that certainly does not tell one what actually is taking place; it merely says *something* is happening. Therefore, Phillips's wish to obtain the following assurance, "*constitute a reason to believe in the objective truth*", is unlikely to be granted. Here we have the problems of 1. belief, 2. objectivity, and 3. truth, with these very difficult and contentious terms to be applied to higher states of consciousness. They cannot even be applied successfully to the ordinary waking state, because of the inherent difficulties and the wide disagreement as to what

exactly these terms and their realities are and mean to different involved people. What is very evident, and that should be the point of departure, is the fact that Shri Aurobindo claims to have had subjective mystical experiences, and that he formulated his philosophy according to what he experienced. This subjective realm, or the material emanating from there, is not verifiable utilising the normal rules of ordinary logic operating on the mental level. This Shri Aurobindo has also stated. Specifically, he explains the nature of the Mind which in its essence is a consciousness which measures, limits, cuts out forms of things from the indivisible whole and contains these, as if each were a separate integer. He says that Mind may divide, multiply, add, subtract, but it cannot go beyond the limits of this mathematics. If it goes beyond and tries to conceive a real whole, it loses itself in a foreign element; *it falls from its own firm ground into the ocean of the intangible, into the abysses of the infinite where it can neither perceive, conceive, sense nor deal with its subject for creation and enjoyment.* (Italics mine). For if Mind appears sometimes to conceive, to perceive, to sense or to enjoy with possession the infinite, it is only in seeming and always in a figure of the infinite. The moment it tries to deal with that, to possess it, at once the inalienable tendency to delimitation comes in and the Mind finds itself again handling images, forms and words. Mind cannot possess the infinite, it can only suffer it or be possessed by it; as if it so tries, it only vaguely possesses a formless Vast and not the real spaceless Infinite. So, his formulated philosophy states that the Mind is unable to grasp the total Truth with logic. To use an alternate approach or point of view to that of Shri Aurobindo, *places the onus on the critic* to show why his (Shri Aurobindo's) approach should not be used. Until then, Shri Aurobindo cannot satisfy Phillips, he cannot prove "*the objective truth*" of his mystic claims, and do so on terms that are acceptable to Phillips. Shri Aurobindo cannot prove *objectively* something which is in its very nature subjective. Furthermore, a very strong argument could be made that objectivity is to be found only in the extremes of subjectivity, and that therefore, from a human perspective, is only available to a person in higher states of consciousness. The solution could be for Phillips to develop his own awareness to a higher level. Until that time all he can do is talk *about* mysticism and the philosophy of Shri Aurobindo, he cannot *talk* the philosophy. The vast field of mysticism is not meaningfully accessible using only the intellect and as Phillips operates apparently only on the level of the intellect, he is excluded from the subtleties and truths

of that field.

1.3. *He (Shri Aurobindo) acknowledges the early Upanishads as the intellectual source of many of his ideas about Brahman, and comments on mystic experiences related in these early Upanishads, seeing those experiences were similar to his own.* This is correct; Shri Aurobindo's studies in Indian philosophy included the Upanishads. His reading and interpretation certainly also differs from other scholars. This difference in outlook and interpretation is the way, not only philosophy, but of life. Shri Aurobindo speaks as a mystic and he uses the language of both the mystic and of a pragmatic person living on earth. But the point is that it is his own experiences that he is writing about. This he does honestly and he accepts that despite shortcomings, logic and reasoning does have a justifiable role in explaining the empirical reality of different states of consciousness to human beings and in expanding their cognitive field. But in communicating what he experienced, it is clear that he knows that he cannot transmit all he wishes about these higher regions to a person such as Phillips; the tools available (words) are inadequate. Exactly because of the use of words, and because words are a very unsatisfactory and incomplete too for communicating truth in particular, and concepts in general, every philosophy, including religion, eventually becomes embodied in rigid and static formations. Even though the same words are used, there are universes between the different meanings thereof.

1.4. *"Aurobindo would have us believe that he is a "mystic empiricist," relying on these Upanishads only insofar as he feels is empirically justified."* It appears as if Phillips does not accept this claim of Shri Aurobindo. It seems as if Phillips denies the fact or possibility that Shri Aurobindo is a *"mystic empiricist"* as his choice of words (*would have us believe*) implies his scepticism in this regard. He also appears to be sceptical of Shri Aurobindo (*relying on these Upanishads only insofar as he feels is empirically justified*) in the dealing, use and quoting of the Upanishads as it differs from other authorities, notably Sankara. But that, I submit, is the way Shri Aurobindo should use any source of knowledge, be it the Upanishads, or his own subjective empirical experience. If that differs from some other authority, so be it. I personally do not know of any reference book or authority that is universally interpreted in the same way by everyone. Certainly not in philosophy, where differences of opinions are par for the

course. However, Shri Aurobindo, by virtue of his personal mystic experiences, can interpret whatever authorities he wishes his way, leaving us to either criticise him because we can prove him wrong, or to learn from him.

- 1.5. *He says that Shri Aurobindo professes that he is an empiricist, and tries to dissociate himself from Hindu and all religious apologists.* Firstly, The Concise Oxford Dictionary states that 'empiric' is "Based, acting, on observation and experiment, not on theory. This is from the Greek *empeiria* experience." Based on this, Shri Aurobindo is certainly an empiricist. Shri Aurobindo has perceived, and he acts on, whatever he writes about. This is much as Einstein was an empiricist by observing the nature of the movement of light by travelling in a mind journey at the speed of light as a photon. Now, having said that, it should also be noted that these statements could indicate the area of weakness in their arguments, it is beyond our normal experience and somewhat incredible. It might be the norm in his culture to accept the mode of perception he uses, but we would be well advised if we did not retain an objective stance in this regard. However, if he were right, then that would put him very far ahead the intellect-bound Western philosophers. Secondly, Shri Aurobindo certainly does not deny his involvement with Hindu philosophy or religion. Phillips does not explain why he believes this to be important. For Shri Aurobindo, Hinduism in the framework of his philosophy is neither important not the essence or thrust of what he is about. This is very clear in his writings. What he does is to explain what *he* experienced and he puts that into a wide context, without accepting truths or realities held in other writings, or interpretations of other authorities, whether it be Hindu or any other philosophy, unless it is identical or at least parallel to his experience. He is commenting and teaching based on his own experience and insight regardless of it differing from any other person, creed or religion. He sees his task as that of a teacher of original and hitherto unknown truths, and not as a philosopher intent on the approval of others. On page 2 of his "The Life Divine", which Prof. Phillips surely must have read, Shri Aurobindo says: "To the ordinary material intellect which takes its present organisation of consciousness for the limit of its possibilities, the direct contradiction of the unrealised ideals with the realised fact is a final argument against their validity." In this statement he might well have anticipated this book of Phillips.

1.6. *Phillips also then states that it is important, and he wants to know, what is Shri Aurobindo's precise relation to Indian traditions and to examine whether in spite of himself, he might be propagating traditional Hindu doctrine.* It is not made clear by Phillips what the importance of such a relationship would be and also, if Shri Aurobindo was propagating traditional Hindu doctrine, whether that would invalidate the views of Shri Aurobindo set out in "The Life Divine". Whether one can pigeonhole him into one or the other alternative is not relevant, what is pertinent and, I submit, very important, and this seems to not absorb the energies of Phillips, is the fact that he is propounding a radical and important philosophy based on his experiences of higher states of consciousness.

1.7. *He notes that Shri Aurobindo's concept of Brahman is an "experience concept", based on his mystic experiences which then provide the experiential grounding for his central claims. Chapter 1 examines this position by addressing the epistemology of mysticism.* Phillips, in the Hartshorne article above, p. 2. has the same basic objection about Jiva Goswami in that "...he turns ... to revelation, and not reason, as the grounds for his theological views." In dealing with information obtained through *revelation, and not reason* certainly produces a weak form of knowledge and truth. The facts are thus not open to argument. But this should not be used in a Shri Aurobindo context, he, in experiencing higher states of consciousness, was placed in a position to obtain knowledge of the subtle of which the universe is comprised. Arguably, the quality of the information would depend on the purity of the observer, and that should then be the focus of discussion, not whether it is possible to achieve higher states of consciousness. Shri Aurobindo states that "not only are there physical realities which are suprasensible, but, if evidence and experience (his own) are at all a test of truth, there are also senses which are supraphysical, subtle organs, existing in the subtle body and the means of subtle vision and experience and can not only take cognisance of the realities of the material world without the aid of the corporeal sense-organs, but can bring us into contact with other realities, supraphysical and belonging to another world-included, that is to say, in an organisation of conscious experiences that are dependent on some other principle than the gross Matter of which our suns and earths seem to be made." Phillips on the other hand accepts that all matters are to be understood purely on

the intellectual level and be reduced to concepts based on the present state of knowledge of amongst others physics and cosmology. It could be pointed out that physics at present is at a loss to explain the basis of the reality of Phillips, namely time and space, both out of and within the atom. The very reality of Matter is a far from settled matter, as David Bohm makes clear in Ken Wilber's Holographic Paradigm. Instead of it being hard tangible material, it is much rather something in a state of enfoldment in an undefined totality of movement which he calls holomovement. He states that the holomovement is the ground of what is manifest. The world of Phillips is shaky, and Shri Aurobindo teaches what causes that shakiness and how it can be understood. Shri Aurobindo as a mystic thinker is performing the task of teaching that which cannot be adequately put into words. The interpretation of a non-mystic of the words of such a teacher would be that the words are the total reality, which reality exists only within the framework of the reader's interpretation of the value of the words. To a mystic the words are a necessary but inadequate tool of communicating results obtained during the search for the true meaning of the reality. Even with the knowledge that the words are incomplete, insufficient and partial symbols of that reality which is being dealt with, his task is to do the best he can, he has to teach with whatever skill in action and in teaching he can muster. The value of words depends entirely on how skilfully and elegantly they have been filled with meaning by their purveyor. In this regard the conversation of Wittgenstein to his publisher regarding the publication of his "Tractatus" comes to mind: "This is half the book, the other half cannot be written".

1.8. With the implication of the approach and tone of the Introduction in mind, the content of the book is not surprising. It does not really elucidate Shri Aurobindo's philosophy nor disproves what he stands for. **Chapter 1** deals with the epistemology of mysticism. His main thrust here is to examine Shri Aurobindo's philosophy by analysing the epistemology of mysticism and by presenting certain views of W V Quine, William James and David Hume. It is a good overview of the subject. He outlines Shri Aurobindo's history and sums up the subject of mysticism.

1.9. **Chapter 2** examines Shri Aurobindo and Indian Tradition. Despite the efforts of his father to make him into an Englishman, Shri Aurobindo "self-consciously" (according to Phillips) "tried" to become more

Indian in culture. Through Yogic exercises he became a mystic. According to Phillips, he embraced the basic philosophy of the Hindus even though he was not a traditional Hindu. Whatever. But being a Hindu or anything else is not really important. However, in pursuing this, it can be argued that despite the efforts of his father, he was in fact a Hindu. Phillips states: *"Aurobindo tries to think critically in his philosophy."* (Emphasis mine.) Also, *"He nonetheless professes to be freethinking and empiricist, albeit mystic empiricist, in his conceptual projects. But it is a good question whether he has been sufficiently critical of the concepts of his Indian heritage to free him from the force of an historicist scepticism."* He continues *"We shall examine his views of the reality and nature of Brahman in the following chapter, while paying careful attention to his claim that the views are founded in certain sorts of mystic experience. And we shall also continue to review the historicist case against his philosophic proposals."* These quotes regarding Shri Aurobindo's tradition do not really reflect the truth. Phillips succeeds in giving a critical slant to matters that are not in itself either important or relevant. My take is that Phillips brings in factors not germane to the central issue of Shri Aurobindo's philosophy. In stating that he will be *"paying careful attention to his claim that the views are founded in certain sorts of mystic experience"* in the next chapter, we again wonder what he wishes to achieve. At face value, it appears that Phillips intends to arrive at an informed position where he can pronounce that Shri Aurobindo did or did not experience mystical states. Again, this is baffling from at least two points of view, firstly, he cannot look into Shri Aurobindo's mind, and secondly he will not know what he sees (namely higher states of consciousness) if he did, and as he is not acquainted with those states, it will be incomprehensible to him. Phillips says that Sankara seems to view the world as illusory; Shri Aurobindo's point of view is that both the world and the Absolute are real. He writes: "The world is real precisely because it exists only in consciousness; for it is a Conscious Energy one with Being that creates it." Here the reality is consciousness with its various manifestations, some being tangible like rocks, some less so like mind. This apparent vagueness and dichotomy does not sit well with Phillips, for him it is an irreconcilable conflict of logic. Phillips refers to Shri Aurobindo stating that it is his claim to personally have had an experience that seems to sublimate the world of the senses but which for him was later sublated in part. The actual words of Shri Aurobindo are: "And the mind when it passes those gates suddenly, without intermediate transitions,

receives a sense of the unreality of the world and the sole reality of the Silence which is one of the most powerful and convincing experiences of which the human mind is capable." In other words, having the experience of Brahman makes the world seem illusory. Now, because Shri Aurobindo admits that the world seems illusory *under these circumstances*, Phillips doubts Shri Aurobindo's veracity and consistency because he says the world is real and also the world is illusory. Paradox sits ill on Phillips's logical mind. For Phillips it either is or it is not. He says "*I do not* see how there could be any experience which would directly indicate the existence of such an Infinite, either on the part of a mystic who could tell the rest of us about it or on the part of such a being itself." (Italics mine). Phillips does not seem to realise that you do not see experience, you *experience* experience. Also, if he cannot see, that does not preclude others better qualified do succeed. He objects to both the possibility of subjective experiences as a valid source of knowledge, and to the seeming impossibility of verifying those statements. He contends that two mystics could have conflicting experiences with a second one perceiving a grander Brahman, the first mystic's Brahman relegated to an inferior position. Firstly, the fact is that two non-mystics perceive the world and reality differently without invalidating the worlds they perceive, but also, more importantly, that does not give us true insight into their worldviews. Secondly, the same applies to mystics, but we have an even lesser chance of knowing what their reality is, because of the totally different state of consciousness with which they perceive their reality.

1.10. **Chapter 3** views Brahman, "Experienced" and Conceptualised. The first paragraph of this chapter outlines the intentions of Phillips. Shri Aurobindo's concepts (realities, actually) of the Absolute and Brahman is to be probed, as well as the themes of historicism and mystic empiricism. Phillips sees the Brahman-necessitated "divine life" as "far beyond the straightforward indications of any individual's experience however mystic and exalted." This is the basis for this chapter, Phillips contends therefore that no individual however mystic and exalted can reach the sort of space that Shri Aurobindo claims to know and have reached. He deals with some of the claims and experiences of Shri Aurobindo. Of importance is the tentative appraisal at the end of the chapter. This can be summed up by the observation that Phillips argues about the reality of Shri Aurobindo's reality. He moreover makes nearly compulsive demands that all these

strange things that Shri Aurobindo talks about must be proved and presented in a way that can be understood by the intellect.

1.11. **Chapter 4** examines Brahman and the Universe: Divine Life. Here Brahman as immanent and Supermind as an aspect of Brahman is dealt with. An aspect of the process of creation, involution, is reviewed, the importance of all that is, including the world, is given a hearing. Brahman's motive for manifestation, matter and its consequences, the failure of the argument for divine life because of Brahman (or God) being transcendent, the cognitive status of the theory of divine life and the significance of the cosmos are argued. Throughout he either discards Shri Aurobindo's views, or differs substantially from it, based on his intellectual perceptions.

1.12. **Chapter 5** gives a General Appraisal of his views of Shri Aurobindo. Here Phillips deals with aspects of mysticism, the value and veridicality thereof, pragmatism, Shri Aurobindo's predictions, and lastly, he raises many objections to the views and philosophy of Shri Aurobindo, and not least against the possible merits of following Shri Aurobindo's advice to follow a spiritual path. (The arguments against this are many and familiar: it is difficult, the outcome is uncertain, it is time-consuming, is it really worth it).

Conclusion. In this book Phillips endeavours to objectively and intellectually deal with the philosophy of Shri Aurobindo. In this effort, I would argue that Phillips did succeed. However, what he did not succeed in was to get to grips with the essence of the philosophy of Shri Aurobindo. He (Phillips) represents the philosopher that approaches mysticism from a purely logical perspective, possibly missing the spirit of the subject. Phillips had to contend with alternate ways of thinking, and descriptions of Shri Aurobindo such as the following one (of many) in describing the inadequacy of language: "And this conflict of terms, so violent, yet accurately expressive of something we do perceive, shows that mind and speech have passed beyond their natural limits and are striving to express a Reality in which their own conventions and necessary oppositions disappear into an ineffable identity." He also is either unfamiliar or does not recognise the type of thinking of somebody like Nalimov, which of course is different to his, but which I believe could enrich and widen his horizons: "Logic lacks creativity. Formal thinking should be preceded by profound, prelogical thinking generating new meanings. Being comprehended, these meanings are reduced to the symbolic system of everyday

language, which yields to logical operations refining our thoughts and making them convenient for communication (Nalimov 1981 b, n.d.; Nalimov and Drogalina, 1984)."

He does not consistently exhibit a detached objective scholarly stance as often his choice of words and the tone of his writing appear petty and condescending and the body of his book does not lead one to believe that the last sentence in the book: "Nevertheless, his achievement has few parallels in the history of thought both Western and Eastern." is sincerely meant. Belated praise, and in contradiction with most of what the book conveyed. The intention of Phillips in writing this book in the way he did as he doubted, criticised and rejected virtually all aspects of Shri Aurobindo's philosophy without providing convincing proof or possible grounds except that he is sceptical of any non-logical approaches, remains obscure.

Here is a brief verbatim academic thumb sketch of Professor Stephen H. Phillips:

The University of Texas at Austin
Department of Philosophy

Professor of Philosophy and Asian Studies, BA, PhD Harvard

- **Teaching:** Indian philosophy, epistemology, ethics, philosophy of religion, Wittgenstein
- **Research:** He is a Sanskritist and specialist in classical Indian thought. He is author of over forty articles and author or co-author of four books: *Aurobindo's Philosophy of Brahman* (Brill, 1986), *Classical Indian Metaphysics: Refutations of Realism and the Emergence of "New Logic"* (Open Court, 1995, Indian edition, Motilal Banarsidass, 1998), *Gangesa on the Upadhi, the "Inferential Undercutting Condition," Introduction, Translation, and Explanation* (with N. S. Ramanuja Tatacharya, Indian Council of Philosophical Research, 2002), and *Epistemology of Perception: Gangesa's Tattvacintamani, Vol. I, pratyaksa-khanda, introduction, translation, and commentary* (with N. S. Ramanuja Tatacharya, forthcoming, Motilal Banarsidass). He is currently working on a four-volume translation of and commentary on the most important work of late classical Indian philosophy, Gangesa's *Tattvacintamani (Jewel of Reflection on the Truth of Epistemology)*, which founded the 'New Logic' school in the fourteenth century. He has been Visiting Professor at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.
- **Graduate Area:** Indian Philosophy

6. "THE ESSENTIAL AUROBINDO" BY ROBERT MCDERMOTT

- 1.1. **Prof. Robert McDermott's "The Essential Aurobindo"** is for the most part a selection and copying of chapters from "The Divine Life", from Shri Aurobindo's work on the Gita, and his Integral Yoga. In the main his selections are "Man in Evolution", "Integral Yoga" and "Towards a Spiritual

Age". These selections are arguably the most relevant for use by a person wanting to understand the gist of Shri Aurobindo's philosophy and thoughts. It could serve a useful purpose to mention the salient aspects of the various sections. However, the work is bland in the sense that no opinions for or against Shri Aurobindo's work are argued, nor does he indicate the role Shri Aurobindo played in the world of religious science.

1.2. McDermott firstly covers the destiny of man, with emphasis on the human aspiration, man in the universe and man as a transitional being.

The human aspiration is towards a unity of man with the infinite or beyondness, Godhead, the urge towards perfection and the yearning for pure truth and unbounded bliss. According to Shri Aurobindo this has been the earliest and most constant preoccupation of man. The reason why man has not achieved this unity is due to the problem of lack of harmony. The reason why this would be a problem for man is that, whereas his lower or animal nature can rest content with a disharmonious reality, his fully awakened mind cannot accept this lack of harmony. This is the spur that drives man's evolution to a more subtle and puissant level. The concept of evolution is dealt with; the word evolution does not define the reality or the mechanism thereof, but expresses the view that involved in matter and life, in a inconscient fashion, is the full mechanism for evolution right back to the source which is the Godhead. It follows that evolution is inevitable and will run its complete course in the fullness of time.

1.3. Regarding man in the universe, Shri Aurobindo assumes a teleological base for the existence of the universe. This asserts the progressive revelation of an immense and glowing indefinable reality of all of creation, declares the existence of dimensions of Being known and unknown. The eventual purpose of the very existence of what is, is "An existence, wholly self-aware and therefore entirely master of itself, possesses the phenomenal being in which it is involved, realises itself in form, unfolds itself in the individual." Now the disorders of life and mind cease by discerning the secret of a more perfect order than the physical. For the universe to evolve, it needs all the components of the involution, including man. For man to evolve it needs the universe. In fact, he has to eventually "manifest the divine All which is his reality". This process is subtle and complex, he evolves within bounds, does not operate in an intensive unity such as Brahman does, free from all conception and

bounds, while at the same time he has to preserve something of Brahman, some transcendent something. He needs to be both divine and earthly to fulfil his task successfully. There are contradictions aplenty. He has enough to survive, but not enough to be satisfied. This is the spring of the dynamic cycle of evolution. The state of consciousness of man determines what he perceives and how the world, universe, whatever, is. With growth of consciousness, it comes into contact with things in a much more conscious way, with the forms of things but also with what is inherent in them. It comes in direct contact with things in a way that seems to contain them, the feeling of having the object, the world or the universe within one. It is a form of consciousness where one sees all things in oneself and oneself in all things, it is universalisation.

1.4. **The present existence of man** is of a transitional nature; in man is the to be realised potential of a divine supermanhood. That is our ultimate reality. Here, man is the mind which is incarcerated in a living body. This mind has consciousness, not the highest type possible, but consciousness nonetheless. Yet, despite present ignorance, beyond this present mind is an attainable supramental or gnostic power of consciousness that is in eternal possession of Truth. There is an immortal soul within him which is restricted by his personality; the soul in most people resides seemingly above and beyond their nature, being possibilities rather than realised and present. But transformation to this potential is possible. This is the gnostic being in him, which is inseparable from the divine, the Knower and Creator and man can realise and reach that stage. This new consciousness is bountiful beyond imagination or ken. The route thereto is inward, the domicile thereof is within, and the roadmap is simple. It is a movement of the present consciousness of man, whatever his present level, moving within in silence, unrestricted by the relative, and coming to know and getting used to this pure state of being within. This inevitably leads to the realisation of the potential of man as the divine gnostic being, as is the intention of Nature.

1.5. **McDermott deals with the stages of involution and evolution, and the sevenfold chord of being.** Involution and Evolution represents the process of existence, contained in the cycle of creation. It starts with the desire of the Supreme, the Beyondness to experience, and hence enjoy, itself. Because this Supreme is the totality of All that is, there is no

possibility of being more, It delegates to an aspect of itself - to Sat-Chit-Ananda - the task of involution and evolution. Sat is being, chit is consciousness-force and ananda is bliss. These components are the essential elements of the Supreme. Here, there is a downward stroke of the process, the involution stage. From Sachchidananda comes forth Supermind, which is part of but separate from Sachchidananda. Supermind is Truth-consciousness, the level of consciousness above mind that links the lower levels, that of the various stages of consciousness, life and matter, to the higher levels of being which is Itself. It is the conscious instrument of spiritual evolution which unifies all aspects of what is created and manifest with its causative essence without losing its own integral reality, its own perfect union. The turning point of involution to evolution is matter, which is the most solid and inconscient of what is. Even this aspect has all of the Supreme in seed form in itself. This matter therefore is capable of and, in its essence, desirous to evolve. This duly takes place and the next level, life, is manifested. This is an interim stage for realised consciousness, which is mind. From this first stage of mind, evolution proceeds upwards back to Supermind, which in turn ascends to the Supreme. The sevenfold chord of being therefore is sat, chit, ananda, supermind, mind, life and matter.

1.6. He deals with evolution and rebirth. Life is involved in matter.

Manifestation of life is birth, end of life is death. However, what was before birth and will be after death, what is beyond knowledge of the intellect, depends on the nature, source and object of the cosmic movement which is the soul. The soul chooses or is assigned this world for its evolution, mostly needing and using great spaces of Time, gradually developing and enlarging the individual soul-consciousness. This process requires manifold rebirths. This human rebirth is a complex of two elements, a spiritual Person and a soul of personality, the first being man's eternal being and the latter his cosmic and mutable being. In the first aspect he is one in his nature with Sachchidananda, consenting here to the involution in the Nescience for the purpose of soul-experience. In the second aspect, his evolution must follow the laws and the lines of the universal evolution. When a human soul, he is as unlimited as he was during his sojourn in a plant or an animal form, here only representing a greater self-expression in a higher scale of nature.

1.7. The message of the Gita and Integral Yoga. Shri Aurobindo's

Integral Yoga is founded on the Gita. "Essays from the Gita" is a handbook for evolution. The first six chapters of the Gita contains a theory of *karmayoga*, the yoga of action, as a solution to the problem of life on the ethical level, with Krishna clarifying the answer to the problem of God and man with the transcendence from the ethical to the spiritual levels of existence. The next twelve chapters deal with more subtle aspects of Being, available routes and evolution. What is required is for all action to have as its sole purpose service to the Divine, thus transforming the yoga of divine works to the yoga of divine love. Conflicts that Arjuna faced, which dealt with performance of necessary and essential but difficult action, are also the conflicts of modern man. When acting, the motive is the defining element. Apparent violent methods in action are quite in order. If in the process the concept of *ahimsa* - non-violence - is violated, so be it. The man that regularly sticks knives into people, even enjoying the process, is forgiven. And rightly so, especially if he is a surgeon. The traditional yogas lead to individual liberation. For Shri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga, these four yogas expressed in the Gita - *jnana* (knowledge), *karma* (action), *bhakti* (devotion), and *dhyana* (contemplation) - is incorporated in his system; he adds the element of Time. He is more specific as to the demands of evolution; for him it is necessary for the transformation of the totality, that is the spiritual, mental, vital, and physical orders of existence. There must be the radical transition from a mental to a supramental reality, embracing a much larger purpose than only the spiritual needs of the individual. It is important that the type of activity used to achieve the highest must be with only the highest in mind, it must be totally without any ego motives. If the ego is present in the performance of action, then the ultimate goal of union with the Divine cannot be achieved.

1.8. The system of Shri Aurobindo is called Integral Yoga. Four instruments are used for the practice of this system. The first is *sastra* - that is the knowledge of the truths, principles, powers and processes that govern realisation, next is *utsaha* - our own personal effort based on patient and persistent action, the third is the *guru*, the teacher of knowledge - his guidance, teaching and example, and lastly *kala* - Time, which is necessary for the cycle which is in all things to play out. The *sastra* is an integral part of every living and thinking being. It is not bound to custom and

dogma or to what was perceived as the Truth in the past. It is a spontaneous ever-present reality. The process is one where there is a movement of a person towards the Divine, and the decision of the Divine to choose that person for evolution. This two-way choice results in eventual attainment of the Infinite. This end result is inevitable as all the necessary knowledge is already within a person to achieve this ultimate step. This knowledge is revealed through the agency of the Word, whether the Word comes from within or from an outside fount. Development then takes place and the Infinite unfolds itself in human life. The *guru*, the teacher, is always there, it can be internal or external, and it is available when required. The *jagad-guru*, the supreme Guide and Teacher, is within, it destroys darkness, and transforms a person to his Divine reality. The process to achieve this is beyond concept, it happens. Shri Aurobindo recommends his system which requires going within, acting beyond ego, acting for the Divine only, and without desire for results. In that way a human being reaches that paradoxical aimless aim of realisation of the Divine.

- 1.9. **Towards a Spiritual Age** This part comes from "The Supramental Manifestation" which is contained in volume 16 of SABCL, 1972. The ideal is the constant progression of humanity whereby through ways overt and covert a spiritual reality of existence will emerge. The manner of thinking, of Thought, is of utmost importance. This thought comes from man's deeper reality and leads to the realisation of the ideal. This ideal is the realisation of the quest for Truth, for this, the development of the totality of man is required. This implies the development of a foundation, not only of the intellect, but also of the spiritual aspect. Here is required the development of philosophy and religious thought which is based on spiritual experience. Only in this way can one go behind the appearances and go to, and experience, the truth of things. Whereas philosophy is the intellectual search for the fundamental truth of things, and religion the attempt to make that truth dynamic in man, neither of these high aspirations can be achieved with the methodology of the intellect. The further requirement is an inner oneness by the integration of the power of the spirit to the physical and mental aspect of man. Then man evolves and his manhood changes to his true nature, supermanhood. This unity and self-transcendence will be the result of man living in the spirit, while still on earth, attending to whatever the relative world requires.

1.10. Shri Aurobindo perceives that the era of the spiritual age and of the

manifestation of the Supermind on earth has begun. At times spiritual evolution is easy; the present is such a time. Little effort yields great results. This evolution leads to the spiritual age. It appears as higher states of consciousness in individuals, not in the mass. If it is present as a mass phenomenon, then is there only because of the effort and evolution of individuals. The mass can never ride on the efforts of the few, each person in higher states of consciousness got there through her/his own efforts. Such people create the spiritual age. Certain conditions are required for this to happen, one or a few individuals must develop their spiritual being and thus form a critical mass, they must also communicate to the remaining populace the idea they have realised and what its power is. Then this populace must be capable of receiving, effectively assimilating and acting on this knowledge. If the society is not ready for this knowledge, what they have heard and learned will be debased and concretised into exoteric dogma and formulations, missing the mark yet again. This latter route leads to development of the "The Only Way" phenomena, where one person or sect decrees that only they have the truth, retarding evolution once again. For a successful transition, the mind and the intellect are essential components. It is in the Mind that the idea of the superiority of the spirit takes root. But here it is the subjective mind that is needed for dealing with this strange new reality, that is the initial tool for moving towards, understanding and realising this sole reality. With this evolution the ego diminishes and eventually disappears, leaving life to be lived in an unrestricted Divine reality. The society lives as a collective soul. Its aim would be the expansion of the spiritual in everything in the relative. There, everything will be religion, as everything will be seen in its true nature, which is spiritual.

Humanity will become a race of mental beings in an earthly body and with a perfected mind of light that operates on the basis of Truth-Consciousness. Despite formidable arguments against such a development, it can take place because the essential reality of everything is, in whatever involved form, its underlying actuality of Sachchidananda.

For the record, on his personal position on the experience of mysticism, McDermott states "On the experiential side, however, I not only am not past mysticism to the next ideal-I am not even to mysticism...", implying that he is

not a mystic.

In conclusion, Prof McDermott's contribution was selected because it is a good selection of the work of Shri Aurobindo to materially assist a person to get to the core of his thinking. McDermott is empathetic towards Shri Aurobindo, and he allows him (Shri Aurobindo) to talk. It is a good introductory work to the philosophy of Shri Aurobindo.

Robert McDermott earned a Ph.D. in philosophy from Boston University in 1969, an M.A. in philosophy from Emory University in 1965, and his B.A. in classics from Queens College, CUNY, in 1962. He was president (1990-99) and is currently professor of philosophy and religion, of the California Institute of Integral Studies (San Francisco). He was formerly professor and chair of the department of philosophy at Baruch College, CUNY (1970-90). His publications include Radhakrishnan (1970), The Essential Aurobindo (1974) and The Essential Steiner (1984), and essays on comparative philosophy and religion in scholarly journals and anthologies. He wrote the Introduction to William James, *Essays in Psychical Research* (Harvard University Press, 1986). He is the general editor of Vista Books, an imprint of Anthroposophic Press. He was secretary of the American Academy of Religion (1968-71) and secretary-treasurer of the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy (1972-76). In 1975-76, he was a Senior Fulbright Lecturer at the Open University and co-produced an OU-BBC film *Avatar: Concept and Example*. The wide range of topics on which he has lectured includes the evolution of consciousness, the spiritual mission of America, classic texts of Asian and western spirituality, modern spiritual masters (East and West), as well as Rudolf Steiner and Anthroposophy. He has been the recipient of numerous grants, fellowships, and professional honors, including a Fulbright grant for study and travel in India (1966) and a position as senior Fulbright lecturer at the Open University, England (1975-76) where he was advisor and contributing editor to sixteen films on "Man's Religious Quest." With the support of Laurance S. Rockefeller, he has co-directed a four-year project, "The Recovery of Thinking in Philosophy, Science, and Education." Prof McDermott is editor of *The Essential Aurobindo* (1988) and *The Essential Steiner* (1984).

7. "WORTHY IS THE WORLD: THE HINDU PHILOSOPHY OF SHRI AUROBINDO" BY BEATRICE BRUTEAU.

Beatrice Bruteau has had a lifelong interest in the spiritual world. She has attended and facilitated numerous reclusive spiritual retreats. She has practised various forms of techniques for spiritual growth. She is particularly interested in practical spiritual results and Christian mysticism. Her eclectic interest the spiritual world allows her to study and appreciate a wide range of philosophers, including Shri Aurobindo. Her book is examined here because she does not merely reproduce his work, but she adds her own positive interpretation to it.

This book was published in 1971, and it gives a clear insight into a number of aspects of Shri Aurobindo's philosophy, and is therefore a valuable contribution to the literature. Of initial interest is Dr Bruteau's introduction which contains effusive praise for Shri Aurobindo. Authorities such as Professor Pitirim Sorokin are quoted, as saying "From a scientific and philosophical standpoint, the works of Shri Aurobindo are a sound antidote to the pseudo-scientific psychology, psychiatry, and educational art of the West." As Prof. Sorokin is not trained in the fields of psychology or psychiatry, it is difficult to understand how he can call these fields "pseudo-scientific" without giving reasons for his stance. She also sings the praises of Shri Aurobindo on page 14, making a case for his international stature (where his work figured in discussions of a number of philosophers at a total of two congresses of philosophy) and quoting sources and authorities that agree with the importance of Shri Aurobindo. The tone of the introduction is more that of a disciple than of an objective critic. In the body of her book she does much better, culling important and subtle views and arguments from the works of Shri Aurobindo.

She deals with eight aspects of Shri Aurobindo's philosophy. They are as follows:

1. **Aurobindo's life and spiritual experiences.** An important aspect of Indian philosophy is the fact that subjective experience is a valid source of knowledge. This is the way that Shri Aurobindo arrived at his philosophical views. He had spiritual experiences through the practice of yoga; an incomplete list includes his experiencing nirvana - bliss, a vision of Krishna where he perceived the all of creation to be in essence Krishna, a realisation of the unity of all that is, and the experience of the day of the Siddhi, the goal of *sadhana*, which is the practice by which *Siddhi*, perfection, is attained. He deals with ascending fields or realms of existence, which he explained and named as follows: Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuitive Mind, Overmind and Supermind. He personally progressively achieved the first four states by November 24, 1926. The Mother would only in 1956 declare Supermind to have descended. For Shri Aurobindo, these are dimensions, new regions of being, and not mere intellectual concepts.
2. **Brahman and Maya.** The vexing problem of the reality of the One (infinite) and the many (finite), was dealt with by Shri Aurobindo as follows:
 - 2.1. The Absolute Reality is utterly transcendent with respect to all form. This means that this Absolute is, and is independent of everything, even Itself.

2.2. This Absolute is also a personal God, the creative and all-pervasive Lord of the Universe.

2.3. The Absolute Reality is all-inclusive, beyond duality, it is simultaneously unmoving and moving, formless and possessing form, beyond the world and fully in the world, essentially indeterminable but manifesting endless determinations.

2.4. Being and existence are present on various planes of being, linked in graded continuity from the lowest matter to the highest spirit, an integral non-dual Reality.

There is an elegant structure present in the writings of Shri Aurobindo; he integrates these two traditionally opposite aspects of Brahman and Maya. Shri Aurobindo reconciles the "non-reality" of matter (for the ascetic) and of the spirit (for the materialist) positively by affirming both to be real, both to represent Reality, both simply being different aspects thereof. Having these views of two negations (or denials) so beloved by mankind are damaging. Both are real and the denial of any one of the two reduces the universe considerably to such a person.

Further, Brahman is a complex of three poises. Not only is Brahman transcendent as well as immanent, but also the immanence has two aspects, cosmic and individual. Of these three, the transcendent is primary. This ground state is the realm of silence, which is the fount of activity and of withdrawal from activity. This is "being", the ground of all cosmic existence, and this is "non-being", in its nature of being free from any particular form of actual existence. The cosmic poise is a form of total or Cosmic consciousness; it is an intelligence and power immanent in all of creation. Here the three Gunas of the Gita in Chapter 2 v 45 functions. This is the activity field of *Brahma* the Creator, *Vishnu* the Maintainer and *Siva* the Destroyer. This trinity is the foundation of the world's reality. The third poise appears as the multitude of separated and divided individual beings that constitute creation.

It is possible for man to be aware of, and to enter into all three poises, which then constitutes Shri Aurobindo's ideal man.

Concerning *Maya*, illusion, Shri Aurobindo separates this into two aspects, a higher divine, which is a creative power, and a lower or undivine *Maya* where we perceive reality as partial.

3. Supermind and Evolution.

3.1. There is a unity of Sachchidananda on the one hand and Matter, Life, and

Mind on the other. The two are linked by Supermind which mediates between the two Mayas. Supermind is the creating and governing principle, as it possesses the divine Chit, which is knowledge or consciousness, together with force. Mind cannot create, as it lacks Chit. For Shri Aurobindo the true knowledge required here is knowledge by identity, where all three aspects of knowledge, i.e. knower, knowledge and the thing known, are transcended.

- 3.2. Supermind has both an ascending and a descending movement, which causes a dynamic creation. The downward movement is the involution stage of creation, the upward the evolution stage, and together they form the cosmic play of *Lila*.

4. Transformation.

- 4.1. The Evolution of Shri Aurobindo is the evolution of every aspect of existence, including, but not limited to, Consciousness and Matter. In this chapter he concentrates on the goal of evolution of man. The evolution of Man is a process in which man is involved, he can help or hinder this process by his free acts, but he cannot totally direct it, as the process of development is both an individual and a cosmic one.
- 4.2. Shri Aurobindo views man to be the turning point in evolution because man has developed consciousness which elevates him from the animal and sets him on his way to the divine. He has this potential to experience his own consciousness and to develop his spiritual life, fulfilling his purpose. The Sachchidananda in him is the driving force towards the Divine.
- 4.3. This psychic leap from animal to human is the first step of man in the Triple Transformation. The second step is a spiritual transformation, the results of which are seductive, seeing it is an existence of bliss in the presence of the Divine Beloved. But there is more, the third transformation being the supramental transformation, which is the ascent into the Supermind, which is the aspiration of humanity. This is the field of all knowledge, all bliss, the field of the Gnosis, the one Truth.

5. Maya and the Mayavada.

- 5.1. The subject matter here is Shri Aurobindo's arguments for the reality and value of the world. This is an important aspect of his ontological view, and

it puts across his views of the Vedic interpretation of the relative. In popular parlance Maya means ignorance, whereas Bruteau, quoting Ruth Reyna, says: "The broadest sense of the word on which all scriptural texts and commentators seem to agree is that which pertains between the phenomenal world and the transcendent Absolute. Maya "measures," or delimits, the infinite, producing finite forms." Even though Brahman (universal) and Atman (individual) are the same, the effect of this ultimate existing in these two modes is that even though Atman is the basis of the individual, it is hidden and here appearances are dominant. These appearances are Maya which both reveal and conceal the Reality.

5.2. There are differences between the interpretation of Sankara and Shri Aurobindo regarding Maya, but at issue are ontological concepts. In the end the issue disappears as being immaterial, if viewed from a sufficiently broad perspective, as Shri Aurobindo outlined in *The Life Divine*, Volume 2, Part 1, chapters 3 to 6. The eventual importance of his views are that regardless of the apparent differences, from the suprarational consciousness all is seen in its full reality and truth, and not in its appearance.

6. The Destruction of Values in Mayavada.

6.1. The importance of the different views of Maya is the effect thereof on the reality and the value of the world. It forms the attitude that is held towards the world. One such consequence is to deny the world. Various arguments can be used to do so, based on a dissatisfaction with what the world offers. From a philosophical perspective, the only question that needs be asked is: What world do you deny? Because, whatever that world is, by identifying it, you imply that it is and that it has a reality. You denying it does not make it unreal.

6.2. The feeling that there is a better alternative to a hard world by the expedience of escaping into spirituality and otherworldliness has merit. That leads to the Nirvana experience. But from the point of view of Shri Aurobindo, evolution is the result of going through, not around, the world. Mastery of the different stages of being is essential for Shri Aurobindo's evolution. Nirvana is not excluded from his philosophy but it is not the ultimate aim. It must be achieved, after which the journey continues, as this is no place to remain, it being only a stepping-stone to the ultimate. He has seen at first hand the negative effects on individuals and society in India taking the escapist route, instead of embracing and mastering the

world.

7. The Value of the Universe and of the Person.

- 7.1. There are views of earth as being a place of suffering, of being unreal or only temporarily real, and other suchlike, based on the non-enjoyment of what is here. From Shri Aurobindo's perspective this is not the full reality, avoidance of or departure from this world for the wrong reasons has no merit. Bruteau quotes Shri Aurobindo as follows: "The ascent of man into heaven is not the key, but rather his ascent here (on earth) into the spirit and the descent also of the spirit into his normal humanity and the transformation of this earthly nature. For this and not some post-mortem salvation is the real new birth for which humanity waits as the crowning movement of its long, obscure and painful course."
- 7.2. For Shri Aurobindo, the world is to be judged in terms of its value to God, rather than its value for man. The world is here for a purpose of learning lessons, with development and evolution as a result. The only problem with the world in the end is the way in which we view it, which is rather arrogantly anthropocentric, resulting in the formulation of a concept of limited reality. To explain, there is this infinite, which is so far beyond that we have no conception of where to begin to understand it. The infinitesimal portion of what is and that we can partially perceive, is to us the All. And on that we have definite ideas, mostly on two levels, i.e. that of the emotions and of the intellect. Shri Aurobindo pictures something considerably greater, something divine, rather than this limited manmade reality.
- 7.3. The individual person and the world are based on the transcendent Reality, and the Reality will decide in which way to organise things. This includes the way man is to evolve and in evolving, helping the world. It also includes the nature of the process of involution and evolution. So, in these ways, humanity has a great value. But then everything has a great value. Suffice to say that the purpose of everything is to reach its source which is The One.
- 7.4. The individual forms part of the community; both have to evolve, and as individuals evolve they lift the community with them and as the community is uplifted, it again benefits the individual as it eases his way in his evolution. The primary factor here is the individual, not the community. Otherwise there is no serious acceptance of responsibility by individuals, which acceptance is imperative for the evolution process.

8. A Summary and Evaluation.

- 8.1. In this summary Bruteau identifies Shri Aurobindo's thought to be clearly situated in the context of Indian philosophical and spiritual tradition. The fact that he dealt with, and integrated, the classical problems of the phenomenal and the transcendent One is a positive gift to knowledge and understanding. He accepts many traditional Indian orientations, such as the non-dual nature of the ultimate reality, its identity as Sachchidananda in abstract terms and Lord Krishna in personal terms. He developed the Shakti tradition - self-effective power of the Lord - and he integrated different yogas. He turned his attention to the problems that concern men generally - the meaning of life, of God, of evil, of the world, of action, of selfhood, and many more - and made sense thereof. He went about his task with a spirit of integration and reconciliation. He viewed what he saw from the widest and highest perspective. He outlined the advantages of some of the philosophies such as the doctrine of the three poises, the importance not only of involution but of its logical other leg, evolution and his views on Maya. All this, and the soundness of his theories, is praised.

Dr. Beatrice Bruteau obtained her master's degree in mathematics, philosophy, and religion at the University of Pittsburgh and her doctorate in philosophy at Fordham University in New York. For the past fifty-odd years, Dr. Bruteau has been charting a unique path through the worlds of science, philosophy, mathematics, evolutionary theory, and mysticism, East and West. She was introduced to the esoteric world by Ramakrishna's philosophy. Today a practicing Catholic, Dr. Bruteau's wide-ranging interests have given her a unique combination of spiritual and scientific approaches between the two, seeking the mystical in the material and the vast creativity of God in the temporal unfolding of the cosmos. She has the unusual distinction of having deeply studied the work of both Teilhard de Chardin and Sri Aurobindo and has published several books exploring their visionary work. Like Teilhard de Chardin, Bruteau believes that we are at a unique juncture in history where, perhaps for the first time, evolution will not be primarily physical in nature but rather will be noetic, a transformation or mutation of consciousness. And human beings are in a crucial position. For in order to take this next evolutionary step we must actually become conscious participants in the unfolding and direction of the evolutionary process itself. It is to this "Grand Option" that Bruteau calls us, to this great moment in human destiny, when "the universe will either go forward into the creation of higher level unities, or else it will eventually fall back into the dispersed homogeneity of maximal entropy. It all depends," she writes, "on what we choose to do. "But the apophatic experience itself disabuses us of the notion that we have any such thing as "our contemplation," or even any separate substantiality. In the Night of the Absolute, everything is empty. Having reached what we yearned to possess, we find that all distinctions have vanished, including the selves that had thought they could possess anything or desire to possess anything. Thus, for us there is nothing left to defend, nothing left to augment, nothing to prefer to something else, nothing to which to accord privilege.

Currently living in the small community of Pfafftown, just east of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, Dr. Bruteau edits the quarterly journal *American Vedantist* and oversees two Christian contemplative orders, even as she works on what will be her thirteenth book. Indeed, at the age of seventy-two, her creative energy seems inexhaustible, and she spoke as

if we had all the time in the universe to get to know one another, reflect on the human adventure, and let the great mystery of evolution gradually unfold.

Chapter 2

BIOGRAPHY

INTRODUCTION

For clarity, the biography of Shri Aurobindo is divided into the following sections: his youth, schooling in England, political life, a selection of personal interviews, the Mother, and his writing and spiritual life.

For sources I relied on Volume 30, Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library (SABCL 30) and on the website of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, Pondicherry, India. Work of another scholar, Dr Ananda Reddy, who obtained his doctorate on Shri Aurobindo, was also consulted. Normally, the best source for information about a person is himself. Here, fortunately Shri Aurobindo in SABCL 26, "On Himself" gave valuable insight into his mind, being and thinking.

Shri Aurobindo lived an internal life that was mainly hidden from outside observation. In interviews he made that clear, as the following statement attests: "I see that you have persisted in giving a biography -- is it really necessary or useful? The attempt is bound to be a failure, because neither you nor anyone else knows anything at all of my life; it has not been on the surface for men to see."

Even so, when observing Shri Aurobindo, we find a human, lovable, pragmatic and entertaining individual, as well as a formidable intellect and a strong will. He was a great teacher, teaching both through his writing, his conduct of life and the influence he had on his fellow man, whether ordinary or important, and in interviews where his answers were clear and simple. Not that what he said and wrote were always understood in its simplicity, but for a teacher, that comes with the territory.

YOUTH

Aurobindo was born in Calcutta at 4.50 a.m., on Thursday the 15 August 1872. He was the third son of Dr. K D Ghose, a surgeon of Calcutta, and his wife

Swarnalata. His two elder brothers were Binoy Bhushan and Manmohan. His father received his medical training in Edinburgh, Scotland. He was totally enamoured with the English culture and wanted his sons to become anglicised as he was. They had to become English and they were not to learn their own Indian culture. He also wanted his sons to have the best of careers available in India namely the Civil Service of India (ICS). A requirement for this job was that an applicant should have passed an examination called the ICS, for which the training took place in England. Dr. Ghose planned their future with his ideals in mind. Their schooling in English started with them going to the Loretto Convent School at Darjeeling, a school where the sons of British administrators in India received their education. There they remained for two years.

SCHOOLING IN ENGLAND

In 1879 Dr Ghose took his three sons to England where they would remain for fourteen years. They were left in the care of Rev. W H Drewett and his wife in Manchester. Dr. Ghose undertook to reimburse the Drewetts for expenses incurred regarding board, lodging and education. He instructed the Drewetts to keep them from associating with other Indians. Initially Rev. and Mrs. Drewett taught the children. With time, Aurobindo obtained a scholarship to attend St. Paul's School in London in September 1884. He impressed the teachers with his intelligence and he was taught Latin, Greek, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Arithmetic and Geography. He read European history, a range of poets and novelists including Homer, Aristophanes, Dante and Goethe in the original languages. In his mother tongue English, he read the Bible, Shakespeare, Shelley, Keats and others. His first poem, 'Light', was published in the 'Fox Family Magazine'. This was the beginning of his authorship, which led amongst others to the writing of a lengthy poem called Savitri.

He was a healthy boy but not interested in sport, nor was he spiritually inclined despite the ministrations of Rev. Drewett's mother. The Drewetts emigrated to Australia and the children were left with Mrs. Drewett senior. She went to live elsewhere because she did not want to live under the same roof as heathens. Furthermore, Dr. Ghose seldom sent money anymore and they were left to fend for themselves. These were difficult times for them. The elder brother earned five shillings a week and this is what they lived on for a year. They did not have proper clothes for the cold English climate. Their diet was tea, bread and ham in the morning and some sausages in the evening. They stayed in unheated rooms at the

top of the South Kensington Liberal Club. Despite these conditions, Aurobindo passed the final exam at St. Paul's in December 1889 with very good marks. He took the Examination for Scholarships to King's College, Cambridge and secured the Open Scholarship worth £80 a year. Some of his examiners commented that they had never encountered such a high standard of work by a student. In 1890 he passed the necessary examination for the Indian Civil Service, but failed to present himself at the horse riding examination and was disqualified without himself actually rejecting the Service.

Aurobindo's education in England gave him knowledge of the culture and history of ancient, mediaeval and modern Europe. He was a brilliant scholar excelling in Greek and Latin. He read different authors in their original language. This broad based educational experience stood him in good stead in the future, both from a practical point of view in dealing with life and the pragmatic realities thereof, as well as preparation for his philosophical and spiritual development. As for his personal feelings for England and the English people, when Sri Aurobindo eventually left for India, he had no sentimental attachment to the English or England. What he took with him was its education, poetry, literature and intellectual development, and nothing more.

POLITICAL LIFE

At the end of his time in England, the Gaekwar of Baroda was in London. Aurobindo saw him and was offered an appointment in the Baroda Service in India. He left England in the steamship 'Carthage' and arrived in India during February 1893. Meanwhile, in India his father was incorrectly informed by his bankers that the 'Roumania', the steamer in which Sri Aurobindo was thought to have departed from England, had gone down off the coast of Portugal near Lisbon with total loss of life. Dr. Ghose was suffering from a weak heart and he collapsed and died the same night.

In India, Aurobindo worked for thirteen years, from 1893 to 1906, in the Baroda Service, firstly in the Revenue Department, then as secretary for the Maharaja, later as Professor of English and, eventually, as Vice-Principal in the Baroda College. In April 1901 he married Mrinalini Devi. During this time at Baroda, he developed himself and his insight into his native land. He broadened his knowledge of things Indian, its history, philosophy, the languages, and its spiritual heritage. He learned Marathi, Bengali, Hindustani and the ancient mother tongue Sanskrit,

delved into the spirit of Indian civilisation past and present. He was active intellectually and in literature and wrote poetry that was later published in Pondicherry. As Professor of English Sri Aurobindo was highly esteemed by his students. He inspired them by his being, he appeared benign and benevolent and they experienced an inner quietness in his presence. He was a natural and spontaneous speaker. The debating society meetings where he spoke were always well attended. A meeting in 1899 had the subject 'Oxford and Cambridge'. What he said gives an indication of his ability for objectivity as the subject was related to a country and a people that he did not like. His opinion was that a raw student who entered one of those universities, came out of it a man and a gentleman, accustomed to think of great affairs and fit to move in a cultivated society.

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE AND HIS WRITING CAREER

The spiritual life of Shri Aurobindo is very intertwined with Mirra Richard, nee Alfassa, in his writings referred to as the Mother. Regarding their cosmic relationship, he states, "The Mother's consciousness and mine are the same, the one Divine Consciousness in two, because that is necessary for the play." She was born on 21st February 1878. As a child she was involved with the subtler aspects of life and through this, during her early youth years, she realised both the existence of God and of man's possibility of uniting with Him. In her late youth she experienced a constant inner union with the Divine. She grew up in Paris. She met and married Paul Richard, a lawyer turned politician. He came to India in 1910, ostensibly to promote a French politician in French India, but the real reason was to find a spiritual guru. He met Shri Aurobindo and proclaimed him to be a great spiritual master. Through this meeting, Shri Aurobindo and Mirra Richard started a correspondence.

Shri Aurobindo left a legacy of his unique personal spiritual experiences. He wrote on a subjective level and even though he possessed a tremendous intellect, he more than believed, he knew that what was really important lay beyond the limiting confines of the intellect:

"It is not by the intellect that one can progress in the yoga
but by psychic and spiritual receptivity --
as for knowledge and true understanding,
it grows in sadhana by the growth of the intuition,
not of the physical intellect."

What he wrote about is what he subjectively experienced. Especially important is his statement that it is possible for everybody to reach what he did, given the necessary intention and perseverance. His description of what he experienced and knew is literally beyond reason, but not beyond belief: "And still there is a beyond. For on the other side of the cosmic consciousness there is, attainable to us, a consciousness yet more transcendent, -- transcendent not only of the ego, but of the Cosmos itself, -- against which the universe seems to stand out like a petty picture against an immeasurable background." To see the universe as a petty picture is indeed to be in possession of an ability to view things on a vast spiritual scale. But this is exactly the message that comes out of his writing.

A definition of spiritual must always be incomplete if it is to be done from the logical intellectual faculty. On the other hand, if spiritual is defined in any way which excludes logic, how trustworthy will such a definition be? After all, discussions about spiritual matters are done using words and grammar, following rules of logic. Where should one stop the use of logic? The dilemma is that if we use logic to define something which is conceivable beyond the realm of logic, we do not succeed in our quest, and if we do not use logic, the strong possibility is there that the definition is not disciplined, and it could be incomprehensible. I submit that certain non-tangible things like truth in its finest dimensions lies beyond the realm of logic. George Santayana, in "Scepticism and Animal Faith" (1923) argued that all human knowledge derives from an instinctive urge to believe, even though objective truth necessarily lies beyond our capacity. One should add that "our capacity" here refers to our intellectual ability to fully comprehend any object and represent that object completely and accurately to another person. This is the major defect of the intellect, one that is of necessity accepted or glossed over in normal pragmatic life as our present level of development provides us with no alternative. Shri Aurobindo knew of the realities of this intellect, and his description thereof is as follows: "-- the ordinary material intellect --- takes its present organisation of consciousness for the limit of its possibilities" whereas in fact through development of consciousness, man is capable of much greater growth

A "spiritual experience" relates to something that happens to you internally, something that is not the norm, not what everyday normal life is all about. But at the same time it is also not beyond your innate knowledge, and it has a type of familiarity about it. It is an awareness of something more, something to do with a deeper level of awareness or consciousness. Describing an experience of a

different type of consciousness to an empathetic person in waking consciousness is difficult. Describing that to a person that has never had such an experience, and that has a vested interest, for mental security's sake, in the exclusive reality created by the use of the intellect and the five senses, is virtually impossible because that person cannot understand as he/she does not have a frame of reference in which to place such information. Because higher states of consciousness apparently cannot be described to a person that has not (yet) had an experience, does it require a leap of faith for such a person to just accept the existence of higher states of consciousness? This is a somewhat vexing problem that we should consider. I would suggest that the questions that demand attention in this regard is by whom and to whom are these statements about higher states of consciousness made. Also, what should be some of the criteria for acceptability of these statements? These different aspects are closely interrelated and are considered separately only for the sake of clarity.

1. By whom. Here, I can think of three different people; one that does experience higher states of consciousness, another one that does not but says he does, and those that do not and say they do not. I would submit that the most important of the three would be the first one. This is the person with firsthand knowledge and therefore has the ability to talk with authority. He can be defined as a mystic. The second person is a charlatan and can, like a quack, bring disrepute to the whole field of mysticism. The third person is one who could for many reasons, obvious or hidden, discuss these matters. I would postulate that they do not talk with the same authority, as does the mystic, that they speculate and that they do not really know. Very often they are locked in a debate about mysticism. It is not clear why they do not become mystics themselves, as obviously they have a great interest in the subject. Then they can deal with the subject both on a logical and a spiritual level.
2. To whom. The mystic could address people that are seeking knowledge that they believe he can supply. This knowledge will be of a higher nature, related to spiritual matters. Here the interaction is personal, intimate and ideal. When the student asks questions, the motive for that would be to gain understanding and not to prove the mystic wrong. Questioning allows the mystic to guide the student to better understanding. Various mystics throughout the ages have preached to less receptive audiences too, with very little positive results to show. They did this in a desire to convey greater truths and messages to benefit the hearers.

Regardless, Shri Aurobindo has to put across what he found, as he believes it is important and it is his duty. His philosophy entails a hierarchy of consciousness, which started with an original Being, something beyond time and space, "That One" (a schema is attached) which is a beyondness and Beingness that just cannot be placed in words or understood with the intellect. This "That One" manifested for some reason which is beyond our partial understanding. IT manifested a part of ITSELF as Sachchidananda. The components thereof are Sat, Chit, Ananda which are Being, Consciousness-Force, and Bliss. This in turn gave rise to Supermind, which gave rise to Overmind, to Intuitive Mind, to Illumined Mind, Higher Mind, to Mind, Life, and to Matter. This was the Involution aspect of an eternal cycle. The evolution aspect requires the return from matter up back to "That One". Every aspect of each of the stages above had at all times the essence of "That One" in it. That implies that Matter has a subtle inherent consciousness. Because Matter has consciousness, it is not only possible but inevitable for the evolution cycle to proceed upward all along the same path mentioned, back to "That One". This is dealt with later in greater detail.

For greater clarity as to the meaning of Sachchidananda, and because of the importance of the term, I quote the following explanation thereof.

"sat/chit/ananda, also, saccidananda or Sachchidananda, are three Sanskrit terms combined to refer to the Highest Reality as 'existence, intelligence, bliss'. The later thinkers of Advaita Vedanta, such as Shankara, used the term to denote the Absolute, Brahman, a state of oneness of being, pure consciousness and of absolute value or freedom. These are not to be taken as attributes or accidents that qualify Brahman but terms that express its essential nature as experienced by human beings. Sat, (being, existence) is also satyam, (truth), affirming that Brahman is experienced as being itself, not a being over against another. Chit is pure consciousness, consciousness without object, and ananda is the experience of unlimited freedom and universal potentiality as well as satisfaction and the bliss that transcends both all that is pleasurable in the world and release from the bondage of samsara. Hindu theists understand sat/chit/ananda as the qualities of the supreme god."

The spiritual experiences of Shri Aurobindo inspired him in his writing, all of which dealt with consciousness. He wrote not as a latter-day Mohammed with an unalterable and clear revelation, but from his writing it is apparent that he perceived a certain structure of creation, and he wrote not only to elucidate and

explain, but also to comment on his perceptions as it pertains to humanity. The things he wrote about are related to the essence of matter, life and mind. He dealt with dualities and fully realised and understood the dilemma of the emphasis placed on one form of existence over another, for instance, the view of the materialist versus that of the ascetic. He outlined the problem in this way: "If the materialist is justified from his point of view in insisting on Matter as reality, the relative world as the sole thing of which we can in some sort be sure and the Beyond as wholly unknowable, if not indeed non-existent, a dream of the mind, an abstraction of Thought divorcing itself from reality, so also is the Sannyasin, enamoured of that Beyond, justified from his point of view in insisting on pure Spirit as the reality, the one thing free from change, birth, death, and the relative as a creation of the mind and the senses, a dream, an abstraction in the contrary sense of Mentality withdrawing from the pure and eternal Knowledge." His solution to this problem is for us to know and experience both. He maintains even though both the materialist and the ascetic have true contentions, the Sannyasin or spiritual man's point of view, on its level, is more valid than that of the person of the world. That is so because not only does that man (here represented by Shri Aurobindo) is a master of the relative world, but he also knows the subtle he is talking about. His academic prowess and his pragmatic approach to politics attest to that. His answer to a statement put to him, which implied that he lived an otherworldly life, that his spiritual evolution was attained effortlessly and that his life was without the normal trials, and tribulations that seems to be the international sport of life, is illuminating, as well as amusing. His response was very direct and to the point: "But what strange ideas again! -that I was born with a supramental temperament and that I know nothing of hard realities! Good God! My whole life has been a struggle with hard realities, from hardships, starvation in England and constant and fierce difficulties to the far greater difficulties continually cropping up here in Pondicherry, external and internal. My life has been a battle from its early years and is still a battle: the fact that I wage it now from a room upstairs and by spiritual means as well as others that are external makes no difference to its character. But, of course, as we have not been shouting about these things, it is natural, I suppose, for others to think that I am living in an august, glamorous, lotus-eating dreamland where no hard facts of life or Nature present themselves. But what an illusion all the same!" All Shri Aurobindo did here was to make it very clear that he lived both a spiritual and a hard pragmatic life in this world, and that growth in his Spiritual life was achieved in tandem with his normal life.

For Shri Aurobindo there was not much difference between the relative and the

absolute world. In essence, they were the same, with the boundaries between them rather arbitrary. A parallel example, an anatomist here would see a cell and a muscle built of cells as the same, which of course they are even in a certain sense they are not. He is familiar with the apparent contradictions within his views but he explains it as follows: "Even in the world of Matter there are existences of which the physical senses are incapable of taking cognisance." This implies that even if we do not perceive something with our senses, it does not mean that it does not exist. Our ability of perception, our consciousness, determines what we perceive; our "world of Matter" certainly includes atoms and electrons, and yet we know them not at first hand. We are told about them, and that truth we are told, we accept without a second, or a first, thought. With regard to the reality or ontology of the absolute and the relative and our ability to perceive that otherness, if we do not perceive those subtler aspects, it is due to a limitation of awareness in ourselves, and not to the fact that there is no difference. In short, we delude ourselves if we think that only what we perceive at present, with our limited and insufficient methodology and undiscovered and underdeveloped perception apparatus, is what is. At best it gives us a false sense of certainty and hence security as to what is and how it is. We skirt the issue of the ontology of reality. Furthermore, according to Shri Aurobindo, we already have the ability to perceive and to know what IS and we can develop that ability.

Shri Aurobindo's writing ran parallel to his spiritual life. Some form of chronology of these events follows. In 1908 he was arrested and for the next year incarcerated in the Alipore Jail. He viewed this as fortuitous as he spent all his time meditating, reading the Gita and the Upanishads. He stated that the spirit of Swami Vivekananda visited him for fifteen days, giving him spiritual instructions. He wrote: "I had endeavoured hard and long for a direct vision and realisation of Narayana, who dwells in my heart and cherished an intense hope of winning Purushottama, the Creator of the universe, as my Friend and Master, but I could not succeed on account of the pull of a thousand worldly desires, attachments to various activities, and the dense obscurity of ignorance. At last Sri Hari who is infinitely kind and gracious, slew those enemies at a stroke and cleared my path, pointed to an abode of Yoga, and Himself stayed there with me as my Guru (spiritual Guide) and intimate Comrade." He felt that the enforced retirement from the world of politics was a small price to pay for the far greater benefits he acquired in the form of spiritual evolution. Towards the latter part of his stay in jail, he reported that he experienced Vasudeva as the ALL that was. As a result of that experience he saw everything, the tree outside, the bars of his cell, the door, the guard, the

blankets, the court officials, everything as being Lord Krishna. Everything was blessed by the presence of the Supreme Being. A change took place in his life. His initial reason to practice yoga was to help him succeed in his political work for the benefit of his Indian compatriots. Now the inner spiritual life became totally important, he became universal in his outlook, not only the future of India but also the future of the whole of humanity became his concern. On a practical level, in this particular court case he was found not guilty, discharged and he resumed his political life. Shortly thereafter he felt a command from above to go to Chandernagore in French India. He left immediately as he now accepted and trusted the divine guidance. In a few hours he was at Chandernagore where he went into hiding and stayed for six weeks. Here he devoted all his time to solitary meditation.. He experienced visions and revelations, including encountering Vedic goddesses. Because of moves by the English to again arrest him, his friends wanted to send him to France but another divine message told him to go to French-controlled Pondicherry, which he did. He arrived there on April 4, 1910. This is where he spent the next forty years of his life. Even though not externally involved with politics, he states that he knew what had to be accomplished. He had to lay the groundwork, and others would complete the task. He was involved with world affairs on a subtle level. He said: "... I have never known any will of mine for any major event in the conduct of the world affairs to fail in the end, although it may take a long time for the world-forces to fulfil it." Staying at Pondicherry he felt that to be the ideal place to perform his task on earth. It gave him the solitude that he needed. However, the English authorities still wanted him behind bars. They asked the French to arrest him on a false fraud charge. The French police duly searched his home but when the senior officer found Latin and Greek books lying about on his desk, he was so taken aback that he could only blurt out, "il sait du latin, il sait du grec!" "He knows Latin, he knows Greek!" and then left with all his men.

The British Government tempted Sri Aurobindo with a nice bungalow in the quiet surroundings of a pleasant hill-station, Darjeeling, which invitation Shri Aurobindo refused with a polite "No, thank you." During the first World War, the British Government requested the French Government to hand the political refugees over or to deport them. The French approached Shri Aurobindo with this proposal, but he paused a little and then said, in a quiet clear tone; "I do not budge from here."

During these early times in Pondicherry, Shri Aurobindo and his few followers were very poor. They had to make do with very little. Shri Aurobindo once spoke about

their financial situation as follows: "The situation just now is that we have Rs.1½ or so in hand ... no doubt, God will provide, but He has contracted a bad habit of waiting till the last moment. I only hope he does not wish us to learn how to live on a minus quantity..."

Despite this apparent austere and rigorous life, he advanced in his spiritual growth. In 1911 he wrote to the Mother, saying: "I am developing the necessary powers for bringing down the spiritual on the material plane, and I am now able to put myself into men and change them, removing the darkness and bringing light, giving them a new heart and a new mind." And two months later: "My yoga is proceeding with great rapidity..." On 29 March 1914 Shri Aurobindo and the Mother met for the first time. They had already been corresponding with each other after Paul Richard, the Mother's husband, met Shri Aurobindo. There was a mutual recognition. She recognised him as a personage she met on a psychic level during meditation, and he recognised her as the Divine Mother: wrote Sri Aurobindo in Savitri:

"She is the golden bridge, the wonderful fire,
The luminous heart of the unknown is she,
A power of silence in the depths of God...
The might of all that never yet came down...
Once seen, his heart acknowledged only her..."

And also:

"So, now they met in that momentous hour,
So utter the recognition in the deeps...."

They would be together until his death in 1950. Shri Aurobindo implies in the following quote that they had been together during previous lifetimes:

"These knew each other though in forms thus strange.

Although to sight unknown, although life, mind

Had altered to hold a new significance,

These bodies summed the drift of the numberless births

And the spirit to the spirit was the same."

"forms thus strange" could well refer to incarnations on other than the earth plane, where other types of life form could be appropriate.

Shri Aurobindo and the Mother worked together from this point on all levels, both spiritual and the relative. They started, 'Arya' a monthly philosophical Review of 64 pages. That was to be Sri Aurobindo's major intellectual work.

The two objects for the journal were "a systematic study of the highest problems of existence and the formation of a vast synthesis of knowledge, harmonising the

diverse religious traditions of humanity occidental as well as oriental..."

World events that Shri Aurobindo would be involved in on a subtle level proceeded apace. The First World War started at the beginning of August 1914. If "Knowledge is a great purifier" as Maharishi Mahesh Yogi stated, then at times of war, the earth can use all the purification it can get. This could be one of the reasons the 'Arya' was launched on 15 August 1914. In this devastating passage of the history of the earth the 'Arya' was like a 'divine sowing' of purifying knowledge. Publication of 'Arya' continued until January 1921, just after the signing of the Peace Treaties. This could be coincidence, but coincidence could also very well be factual related phenomena, the line of causality of which cannot be clearly observed.

Regarding the 'Arya', Sri Aurobindo himself saw it as presenting a new philosophy and a new method of yoga. His purpose was to recreate man to his divinity, to teach the world a new progress, a new evolution. Anyone can practice this and whoever uses this evolutionary technology will evolve to become the leader of humanity.

In the various articles in the 'Arya' the basis of the new evolution and the method of yoga by which it can be accomplished is shown. The message has three parts:

1. 'for each man as an individual to change himself into the future type of divine humanity, the men of the new Satyayuga which is striving to be born;
2. to evolve a race of such men to lead humanity and
3. to call all humanity to the path under the lead of these pioneers and this chosen race.'

It was in 'Arya' that the following books first appeared in serial form over a period of about six years: '*The Life Divine*,' '*The Synthesis of Yoga*,' '*The Secret of the Veda*,' '*Essays on the Gita*,' '*The Ideal of Human Unity*,' '*The Psychology of Social Development*,' '*The Future Poetry*' and '*A Defense of Indian Culture*'. These are arguably the most important of Shri Aurobindo's writings.

The Mother wrote that during this time she also evolved further, being in the presence of Shri Aurobindo. She attained the position that was her dharma for this incarnation. "It was in 1914 that the identification with the Universal Mother took place, the identification of the physical consciousness with her. Of course, I knew that before this that I was The Mother, but the complete identification took place only in 1914."

Paul Richard had to return to France to join the army, and the Mother accompanied him. The time in France was very far removed from the tranquility of

Pondicherry, and she had a difficult and stressful time, and she fell ill. After her recovery she joined Paul, together with an old friend, Dorothy Hodgson, on an assignment to Japan. That country she found very beautiful. They stayed for four enjoyable years. Her own spiritual development continued and she had a transcendental experience in Tokyo similar to that Shri Aurobindo had in jail. She kept a spiritual diary, with one of the entries her own experience of Vasudeva: "It was a Japanese street brilliantly illuminated by gay lanterns, picturesquely adorned with vivid colours. And as gradually what was conscious moved on down the street, the Divine appeared, visible in everyone and everything. One of the lightly built houses became transparent, revealing a woman seated on a tatami in a sumptuous violet kimono embroidered with gold and bright colours... And in the woman too the Divine was visible."

Upon her asking the Divine what her task was and whether she would be equal to it, IT replied that she would be and that IT is preparing her for the task, even as she stays in, and enjoys, Japan. Further,

"I have appointed thee from all eternity to be my exceptional representative upon the earth, not only invisibly in a hidden way, but also openly before the eyes of all men. And what thou wert created to be, thou wilt be."

The Mother encountered great beauty in Japan, but of the population at large, she had this to say:

"I ought to say, to complete my picture, that the four years I was there I found a dearth of spirituality as entire as could be."

In Pondicherry, Shri Aurobindo working with his group of disciples, typed out articles for the 'Arya' and edited it, keeping the magazine alive while at the same time "kept a close watch on all that was happening in the world and in India and actively intervened whenever necessary, but solely with a spiritual force and silent spiritual action."

In December 1918 as Sri Aurobindo's wife, Mrinalini Devi was on her way to Pondicherry for a prolonged stay, she contracted influenza in Calcutta and died. Shri Aurobindo and Mrinalini were good friends but not really marriage partners.

On April 24, 1920 The Mother returned to Pondicherry.

At war end, Sri Aurobindo wrote in the 'Arya' in December 1918 under the heading "The Unseen Power":

"It is the wrath of Rudra that has swept over the earth ... Two great words of the divine truth have forced themselves insistently on our minds through the crash of the ruin... freedom and unity."

At this time, Shri Aurobindo and the Mother as a team had to do work that was waiting for her return. They had to create ways for a positive force to be established on earth. She wrote:

"It is a veritable work of creation we have to do, to create activities, new modes of being so that this force, unknown to the earth till today, may manifest in its plenitude."

According to Shri Aurobindo, the first part of this work was to acquire "the divine knowledge and power":

"In myself it is trying to manifest as rapidly as the deficiencies of my mind and body will permit..."

The second part of the work was to spread this Knowledge, this thought to the world through the 'intellectual offensive' of 'Arya'.

'the spread of the idea is not sufficient', "you must have real Yogins, not merely men moved intellectually and emotionally by one or two of the central ideas of the Yoga. Spreading of the idea is the second necessity, ... The other means is to form brotherhoods, not formal but real ... for the practice of the Vedantic Yoga ..."

It appears that what Shri Aurobindo means is that the persons required to perform the activity (teaching in this instance), must operate from a different plane to the intellectual or emotional because these normal levels do not possess sufficient force, there you do not find the concrete but subtle reality necessary for the realisation or manifestation of what has to be achieved. The practical way of teaching ideas is by example, very much so in the case of Vedantic Yoga. These 'brotherhoods' were created in 1926.

The pro-independence movement still needed a person like Shri Aurobindo to handle communication and he was approached in the late teens of the century, but even though he was tempted, he could not accept. He knew that for him to succeed in his task on earth, he had to complete a certain type of spiritual preparation first. Pondicherry to him was a retreat where he could realise that endeavour. He wrote - "I must be internally armed and equipped for my work before I leave it." He communicated to his brother Barindra that at Pondicherry he had to perfect himself, that was the place for his Yoga Siddhi. Action in the world, or the external field as he called it, was important, but Yoga had to come first to form a new basis of action. As he wrote to a disciple in 1922:

"...I am determined not to work in the external field till I have the sure and complete possession of this new power of action, - not to build except on a perfect foundation."

This "perfect foundation" was not based on an emotional or mental platform:

"I wish to make a large and strong equanimity the foundation of the yoga, I want established on that equality a full, firm and undisturbed Shakti in the system and in all its movements... I do not want hundreds of thousands of disciples. It will be enough if I can get a hundred complete men, purified of petty egoism, who will be the instruments of God."

His political career was left far behind, as he was totally convinced in his being that India would become free. He saw his task now as more universal namely the changing of the earth and its people to develop higher states of consciousness, resulting in them ascending to Supermind with Supermind simultaneously descending to earth. Instruction and teaching became important. During the late afternoons from 1922 until December 1926, his disciples would meditate with Sri Aurobindo and afterwards he would give talks on various branches of knowledge. He list some subjects in a letter to his brother as "Vaishnavism, Theosophy, Bahaism, Gandhism, Nirvikalpa Samadhi, Samata, Grace and the Guru, Cosmic consciousness, Yogic miracles, Ouspensky, of Theon, astrology, kaya kalpa, space and time... Islamic culture, Indo-English poetry, Art, Education, Medicine" What is important about this list is the broad spectrum of subjects covered. This is more the action of a teacher in the present-day world, than that of a guru, but this subject is discussed further at the end of this chapter.

At this time the Mother started to take over the administration of the household, leaving Shri Aurobindo free to concentrate on his sadhana. This aided Shri Aurobindo with the realisation of one of his long-term goals, that of the creation of a special spiritual community. Here everybody would be working together selflessly and in a spirit of devotion. The place would later come into being as Auroville. The story goes that while Shri Aurobindo was still alive, in 1949, the Mother was driving north of Pondicherry. She suddenly stopped somewhere close to the sea and identified the spot as one where people from all over the world would come and stay. Almost twenty years later, the project of Auroville was begun here. Interestingly, there is a legend in this area of Tamil Nadu, which speaks of a yogi whose curse created a desert out of the rich land. This curse would be lifted when people from all over the world would settle there. She stated that by the founding of Auroville, this condition was met and the area has once again become a green and luxurious land as predicted.

During the twenties, more people came to see Shri Aurobindo, some stayed, and 'naturally and spontaneously,' the Sri Aurobindo Ashram took form and was a

reality by 1926. Sri Aurobindo describing the nature of this Ashram as follows:

"This Ashram has been created with another object than that ordinarily common to such institutions, not for the renunciation of the worlds but as a centre and a field of practice for the evolution of another kind and form of life which would in the final end be moved by a higher spiritual consciousness and embody a greater life of the spirit."

Shri Aurobindo strove for humanity to develop holistically. Not only the spiritual Absolute had to be attained, the relative also was holy and the perfection thereof was an integral part of evolution.

The Ashram grew organically. Shri Aurobindo left the administration and organisation of the Ashram in the capable hands of the Mother. A variety of people, representing a cross-section of the population assembled at the Ashram to form a veritable ideal republic, as envisioned by Shri Aurobindo. It became an ideal and fully functioning communist society. Everybody had the same goal, namely evolutionary growth, and what they did, they did with joy. The scale of the place was outlined in a letter of the Mother to her son Andre, dated 23 August 1930. By then, there were about eighty-five members and sixty paid labourers. It was a self-sustaining operation. They acquired their twenty-first house, five cars, twelve bicycles, four sewing machines, a dozen typewriters, many garages, an automobile repair workshop, an electric service, a building service, sewing departments (European and Indian tailors), a library and reading-room containing several thousand volumes, a photographic service and a general store containing a wide variety of goods, nearly all imported from France, large gardens for flowers, vegetables and fruits, a dairy and a bakery.

Shri Aurobindo effectively retired completely, giving darshan to his disciples only on three days in a year: The Mother's birthday on 21 February, his own on 15 August, and the Siddhi Day on 24 November. He very seldom received visitors, exceptions were made for people like Rabindranath Tagore.

Throughout his life, Shri Aurobindo spoke freely about the spiritual world and about the possibility of humanity to evolve spiritually. He described his own experiences in having attaining higher states of consciousness and of his connection with Divinity. He attributed the same spiritual reality to the Mother. To the Western mind, this ontological subject sounds strange. For the present, all we can do is look at what he had said and done. A deeper analysis of this matter should be the subject of a later study.

To give some examples of Shri Aurobindo's views and experiences, the following:

Example 1.

Shri Aurobindo used to give Darshan. Darshan is an -often-personal - interview that a Master would give to mostly followers, but also to other people. Explaining the significance of the Darshan, The Mother said:

"In those days when Sri Aurobindo used to give Darshan, before he gave it there was always a concentration of certain forces or of a certain realisation which he wanted to give people. And so each Darshan marked a stage forward; each time something was added."

Example 2

The activity of the Mother seemed to be that of a Master, and she was viewed as such by both Shri Aurobindo and the disciples at the Ashram. Between 1928 and 1938, the Mother's daily programme used to be, more or less, a regulated one:

"The Mother used to get up by 4 a.m. or earlier. By 6 a.m. she would be ready and go up to the terrace of her house... A sadhak would blow a conch to announce the Mother's coming to give her blessings. Then Pranam would start in the Meditation Hall on the first floor, lasting an hour or two." (A sadhak is a disciple.)

Example 3

The Mother used to conduct Pranam, which is a ceremony of offering devotions by disciples. During the Pranam, "The Mother sat cross-legged on a low cushioned seat, her right foot partly left bare." The Sadhaks offered pranams, one by one placing their head on the bare part of her right foot and receiving blessings. "A dish of flowers remained at her right side, artistically arranged. After blessings she gave a flower to each." When Sri Aurobindo's was asked the significance of the Pranam, he answered:

"It is meant to help the realisation of the thing the flower stands for."

Example 4

This is an indication of the status of the Mother in the eyes of sadhaks and visitors. After the morning Pranam, The Mother used to give personal interviews to the sadhaks and visitors until noon.

"Formerly, you see, we began with thirty five, thirty-six (people) but even till a hundred and fifty it was so like ... they were as though held in an egg-shell in my consciousness, so close, you know, that I could direct all movements, both inner and outer, all the time, everything was under complete control, at every moment night and day. And naturally, I believe, in those days they made some progress. It was altogether true that I did the sadhana for them, all the time!"

Example 5

Ordinary activities such as the serving of soup in time became to be viewed as divine activities of the Mother. In the evening soup was served.

When The Mother came down into the soup room a cauldron of hot soup would be put in front of her. She went into deep meditation and after a while, although her eyes were still shut, her hands stretched out, palms downward over the pot as if blessing it...

"Then ... sadhak after sadhak came up with his own cup and knelt down before her. She poured the soup into it, took it up to her lips, then gave it to the sadhak."

Sri Aurobindo explained:

"The soup was instituted in order to establish a means by which the sadhak might receive something from The Mother by an interchange in material consciousness."

Example 6

The Mother used to walk on the balcony in the evening. The disciples would wait outside to see her. This then evolved into the daily Balcony Darshan. About that The Mother later said:

"Every morning, at the Balcony, after establishing a conscious contact with each of those who are present, I identify myself with the Supreme Lord and merge myself completely in him. Then my body (becomes) completely passive, is nothing but a channel through which the Lord passes freely his force and pours on all his light, his consciousness and his joy, according to each one's receptivity."

Example 7

About the divine reality of the nature of the Mother Sri Aurobindo wrote:

"Four great aspects of The Mother, four of her leading powers and personalities have stood in front in her guidance of this universe and in her dealings with the terrestrial play. One (Maheshwari) is her personality of calm wideness and comprehending wisdom and tranquil benignity and inexhaustible compassion and sovereign and surpassing majesty and all-ruling greatness.

Another (Mahakali) embodies her power of splendid strength and irresistible passion, her warrior mood, her overwhelming will, her impetuous swiftness and world-shaking force.

A third (Mahalakshmi) is vivid and sweet and wonderful with her deep secret of beauty and harmony and fine rhythm, her intricate and subtle opulence, her compelling attraction and captivating grace.

The fourth (Mahasaraswati) is equipped with her close and profound capacity of intimate knowledge and careful flawless work and quiet and exact perfection in all things...

To the four we give the four great names, Mahasaraswati, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi, Maheshwari..."

The pages that Shri Aurobindo wrote in this regard are reproduced as an

addendum.

Example 8

Shri Aurobindo obviously had a purpose with the establishment of the Ashram. He ascribed the significance of the Ashram as follows: The Ashram had become "the cradle of a new world, of the creation of tomorrow." Sri Aurobindo himself had given indications of the 'creation of tomorrow' in his letter of November 1933: "No, the supramental has not yet descended into the body or into matter - it is only at the point where such a descent has become not only possible but inevitable; I am speaking of my experience."

A year later, he wrote:

"The descent of the supramental means only that the power will be there in the earth-consciousness as a living force just as the thinking mental and higher mental are already there... it will be at first for the few... only there will be a growing influence of it on the earth-life".

Example 9

In November 1926: Shri Aurobindo said:

"I am trying to bring down the Supramental; things will happen, conditions for its descent will be created. from the highest standpoint the coming of the Supramental is decided, you can't stand in the way."

Example 10

During 1926 he made a direct reference to the world of the Gods, the Overmental world:

"I spoke about the world of Gods because... I am trying to bring it down into the physical as it can no longer be delayed and then things may happen."

This apparently happened on 24 November 1926:

"There was a deep silence ... Many saw an oceanic flood of Light rushing down from above."

Sri Aurobindo explained the significance of this day's event, from then called Siddhi Day:

"24th was the descent of Krishna into the physical. Krishna is not Supramental Light. The descent of Krishna would mean the descent of the Overmind Godhead preparing, though not itself actually, the descent of Supermind and Ananda."

Example 11

After the event of the bringing down of the Supramental, Sri Aurobindo identified totally with Sri Krishna and stated: "There is no difference between me and Sri Krishna."

According to Shri Aurobindo, this plane on which Lord Krishna resides is the

Overmind. He explains that whereas in the Overmind and triple world of Mind, Life, and Matter these Divine powers appear as independent beings, "they return in the Supermind into the One and stand there united in a single harmonious action as multiple personalities of the One Person, the Divine Purushottama." Therefore in the Supermind there is only divine unity, in the Overmind there is divine diversity. Here this One Godhead puts forward subsidiary aspects of Itself. As Sri Aurobindo explains: "Four great Aspects of the Mother, four of her leading Powers and Personalities have stood in front in her guidance of this Universe and in her dealings with the terrestrial play. One is her personality of calm wideness and comprehending wisdom (Maheshwari), another embodies her power of splendid strength and irresistible passion (Mahakali), a third is vivid and sweet and wonderful (Mahalakshmi) and the fourth is equipped with her close and profound capacity of intimate knowledge and careful flawless work (Mahasaraswati)." This is the divine Mother, and is also the reality of the Mother in the bodily form of Mirra Richard. Details of the four aspects are given in the addenda E to H.

For a person not used to ashram life, the examples quoted above are strange. It is obvious in what he wrote that he did not seek to be a typical Guru with many devotees. But considering the following facts, it is obvious that he was a Guru. He had an ashram, and he had followers. He had a philosophy of a spiritual nature. His goal for humanity was to evolve spiritually. He stated that if he could have a hundred sadhaks that were serious about evolving, he would be able to effect great changes not only in them, but also in the world. His contention was that a relatively small group of evolved people could positively influence the evolution of the rest of humanity. He declared his opposition to starting a new religion. He had commented on how religions decline into impure forms with the corruption of the original message, and this he wanted to avoid. However, *prima facie* a new religion did see the light of day. We have a body of works that deals with God and the way He created the universe, we have a fall from Godlike status to ignorance, and we have a means and telos of returning to God.

Regarding his disciples in the ashram, it appears that a great deal of value was placed on the attention they received. The concept of Darshan during which a Master directed forces to disciples to aid their evolution, seems curious and yet this is normal in these environments. Initially he had direct verbal contact with them, later he retired to a near-total reclusive existence but he stated that he continued to attend to their spiritual welfare. The Mother then took over and gave darshan. The darshan had a strong ritualistic nature. The whole scenario was

typical of life in an ashram. Also evident from their writing was the importance of the subtle nature of a lot of actions, for instance, the value of the Mother serving soup. What is also apparent is that the disciples were very attached to the two Masters, Shri Aurobindo and the Mother and viewed them to being divine.

His stated intensions included the bringing down the World of Gods from the plane of the Overmind. This is some form of energy manipulation. He declared that he was successful in this mission as he said that this eventually occurred on 24th November 1926, the day that Sai Baba said was his birth date. He said that this event had a great influence on both himself and the world, and he made the very significant statement when he said, "There is no difference between me and Sri Krishna." It certainly is an incredible statement. How would we know what this meant, and what the import of that was? According to his schema of creation, the level of Overmind, is not the ultimate level that we on earth can experience; the level of Supermind is above that. The Mother declared that this superior plane descended on earth in 1956. We do not know exactly what energies are involved. Obviously they are beneficial to the world at large and to the sadhaks in particular or at least, they believe that to be the case. Is it true? How would we know? What he stated he wanted to, and did, achieve was closely related to the element of energy. His views on energy is clearly stated in the next quotation: "When we study this Life as it manifests itself upon earth with Matter as its basis, we observe that essentially it is a form of the one cosmic Energy, a dynamic movement or current of it positive and negative, a constant act or play of the Force which builds up forms, energises them by a continual stream of stimulation and maintains them by an unceasing process of disintegration and renewal of their substance." Later in this dissertation the incredible complexity of energy is dealt with. For now, we are aware that energy can be manipulated with both machines and, if we are prepared to accept it, people in for example the practice of reiki. Would it be so farfetched to entertain the possibility of an adept such as Shri Aurobindo manipulating energy? The aspect that is difficult to accept is the fact that he did it on such a grand scale. Yet it appears that he viewed that as part of a normal activity in keeping with his way of conduct.

In summary, he lived a mainly contemplative life and remained in seclusion in the ashram in Pondicherry. Whatever the true nature and extent of his spiritual life might be, from what he wrote it appears remarkable and the philosophical work he produced is unusual in its scope and nature. He died in Pondicherry on the 7th of December 1950.

Chapter 3

SCHEME OF "THE LIFE DIVINE"

This chapter is intended to give an overview of Shri Aurobindo's rather extensive "The Life Divine" making the reading thereof more manageable. His works are supplemented by books and articles I consulted and from various sites on the web, some of which I quoted but which are now lost. The chapter comprises the following sections:

1. The Table of contents of "The Life Divine", indicating the scope of Shri Aurobindo's work
2. A very brief overview of "The Life Divine"
3. A short summary of the contents of all the individual chapters of "The Life Divine"

SECTION 1

The Life Divine

Table of contents

Book 1. Omnipresent Reality and the Universe

Chapter 1	The Human Aspiration	1
Chapter 2	The Two Negations 1 The Materialists Denial	6
Chapter 3	The Two Negations 11. The Refusal of the Ascetic	17
Chapter 4	Reality Omnipresent	25
Chapter 5	The Destiny of the Individual	33
Chapter 6	Man in the Universe	42
Chapter 7	The Ego and the Dualities	51
Chapter 8	The Methods of Vedantic Knowledge	60
Chapter 9	The Pure Existent	71
Chapter 10	Conscious Force	80
Chapter 11	Delight of Existence: The Problem	91
Chapter 12	Delight of Existence: The Solution	100

Chapter 13	The Divine Maya	112
Chapter 14	The Supermind as Creator	122
Chapter 15	The Supreme Truth-Consciousness	132
Chapter 16	The Triple Status of Supermind	142
Chapter 17	The Divine Soul	150
Chapter 18	Mind and Supermind	159
Chapter 19	Life	173
Chapter 20	Death, Desire and Incapacity	188
Chapter 21	The Ascent of Life	198
Chapter 22	The Problem of Life	207
Chapter 23	The Double Soul in Man	218
Chapter 24	Matter	231
Chapter 25	The Knot of Matter	240
Chapter 26	The Ascending Series of Substance	251
Chapter 27	The Sevenfold Chord of Being	262
Chapter 28	Supermind, Mind and the Overmind Maya	271

Book 2. The Knowledge and the Ignorance -
The Spiritual Evolution
Part 1. The Infinite Consciousness and Ignorance

Chapter 1	Indeterminates, Cosmic Determinations and the Indeterminable	295
Chapter 2	Brahman, Purusha, Ishwara - Maya, Prakriti, Shakti	322
Chapter 3	The Eternal and the Individual	365
Chapter 4	The Divine and the Undivine	389
Chapter 5	The Cosmic Illusion: Mind, Dream and Hallucination	412
Chapter 6	Reality and the Cosmic Illusion	439
Chapter 7	The Knowledge and the Ignorance	482
Chapter 8	Memory, Self-Consciousness and the Ignorance	501
Chapter 9	Memory, Ego and Self-Experience	511
Chapter 10	Knowledge by Identity and Separative Knowledge	524

Chapter 11	The Boundaries of the Ignorance	553
Chapter 12	The Origin of the Ignorance	566
Chapter 13	Exclusive Concentration of Consciousness-Force and the Ignorance	581
Chapter 14	The Origin and Remedy of Falsehood, Error, Wrong and Evil	596

Part 2. The Knowledge and the Spiritual Evolution

Chapter 15	Reality and the Integral Knowledge	633
Chapter 16	The Integral Knowledge and the Aim of Life: Four Theories of Existence	657

Chapter 17	The Progress to Knowledge - God, Man and Nature	683
Chapter 18	The Evolutionary Process - Ascent and Integration	702
Chapter 19	Out of the Sevenfold Ignorance towards the Sevenfold Knowledge	726
Chapter 20	The Philosophy of Rebirth	742
Chapter 21	The Order of the Worlds	765
Chapter 22	Rebirth and Other Worlds: Karma, the Soul and Immortality	792
Chapter 23	Man and the Evolution	824
Chapter 24	The Evolution of the Spiritual Man	848
Chapter 25	The Triple Transformation	889
Chapter 26	The Ascent Towards Supermind	919
Chapter 27	The Gnostic Being	964
Chapter 28	The Divine Life	1015

SECTION 2

A brief overview of "The Life Divine"

"The Life Divine" has two parts. The first book has 28 chapters and deals with the Involution aspect where The Absolute becomes the universe. The Evolution stage - the return path - is treated in the second book, which consists of two parts of 14 chapters each. In the first part he describes how the unitary universe became a universe of duality, and how it was possible for the change of the Consciousness of the Absolute, which is Infinite in its nature, to transform into the type of Ignorance found in human consciousness. In the second part he logically and comprehensively outlines the route of rising from Ignorance to a state of Integral Knowledge by attaining higher states of consciousness.

Book 1 deal with the universe and reality. The original knowledge which was before creation changed into the relative ignorance of the universe with the partial perception of reality forming the accepted view of the universe. With evolution Matter rises in consciousness and attains the levels of Life, and then Mind, where human consciousness comes into play. From here further evolution of the psychic being or the soul now inherent in a human body takes place. The result is a new type of human evolving to a state where it is possible to live and have it's being in

a new complete and spiritual way, even while being in his body. This is when life on earth is lived in the fullness of the Divine. The different aspects and components thereof are elucidated. Sri Aurobindo outlines the way creation took place in the process of the involution from and by the Absolute. Here the downward stages from Brahman to Sachchidananda, Supermind, the range included in Higher Mind, Mind, Life and Matter take place. This process created the universe. The reverse journey is the evolutionary phase where the psychic being experiences the reality of Matter, Life, Mind, Higher Mind, Supermind, Sachchidananda, and ultimately Brahman. Brahman as such could not create, as IT is unitary, incapable of dualism which contains the components of both Absolute and relative. But Sachchidananda could solve that problem because of its components, sat, cit and ananda. The chit component of Sachchidananda enabled it to create. Chit is Consciousness - Force. It is the creative hidden Spirit, it has a Force component, and it is involved in all the aspects of consciousness from Supermind down to the consciousness of Matter. It is secretly present and progressively more invisible, but always present in some form, as the involution proceeds downward. The reverse happens during evolution, with consciousness becoming more evident. Evolution implies the rise of consciousness. Development of consciousness took a quantum leap with the arrival of mankind. The prospect of a divine origin and destiny for everything, but specifically for man, became part of the thinking of humans. It was appreciated that humanity should evolve the subtler spirit in all spheres of its being. This will result in the perfection of all aspects of humanity, while simultaneously aiding the evolution of the rest of creation. From this start other and different types of consciousness will evolve. The mind as it is now with its logical and conceptual mechanisms will continue to function at its normal level, but a new dimension will be added; with evolution the possibilities of the dormant and hidden aspects of the spirit will come to the fore and humans will live in internal harmony while still operating in a human body. Evolution upwards to the Supramental truth consciousness will take place. Our task is to reach those levels. This upward journey is the result of our soul evolving and finds its apex in a human rising to Supernature. This is possible because of two components, the human striving, and a corresponding downward flow from higher spiritual levels. The result is perfection of all our aspects, with us experiencing the joy and the knowledge of the universe. The full potential of all the aspects of the individual, that is the physical, vital, mental and spiritual unfolds. We realise our abilities for gaining superior knowledge and activity. Our inherent truth and bliss becomes realised and the boundaries and lack is replaced by the fullness of life in the spirit.

We accept the new dimensions that came with the expanded spiritual life, and we experience infinity with all its wonderful possibilities. Transcendence of the old allows us to live unboundedness.

Sri Aurobindo outlined the way we will evolve. The actions we take now effects our evolution and that in turn determines our future. He recognised an inner evolution dealing with our evolving soul, and an outer evolution which is the domain of the supramental truth consciousness. This type of consciousness represents the highest order, and is endowed with great force and energy that will transform the old human into a new form of being. This new evolved being is gifted with the realisation of its inherent involved inconceivable spiritual powers. This is the zenith of our development. He stated that this growth would have taken place over a period of tens of thousands of years, whereas we could accomplish it during a period of centuries or even decades. Individuals will evolve to these heights, but eventually all will reach this goal.

In part 1 of book II he explained various aspects of Knowledge and Ignorance and in part 2, the subsequent Spiritual Evolution. He explained the duality and nature of the world we live in and the reasons for problems and divisions. He outlined the inward route to higher states of consciousness which results in freedom from the lower reality and development to even higher states of consciousness, right up to supermind. This life in higher states of consciousness is infinitely rewarding, the changes for the better is beyond conception. The components of Sachchidananda namely being, consciousness-force and bliss become lively in our daily existence and our experience is living a tangible and lively original Being. Our lives become blissful, harmonious and trouble free. Reaching this high plane, leave us in the realm of consciousness where we live the Divine Life on earth. We leave the limited intellect-bound life behind and become Gnostic beings. When humanity as a whole has reached this level, this vale of tears become the Elysian Fields right here on earth. Not only do we enjoy then, at the same time we have also fulfilled our destiny.

SECTION 3

Book 1. Omnipresent Reality and the Universe

This deals with the way Nature works, and the way That One manifested The Universe from Itself.

Chapter 1. The Human Aspiration. Throughout time the impulse of man was

towards perfection, truth, bliss, light immortality. Man's eternal quest was this striving for some unknown and vastly superior something; incompletely called God, truth, joy. By and large, he has been denied that goal. Attaining that is possible only through the inward development of consciousness. Nature itself progresses through the slow uncertain and winding way of opposites, from where it is to where it can be. As man is part of nature, and evolves in a similar way, he can affect the emergence of the higher harmony quicker by utilizing the higher plane of spirit. Evolution comes about through the conflict and lack of harmony. This is an incentive to leave that behind and to evolve, resulting in a higher harmony.

Chapter 2. The Materialists Denial. There are dualistic opposites in creation. It includes good/bad, pleasure/pain, and material/spirit. Often, when a person experiences one, they deny the reality of the other. This is so for the materialist that denies the reality of the spirit. For him, the totality of existence, the entire cosmos is embedded in matter and is assessed through the intellect. The opposites, contradictions and the extremes in the world, are all the result of the way of nature, which is the visible way. To him, this limited reality is the only reality. This can be understood and attained by means of the intellect. Yet, all that is is not perceived clearly, and he strives to do so. He uses the intellect to overcome that lack of clarity. This mode of operation is very useful and has great material benefits, which verifies his view that any alternate existence such as the world of the spirit does not exist and to him only matter or force is real. This differs from the view of the ascetic.

Chapter 3. The Refusal of the Ascetic. The ascetic maintains that pure spirit is the exclusive reality, free from change or death. He experiences the material world as one of strife and suffering and he cannot accept that a perfect God could create such a world, as he argues that a perfect God can only create perfection. He therefore affirms the material world to be illusory and the world of the spirit as the only true reality, denying the reality of his present tangible material existence. He knows from experience that the world of the spirit does exist, and his goal is to escape from the illusory material world to that of the spirit. Shri Aurobindo reconciles these two opposing points of view by proposing that both are real, each on its own level.

Chapter 4. Reality Omnipresent. There are opposing points of view regarding the nature of reality. In essence, Brahman is the reality of everything. The incorporeal and the tangible worlds are two affirmations of what is, namely the

omnipresent Reality. When we perceive differences, they are only on the surface level and by growing in consciousness we perceive the two alternatives to constitute and create the total reality, as we observe in cosmic consciousness. The origin of Matter was Brahman, which is still secretly involved in Matter. The knowledge of advanced physics has shown that Matter is not solid. When viewed in its finer aspects it becomes totally ephemeral. In its finest it is the non-existing ground state of the quantum world, which in effect is the world of the spirit. Spirit therefore continually becomes matter, creating the infinite variety of what is. This infinite Whole is only visible from the heights of higher states of consciousness. Then both are seen to be the Absolute, God, and we realise that it was only our minds that reduced them to non-Absolute levels.

Chapter 5. The Destiny of the Individual. The destiny of the individual is a spiritual one. Divine action aims at the liberation of the individual. What we need to do is to discover our spiritual reality which is Brahman through the development of our consciousness. The individual's soul is that psychic aspect that evolves and this manifests as the development of his consciousness. With greater awareness, more of the spirit is revealed and experienced, culminating in the experience of unity with Brahman. Here all is one, the individual, the universal and the transcendental consciousness is lived in a unified way and we realise spirit and matter to be one.

Chapter 6. Man in the Universe. The universe exists through the action of Brahman. The universe is in fact Brahman in its different reaches of time and space. The individual too is in essence Brahman. Involved in him is that Divine reality. The Universe and the individual are necessary to each other, and the conditions of the universe provide the means for our progress. Man can materialise the Divine, as it is inherent in him. Using the mental faculty, he can imagine what he wants, and what he can imagine, he can realise, including those aspects of Brahman called Sat (Existence), Chit (Conscious Force) and Ananda (Bliss of the Divine). In doing so, the purpose of self-realisation of man and the universe on a transcendental level is achieved.

Chapter 7. The Ego and the Dualities. Humanity evolved from matter through life to mind. This placed him in a position where soul, an active part of divinity, could join with him. What now has to happen is that he must move inward, towards soul, with less attention on the senses and matter. This is simultaneously a movement away from the ego, and from the negative and dualistic world. Things are seen in a

broader perspective, it is not good/bad or negative/positive any longer, it is the recognition that both are there, and are necessary for any advance to harmony. Harmony at this level is between two aspects that can be called opposites. In their Absolute state, they are the two necessary components for the whole, between the limited and the unlimited, and between her present status and Supermind.

Chapter 8. The Methods of Vedantic Knowledge. In order to know truths that are beyond ordinary experience, for gaining true knowledge, Vedanta uses what is available to man; it starts from reason but uses intuition as the final authority. In this way, both the mind of the senses which can give us a great deal of information about the apparent, and Pure mind which is more complete in that it is able to get at reality behind the appearances, is utilised. As the reasoning mind is limited, it is necessary to develop and move to Pure mind to gain intuitional knowledge of the divine reality. Pure mind is the bridge between the subconscious and superconscious. The developed intuitive mind can integrate the being that knows and that what is being known. We know we experience growth when we have intuitive flashes of the higher knowledge which is beyond duality. This knowledge is subtle, comprehensive, broad based and direct. This is the development of our highest faculty and also the source of knowledge for the Vedic sages. This is the basis of their spiritual experiences and their intuitive knowledge.

Chapter 9. The Pure Existent. This Omnipresent Reality, the All, is Brahman, the One. This is the pure existence that can be known by identity, by intuition, but not by thought. It includes the dualities. We can say it is and it is not. It is the world of paradox. It is the two realities, the subtle behind manifestation and the gross manifested. It is Sat (Being), the infinite, timeless, spaceless, immutable, it is Chit, which is pure knowledge-force, and Ananda, bliss of Brahman. It is the Being and also the Becoming of the universe, it is also the Becoming in the Being. Yet it is not the Being, as Becoming is the only Being, and only when it is not Becoming. It is Life, it is existence and it is beyond. It is the part, it is the whole too. To know the truth, the beyondness and what is, we have to find the true relation between the components of the what is and the what is not, and that is true wisdom. It is a total beyondness, beyond movement and change, it is pure existence, eternal, infinite indefinable, Self only and absolute.

Chapter 10. Conscious Force. The conscious-force in the world is the self-aware force of consciousness, of Chit. Brahman expanded Sat and enlivened Chit, which

is consciousness-force. This consciousness is involved in everything, together with the force which is part of it. This force created the manifested universe of forms. Consequently, this Force is the basis, the building blocks of the universe. It is the pervasive Energy of which and in which everything exists. This is the universal constant. It ranges from this to that, from Matter to Supermind. It is at rest and it moves. This includes subtle and gross, from the subconscious matter to life to mind and up. It is immanent in everything.

Chapter 11. Delight of existence: The Problem. To the question why would Brahman, being complete in all ways, wish to create the world (and universe) of forms? produces the answer: for delight, for Ananda. But on earth, delight is not really the experience of everybody, and the question is if delight is the nature of existence, how can grief and sorrow exist? This delight or Ananda is everywhere but it is in secret. It is involved in what is. And this is what we seek; the Atman in us wishes that. We are the Atman, and we wish to return to ourselves. Only then will we find again what we were and what we have never lost. To get there we have to go within, to evolve more, to live in our soul. All experiences that we have are meant to get us to ourselves again, regardless of the nature of that experience. All that takes us deeper into ourselves, where our Self dwells. Then we experience Union, we are on planes of consciousness that are complete and then the ego at last can rest; it is not needed any more.

Chapter 12. Delight of existence: The Solution. Ananda is at the base of all experiences, whatever our superficial responses. We view what is from our present state of consciousness. Sachchidananda (sat, chit, ananda) views everything as complete, Absolute as well as relative. Our own sat, which is a surface consciousness, sees the world as Maya. Our chit says the world is Prakriti. Our ananda experiences the world as the play of Lila. And that is right, but it is not complete and coherent. We experience variation, including joy and pain. This pain and pleasure is a surface display of something more profound. It is on a continuum and the variation allows for a greater joy. It is our evaluation of what is that determines the degree of pain or joy we experience. Also, as pain can numb, it is a form of protection for us on earth.

Chapter 13. The Divine Maya. The division of the Absolute into duality enables creation. All creation or becoming is self-manifestation of the origin. That origin is the infinite in a specific way. The infinite being is perfection and is totally unbounded. Being that, it can only create infinity. So, a certain limitation in the

creative agency was necessary in order to have duality in what was created, to have relativity and finitude in creation. It demanded a selective faculty of knowledge commissioned to shape finite appearances out of the infinite Reality. This agent of limitation is Maya which is still divine but limited for a very specific reason namely for the creation of duality. Ignorance cannot evolve out of Brahman, and Brahman is all that is. But Maya as the creator is originally signified in the Veda as the comprehensive and creative knowledge, wisdom that is from of old, and only afterwards has it taken in its second and derivative sense, being cunning, magic, illusion. It is in fact the power of self-illusion in Brahman.

Chapter 14. The Supermind as Creator. There is the One that cannot create the finite as it can only create itself which is infinity. Then there is the flux, the many that has been created. The intermediary between these two existences or states is Supermind, the activity or creating aspect of the Absolute. This creation principle, Supermind, is inherent also in us. The desire to return our original perfection is there as Sachchidananda. Reaching this appears impossible but because it is in us in any case, we not so much must reach it, as realise it. To dwell permanently on this last and highest summit of the creative being is the supreme ideal of the evolving human consciousness. This is the original Idea and the final harmony and truth to which our gradual self-expression in the world returns and which it is meant to achieve.

Chapter 15. The Supreme Truth-Consciousness. Supermind is the origin of everything in creation, and it is the very Nature of the Divine Being. This is the truth of that which we call God, the unlimited Deity. It is the link between the manifested creation and the source, it is present everywhere in the universe, and that is the reality through which the One manifests whatever is. Differentiation starts with Supermind, but it is also the instrument of unity and harmony in creation. The creating aspect, Chit, can only create forms and powers that it is itself. However it creates and whatever is created, in it is involved the Creator and its Truth. It cannot create anything other than itself. The order and nature of creation comes from this source. This prevents erratic randomness and chaos. If this basic order were not present and involved in creation, unending chaos, with no possible purpose or self-realisation would be possible. Eventually the whole infinite complex of creation reality exists, with the basic aspects of Sachchidananda as its only components.

Chapter 16 The Triple Status of Supermind. Supermind has the three aspects of the Ultimate Being as its essence namely sat, chit and ananda. These three

constitute all that is necessary for creation and has these characteristics: 1. Supermind enables the creation from out of Sachchidananda (Existence-Conscious Force-Delight). 2. It is the power that man rises to in order to perceive Sachchidananda, including its unity. 3. Supermind differentiates the Absolute to enable creation, and oppositely or reflectively enables the human to have a vision of the essential unity of everything, and of the All. It can be many things at a time and maintain more than one enduring poise, even for all time. Supermind has three such poises, one the inalienable unity of things, the second modifies that unity so as to support the manifestation of the Many in One and the One in Many; the third further modifies it so as to support the evolution of a diversified individuality which, by the action of ignorance, becomes in us at a lower level the illusion of the separate ego.

Chapter 17. The Divine Soul. Growing in consciousness, we realise that we have a soul which is the spark of the divine. Before its descent in the involution, it was one with Sachchidananda, without being tainted with the experience and resultant knowledge of ignorance. It lives simultaneously in the One and the Many. It is aware of the Many, including our personal soul. This Divine Soul can take its poise with its centre in the consciousness of the individual Divine living and acting in distinct relation with the other facets of creation, still having as the foundation of its consciousness the entire unity from which all appear through creation. In this poise, its relation with God and its other selves in other forms is based on its self-knowledge and are the relations of being, consciousness, and love and delight. These are the metaphysical foundations of the soul.

Chapter 18. Mind and Supermind. Mind was born of Supermind to separate and utilise the three inherent essentials of Supermind to enable creation. It does not know the wholeness, which can only be known by Supermind. The Truth Consciousness governs mind. The way Mind works is to deal with things separately; it divides wholes like time, space and matter into their particulars. But it can never reach its (time, space and matter) final essential truth, Reality, in this way. It does not know the unified whole, as that ability to perceive the larger reality is absent from mind. In the way he views things, he is not only unwilling but also unable to see a different reality to the self-centered one that works for him. The ego and what accompanies it, ignorance, causes self-identification with the body. On the other end, the deeper inner mind connects to the inner soul. Mind represents Supermind and is still an active cosmic creative agency.

Chapter 19. Life. Life manifests out of Matter. It is a form of the one cosmic Energy. This life experiences and recognises duality and is separated in consciousness from its essence which is Truth-Consciousness. The triple world that we live in is Mind-Life-Body. There are many forms of life on countless worlds in the universe. It has one constant, death. And Death has no reality except as a process of life. In no form is life ever destroyed, it only assumes another form of life. It is universal, all pervading, imperishable, only its forms and way of organisation differs. It is a dynamic movement of positive and negative currents, which builds up forms, maintains them and experience disintegration and again renewal of their substance. Life is the dynamic play of a universal Force in which mental consciousness and nervous vitality are in their principle always inherent. Birth, growth and death of life are the processes of creation, maintenance and destruction.

Chapter 20. Death, Desire and Incapacity. Life is an aspect of consciousness-force that creates, maintains, and destroys individual forms. Death is the process by which life renews forms. This means that life eventually is terminated in death in order to start anew with another round of life and the struggle for not only survival, but also the development and growth of the mind. Death is therefore a process of Life. There is the impulse to realise its secret consciousness which is the cosmic Divine. This is the evolution of the individual; each action is backed by the essence of Sachchidananda. But the individual is still on a plane different from that of Sachchidananda. There is a limitation to its achievement, because only then will it continue to strive to reach more and to evolve. The incapacity of life is caused by the fact that life operates in a finite and limited form and it cannot achieve its desire to expand itself to the potential it has.

Chapter 21. The Ascent of Life. There are four expressions of life namely life found in physical matter, in vitality, in mind and in spirit. The life of matter is an urge of physical energy, that of vitality are elements of a prior life form broken up and entered into others, including those of our subtler life-energy, that life in mind starts with the emergence of the mental being, and the development of the ability to love. This ability expands beyond the mental to the only further level possible which is the spirit.

Chapter 22. The Problem of Life. The three essential problem of life for man are that he is only aware of the surface reality, and not the inner being, he is not connected with the universal and with others, and that internally, the body, vital

and mind are not in harmony with each other.

Chapter 23. The Double Soul in Man. The soul is the veiled form of Sachchidananda which is thus the Absolute involved in us. This divine spark is the same in all beings, and as we grow, and the soul becomes more aware, we become more aware of those subtle divine aspects which are hidden in us. We are mainly aware of only the surface aspect of the soul, which is the desire-soul, whereas the true form is hidden in the subliminal psychic being. This true soul is a silent witness and guides us to the universal Ananda; it is the inner voice of the mystic. It is imperishable and is behind the Matter, Life and Mind. It grows and changes from life to life on its onward journey back to Sachchidananda.

Chapter 24. Matter. Matter comes about by Sachchidananda extending itself to Supermind, which ventures down further to eventually manifest matter. The body is matter, and life is lived through the body. In essence then body, being Matter, is a form of Sachchidananda. In the Involution the functioning of Supermind creates the plane of universal Mind and this enables a dividing action in substance. This dividing process extends from the higher mind levels right down to the atomic level. The individual knower observes duality and then regards a form of his own being as other than he, as object. This is how and where a division between the knower and the known is created.

Chapter 25. The Knot of Matter. Substance consists of both Matter and Spirit, Brahman. There is no sharp division between spirit and matter but in practical terms matter presents a difficulty, due to its three characteristics of inconscience, of bondage to material law and as a consequence thereof, the principle of division and struggle. They are not divided, we divide them. Because of these oppositions and conflicts, pain and suffering results. Because of ignorance, Matter is perceived as a stumbling block for living the divine life. The solution to these problems is for the supramental to emerge, liberating the body from the cycle of life and death, and developing a divine body. This will enable its liberation.

Chapter 26. The Ascending series of Substance. Substance ascends from matter to life, mind and the spirit. At each level there is less bounding to form, and it has greater force, flexibility, and power of transmutation. Matter appears solid in a great variety of ways. The subtler it appears, the less material it seems. For dealing with Matter, we use senses, of which touch is the most essential one, with taste, smell, hearing, and sight being more subtle and indirect. From Matter evolves spirit. On higher planes, there are greater subtlety, culminating in what is

beyond subtle, the causal Supermind. We draw near to the highest divine poise in the infinity, unity and indivisibility of Spirit. There is continuity between material substance and pure substance. They correspond to the ascending series of Matter, Life, Mind and Supermind and also Sachchidananda. This evolution needs the human body, which provides a vehicle for life and consciousness. This evolution takes place by a mutual upward movement from Matter and a descent of Spirit from above into Mind.

Chapter 27. The Sevenfold Chord of Being. There are seven components of existence at the base of cosmic existence. They are 1. Existence, 2. Conscious-Force, 3. Delight (Sat-chit-ananda). Consciousness has two aspects, that of self-awareness and of power of self-force. This is the creative action of the All-existent, the intermediate principle of 4. Supermind. Here this Divine Knowledge is one with self-existence and self-awareness. This is where Supermind created the plane of 5. Mind which divided Force into Knowledge and Mind. With Knowledge acting on Will to create energy and the planes of 6. Life, Knowledge withdrew from Will and energy, enabling the plane of 7. Matter. Therefore Existence became Matter, conscious Force became Life; Bliss became the evolving personal soul, the Psychic Being; and Supermind became Mind. This is the 7-fold Chord of Being.

Chapter 28. Supermind, Mind and the Overmind Maya. Supermind caused Overmind to enable creation. This was the start of the right conditions for Creation as creation can only exist in duality. Mind is a power of the ignorance seeking for Truth. That truth we can perceive by using intuition, which is a facet of spiritual mind. To develop that requires discipline and in this process the ascent towards a vast static and silent Self takes place. Simultaneously, a descent of light, knowledge, power and bliss occurs. We can also ascend into higher regions of the Spirit where we reach the Truth-Consciousness. We recognise in the Overmind the original cosmic Maya, a Maya of Knowledge, which power has made the Ignorance not only possible but also inevitable. Ignorance is not a plane of falsehood or error; it is merely a form of limitation.

Book 11. The Knowledge and the Ignorance- The Spiritual Evolution

Part 1. The Infinite Consciousness and the Ignorance

These summaries describe how Ignorance emerged from a state of perfect Knowledge.

Chapter 1. Indeterminates, Cosmic Determinations and the Indeterminable.

These elements are outlined and summarised below. The framework and tables in these sections are from an unidentified website that credits the Mother's Service Society in Pondicherry as its source.

COSMIC DETERMINANTS:

Facet of Absolute	#	Name	Description of power/ determinant
Existence	1	Self	With the power the Self the Absolute moved toward manifesting in the universe by its own awareness of its own existence and its infinite potentials for creation.
Existence	2	Creator	With the power of the Creator Existence also has an awareness of the power to express these potentials in creation as forms in an objectified universe.
Existence	3	Witness	With the power as Witness Existence also has the capacity to stand back, detached from its creation, and be a witness.
Consciousness Force	4	Knowledge	With the power of Knowledge as Consciousness the Absolute has the comprehension and knowledge of what has been and what is being created.
Consciousness Force	5	Will	With the power of Will Consciousness through it can manifest creation.
Delight/Bliss	6	Love	With the power of Love , the Absolute as Bliss or Ananda seeks an intimate shared relationship between its created forms.
Delight/Bliss	7	Joy	With the power of Joy , the Absolute expresses itself in satisfaction in what was created.
Delight/Bliss	8	Beauty	With the power of Beauty the Absolute acknowledges the harmony of form of that which has been created.

THREE POISES OF COSMIC DETERMINANTS:

	Subject	Object	Power
Self (Being)	Self as Subject	Self as Object	Existing
Creator	The Creator	That which is Created	Creating
Witness	The Witness	That which is Witnessed	Witnessing
Knowledge (Knowing)	The Knower	The Known	Knowledge
Will	The Lord of the will	The Object of the will	Executive Force
Love	The Lover	The Beloved	Love
Joy	The Enjoyer	The Enjoyed	Delight
Beauty	The Beholder of beauty	That which is Beautiful	Beauty

Chapter 2. Brahman, Purusha, Ishwara - Maya, Prakriti, Shakti. The

Transcendent, the Universal, and the Individual are present in the infinite. The individual consciousness also contains those poises. The individual and the infinite are equivalent in the sense that they are the same in their being. The difference is that The One has total awareness and knows itself as all three, whereas the

individual is just more limited in its perceptions. The infinite consciousness can have, and in Overmind has, limited itself, which created the basis for Maya. In creation, Brahman is the totality of all physical manifestation. It includes the intellect which is without qualities and yet capable of infinite qualities. Brahman is the Being, the Becoming and the Being in the Becoming. This is the essential spiritual nature of the divine. Becoming is universal existence, and Being in the Becoming is Nature, the spirit in Life.

Chapter 3. The Eternal and the Individual. The individual is viewed as a separate entity because the reason thinks of the temporary ego as the individual. There is in fact a Person (purusha) beyond the individual, which is spiritually united with other selves and the world. This is true for all particulars (or individuals); the absolute is their basis. The importance of the human individual is that he is the key to the divine unfolding.

Mind's view (opposites)		Supramental view
(reconciliation)		
Unmanifest (Outside Creation)		Manifest (In Creation) Brahman
(Outside, inside creation)		
Being	Becoming	Being in the Becoming
The One	The Many	Experience of the One in the
Many		
Infinite	Finite	Infinite emerging in the Finite
Timeless	Time	Integrality of Timelessness of
Unmanifest and Timelessness of Creation (past, present, future in one)		

Chapter 4. The Divine and the Undivine. The experience of suffering and limitation, good/bad, pleasure/pain is undivine, it is the result of duality and a limited consciousness. This follows the divine limiting itself by entering the relative. This is the action of the mind which then sees the limited reality as the only reality. We seek for more, we rebel against the undivine, and start the venture of the soul in first hiding and then finding itself.

Chapter 5. The Cosmic Illusion: Mind, Dream and Hallucination. Dreams and hallucinations are based on realities peculiar to them. Like the surface consciousness, dreams are a representation of reality but are not reality itself. Mind does not create but it can be used to imagine. Because of its limitations, it cannot know what reality is and what truth is and in imagining, it deals with the unknown. Imagination is therefore used as an instrument of ignorance, even though based on truth-consciousness. What mind creates is only what is already there in nature. All human thinking is a constant flux, and it cannot know the

underlying Reality. It attempts to find truth, but is not equipped to do so. The mind experiences dreams, which arise from the subconscious, which is underpinned by a half-conscious Inconscient. Dreamless sleep is from the inner consciousness of the Subliminal. Deeper into the Subliminal we encounter the universal consciousness. Here we have illusion but also reality. The mind moves as it can, it came from the subconscious and is on its way to the superconscient. Both these aspects influence it.

Chapter 6. Reality and the Cosmic Illusion. According to the mind's experience or conception of reality it interprets data. What it finds depends on its state of consciousness. But the universe does not exist in a Void, nor is it unreal, as Brahman created it. Brahman is the sole Reality. Maya has the power of differentiating perception, and therefore it can create. We can envisage the Reality as an eternal one pure existence supporting all that is. The intellectual reason operates in duality, seeing Brahman in different components. If Brahman alone exists, all that is must be Brahman, and in Brahman-consciousness the division of these concepts must be reconciled as one; that is found beyond the intellectual Reason in spiritual experience where they become one as a spiritual reality. The fact then is that there is an eternal oneness which supports an eternal dynamism. This fashions multiple true ranks of being and consciousness.

Chapter 7. The Knowledge and the Ignorance. When Mind divides, ignorance is created. In Brahman is the inherent potential of Knowledge and Ignorance. The object of Knowledge is to discover the Truth which is the One. Knowledge of the One is Knowledge, and the knowledge of the Many is Ignorance. Ignorance is a limited form of knowledge. Mind however has the power to receive manifold illusions. Knowledge and Ignorance is in fact a unified all-knowledge. The only real knowledge is knowledge of the truth of the superconscient Absolute.

Chapter 8. Memory, Self-Consciousness and the Ignorance. The mental being uses memory and ego to operate, to tie past and future to the present. It is merely an illusionary continuum of past, present, future. There is one being, the immutable self, but that is not experienced by the surface mental consciousness. Therefore, memory exists because of an eternal conscious being; it links together our experiences and relates them to one transient being. It is a process of consciousness, not the substance of being or the whole of our personality. We are one conscious existence consisting of two facets, one is conscient and the other superconscient in our mind. The one is located in Time and the other is beyond

time. Ignorance is the consciousness of being in the progression of Time. Here Space and Time is divided in arbitrary components, creating an incomplete reality.

Chapter 9. Memory, Ego and Self-Experience. The real basis of self-consciousness of the mental being is the appreciation of the timelessness of an eternal present. This remains an eternal unchanging now and is unaffected by the mind's distinction of past, present and future. It is the eternal "I am". The mental being through its working can be aware of change and experience and of a self. It is the self that has memory, and that is tied to the ego. This conscious mind-substance is the same conscious person who operated with feeling, thoughts and experiences and these elements is a type of knowledge that leads to real self-knowledge. The function of the mind is to co-ordinate past, present and future to a recognition of an integral "I" which remains the same in all Time despite relative changes.

Chapter 10. Knowledge by Identity and Separative Knowledge. Knowledge is complete in the Absolute, and from that knowledge by identity it becomes the separative ignorance on the surface. It wishes to regain its original nature and for that, the Opening to the subliminal is the critical movement in developing both knowledge by direct contact and the cosmic being. Understanding these different aspects of our being, that is, the surface, the subliminal, the inner and the Self, removes habitual confusion. Our surface cognition is a limited intellectual way of perceiving the knowledge of the four levels. The most complete form of knowledge is knowledge by identity; the second is derived and is separated from its source still being powerful yet incomplete; the third is a knowledge by separation still possessing direct contact with the object of observation, giving a partial identity, and the fourth is a totally separative knowledge relying on indirect contact.

Chapter 11. The Boundaries of the Ignorance. The superficial mental facet is ignorant of our true inner nature, of the external world and of our superconscious reality. Ignorance can be divided in seven ways, namely practical ignorance, constitutional ignorance, psychological ignorance, temporal ignorance, egoistic ignorance, cosmic ignorance and original ignorance. Ignorance must and can be removed by evolution using firstly what we are and have in ourselves. This includes the Mind with the ability to perceive in different ways what is. In the Mind the intuitive faculty is hidden. That faculty can give us much greater and subtler knowledge compared to the logical route of the intellect. Using the intuition, a descending movement of essential knowledge from subtle regions takes place. This

results in the integration of both knowledge and our evolution.

Chapter 12. The Origin of the Ignorance. Ignorance is not an original state; it is a partial and relative aspect of the reality. Different views pertain about the origin of ignorance. The Upanishads state that the ignorance comes from the creator. Shri Aurobindo holds that at first Brahman was and nothing else was. If ignorance does exist, and it does, then it must come from Brahman but in the form of Maya. Supermind created Overmind with the same essence as Supermind, but Overmind has the ability to create duality. With this action the possibility of ignorance materialised. Material creation came into being, while Sachchidananda remained present and secret in all that was and is. As it (Sachchidananda) was not dominant on purpose, room for variety and multiplicity for greater delight was created. Being is unitary, so ignorance must be a movement of the one conscious reality.

Chapter 13. Exclusive Concentration of Consciousness-Force and the Ignorance. Ignorance is an intended and positive power of the infinite. Brahman cannot be ignorant as it is One and undivided. It is beyond the One and the Many, and contains and is aware of both. Ignorance is Nature's way to forget the infinite in order to fulfil her task of creating duality. It is therefore a subordinate phenomenon of consciousness which is a partial knowledge of the being and excludes the rest from its awareness. Ignorance is therefore not the natural character of the consciousness of the soul, but is the outcome of some dividing action in the executive. This ignorance is required for the individual to exist and evolve in the cosmos but in seed form it retains the awareness of the eternal.

Chapter 14. The Origin and Remedy of Falsehood, Error, Wrong and Evil. Ignorance is in its nature a partial knowledge. Truth is incomplete to us as our ability to perceive is incomplete. Ignorance is purely a deficiency of knowledge and has no self-existence. This deficiency is not evil. Our values of good and evil are relative. On certain other planes of supraphysical experience, defective or perverse forms and powers of life do exist. It seems to be the primordial foundation of the discordant mind and life-force on earth. These forces (which we can experience on our subliminal level) are attached in their root-nature to ignorance, to darkness of consciousness, and to evil. These evil powers impose their influence upon life on earth, and wishes to maintain their control in the creation. They oppose the increase of light and are antagonistic to the progress of the soul towards a divine consciousness and existence.

Part 11. The Knowledge and the Spiritual Evolution

Chapter 15. Reality and the Integral Knowledge. Man views creation dualistically whereas integral conception sees opposites, that are finite/infinite, many/one, etc. as complementary, as One, being both the Absolute and the relative. In our evolution we are required to know both the subjective and the objective and to rise above the limited dual reality. We have to overcome the seven ways that Ignorance manifest itself replacing it with a matching Knowledge. The table is based on the content of chapter 15 and is obtained from an unknown website.

	<i>The 7-Fold Ignorance</i>	<i>Replaced with 7-Fold Knowledge</i>
1	The original ignorance We are ignorant of the truth of the Absolute, which is the source of the spiritual being and the becoming of the universe we live in	The original Truth; which is the knowledge of the Absolute of all things, which is the source of the spiritual being and the becoming of the universe we live in.
2	The cosmic ignorance We are ignorant of the true spirit, the Being; the immutable Self; and how to enable the Being to enter into the Becoming of life.	The cosmic truth; which is (1) the knowledge of the spaceless, timeless, immutable Self, the Being and (2) how to enable the Being to enter into the Becoming of life, rather than just the knowledge of our becoming without Being in space and time.
3	The egoistic ignorance We are ignorant of the fact that we are one with the universe, that we are a universal Self. Instead we experience our separate, egoistic self.	The truth of oneness; which is the knowledge of our universal self, the cosmic existence and consciousness, the world as one with us in consciousness of our true self, cancelling our division from it by the separative idea and physical, vital, and mental life of ego.
4	The temporal ignorance We are ignorant of the fact that our psychic being, our personal evolving soul is immortal and it exists beyond death and earthly existence.	The truth of timelessness of inner being which is the knowledge of our psychic entity and immortal persistence in Time beyond death and earth-existence, rather than our perception of our little life bound up in time and space.
5	The psychological ignorance We are ignorant of the planes of our greater and inner existence, including the superconscient, subconscient, intraconscient, and circumconscient	The truth of the depths; which is the knowledge of our greater and inner existence behind the surface, of that which is superconscient, subconscient, intraconscient, and circumconscient of our surface becoming.
6	The constitutional ignorance We are ignorant of the physical, vital, and mental parts in relation to their corresponding inner parts, and their relation to spiritual mind and supermind above the mind.	The constitutional truth; which is the knowledge of our mind, life, and body in

its true relation to the self within, and the superconscient spiritual and supramental being above them.

7	The practical ignorance We are ignorant of how we can consciously use our thought, will, and action as expression of the Divine spiritual reality to develop ourselves and act in life
---	---

The truth of development; which is the knowledge of the true harmony and true use of our thought, will, and action into a conscious expression of the Divine spiritual reality, rather than ignorance of our thoughts, will, sensations, actions, and wrong responses in life.

Chapter 16. The Integral Knowledge and the Aim of Life: Four Theories of Existence. Creation started from Brahman, went down the involution leg, and ascended again with evolution back to Brahman. Here being exists in three poises namely Self, Universal, and Transcendent. This allows an Ignorance caused by a division of consciousness where the Many forget its essential Oneness. This changes when the soul in man awakes and he becomes aware of the Universal and Transcendent. These steps lead to higher states of consciousness which overcomes Ignorance. Involved in Matter, due to a conscious Divine Energy, is Life. Out of Life comes Mind which uses matter and life as a means of expression. All evolves by moving upward, and by a descent of the higher power. This replaces the hold of the inconscient on life on the physical, vital, and mental levels. We find existence now on the Supracosmic, the cosmic and terrestrial level, also on the supraterrrestrial or otherworldly level, and the integral or synthetic level. With evolution these levels become known and the task of the soul is to evolve beyond all to a transcendental reality.

Chapter 17. The Progress to Knowledge - God, Man and Nature. Reality is in its nature Sachchidananda, being an eternal Existence, Consciousness, and Delight of Existence. With evolution, Matter comes out the inconscient Energy. Consciousness, involved and non-apparent in Matter, first emerges in the disguise of an animate type of subconscious nature. Through further vibrations, it then strives towards its essential nature, traversing consecutive shapes of that material stuff and becoming the medium for Life. In this evolution, Mind and Consciousness, which has individuality, follows. Its existence however is only partial and incomplete. From here it expands into a universal cosmic self. Eventually the ideal of total transformation to complete knowledge of being will be reached through the development of higher states of consciousness where the individual becomes a realised part of the Cosmos. Then only can he live his Individual Self, his Universal Self, and his Transcendent Self.

Chapter 18. The Evolutionary Process - Ascent and Integration. A radically new reality needs to emerge from the creative power of the involved spirit. This can be achieved through the connection of the soul of man with the higher spiritual mind. This is where the Conscious Force, which is present in Matter, in Life, and in Mind, enables the emergence of successive planes, right up to Supermind. This is the evolutionary process of ascent. The higher plane emerges from within the lower plane. We affect the evolutionary process by developing higher states of consciousness, thus accelerating Nature's slower method. The double opening to the psychic and the spirit above is the Secret of the new evolution.

Chapter 19. Out of the Sevenfold Ignorance towards the Sevenfold Knowledge. The mind creates by dissecting the whole into parts. This is its way of operation. The purpose of this action is to reach perfection. The mind has to evolve to higher levels of consciousness, substance, force, and delight of being. In this process the ego, which causes our separateness and Ignorance, is steadily diminished. We unite with the universal and transcendent facilitating a descent of higher mind of light, revelation, and intuition, whereby we obtain knowledge by identity. All evolution is in essence a heightening of the force of consciousness in the manifest being so that it may be raised into the greater intensity of what is still unmanifest, from matter into life, from life into mind, from the mind into the spirit. It is this that must be the method of our growth from a mental into a spiritual and supramental manifestation, out of a still half-animal humanity into a divine being and a divine living.

Chapter 20. The Philosophy of Rebirth. For evolution, rebirth has to take place allowing the individual soul to experience different forms until it reaches higher levels and higher possibilities. It then incorporates the powers of spiritual mind, Supermind, and beyond into itself. Rebirth follows death and birth is the machinery enabling evolution. It enables an incomplete being in a body to reach its potential of complete spiritual fulfillment. A human birth is a complex of two elements, a spiritual Person and a soul personality. The first psychic form is eternal; the other is more superficial. The psychic form is akin to Sachchidananda who caused this cycle of soul experience. In the relative part he follows the universal evolution which is also the stream of the evolutionary soul-experience of Nature.

Chapter 21. The Order of the Worlds. The Absolute is pure spirit, and spirit is energy. Matter, which is energy, is therefore also spirit. We are matter and more, therefore we too are spirit and spiritual. Other worlds exist; they influence us and are similar in nature to our world and us. We can know those worlds and its influences, also what part it plays in our evolution. This is possible only when we rise in consciousness through our inner experiences and connect with the superconscious forces and powers. We can attract those powers and forces through our subliminal being that overcomes the limiting influences of the subconscious on us. Since the subliminal sits on the surface of the subconscious, by opening to the superconscious it can help the subconscious evolve.

Chapter 22. Rebirth and Other Worlds: Karma, the Soul and Immortality.

Other planes are in existence with our physical plane and they influence each other mutually. Now we live on earth but in-between lives the essence or spirit or soul goes to another state which appeals to it and which it is in need of at that time. There it continues evolution and learns what it can. It can incarnate back on earth later, or on other mental, vital or physical planets. The whole purpose for life is to evolve and that can take place at all possible venues, of which earth is only one. Wherever a person incarnates, that is the right place for that lifetime. Previous lessons not learned must be completed, bringing in the reality of Karma. Each incarnation is carefully considered and what is best for the long-term interests of a soul, that is what determines the planet on which it incarnates. As the soul is immortal, being part of Sachchidananda, it can take the all the time it needs for its evolution.

Chapter 23. Man and the Evolution. Evolution of everything, including matter, relates to the evolution of consciousness. That process causes internal and external changes. From a human perspective, whatever changes take place is immaterial as the human form is only temporary and a precursor to the ultimate aim which is evolution to the supramental level. This will be achieved during the process of evolution from matter to life to mind and beyond, to Supermind where he lives as a spiritual being.

Chapter 24. The Evolution of the Spiritual Man. After mind, spirituality develops. Normal activities can be used for such development. Different techniques of a spiritual nature has been used for evolution, all can be effective. The type of technique required depends on the level of evolution of a person, be it with

emphasis on the spiritual mind, the devotion of the disciple, or the realised liberated man.

Chapter 25. The Triple Transformation. Initially the psychic being is the first level of transformation. This allows easy contact with the divine. It receives guidance, and experiences realities that are an aid to further development. Then, in the second transformation there is a mutual descent from above and ascent to the higher spiritual consciousness. This allows evolution of the higher aspects of mind. Following this is the supramental transformation.

Chapter 26. The Ascent Towards Supermind. A psychic and spiritual transformation takes place and that breaks down the barrier between inner and outer aspects of a person, allowing development of the spiritual stages of mind, that is higher, illumined, intuitive, and overmind. This is not within our ability to understand as mental beings. Each of these levels is complex, powerful and has a unique nature. This can only be known by experiencing those stages through higher states of consciousness. The further development that will take place thereafter is the supramental transformation which is totally beyond our mental conception

Chapter 27. The Gnostic Being. The next development is the emergence of the gnostic being. This takes place gradually, it is continuous and it results in a state of great diversity. It is the apex of the spiritual life, and is characterised by the perpetual experience of the divine, by acting in accord with the divine will, and by being in perfect harmony with all of creation. Everything becomes based on a divine character.

Chapter 28. The Divine Life. The underpinning of the spiritual and divine life is an inner development the reality of which transforms the outer aspect of life. Evolution is concerned with consciousness and life but even with a high degree of evolution, it still is relatively imperfect. This gnostic life is however the real start of a life of divinity. Here the life is one of subtlety and of the spirit. Here the individual develops an inner excellence, lives a life of perfection and harmony with others and with nature, and forms part of a new community of likeminded persons in a perfect group life on earth.

Chapter 4

INVOLUTION AND EVOLUTION

This chapter presents the exposition of the cosmological philosophy of Shri Aurobindo. It deals with the origins and destiny of creation. He perceived a creation cycle which consists of a cycle of involution and evolution. For him this means that the starting point is the unmanifest source of all, there is an involution down to matter and an evolution back to the source. Within this framework he conceives of immense reaches, of other dimensions, other worlds, and with apparent other rules to those of earth for the cycle of creation. He states that even though he reasons (works) from the data, which this evolutionary terrestrial existence offers, the general principles, which he outlines, must be the same everywhere. Such an extensive view helps determining how we see not only the broad picture, but it also influences our conduct of life. The importance of a philosophy, especially such a broad one, per Dr Albert Schweitzer is that: '.... all human progress depends on progress in its theory of the universe, whilst, conversely, decadence is conditioned by a similar decadence in this theory. Our loss of real civilization is due to our lack of a theory of the universe...'

In understanding the work of Shri Aurobindo, especially from a religious science perspective, we have to consider a number of issues. This is mostly covered by the following factors.

1. The study of Shri Aurobindo is based mainly on the research material available. We need that to interpret him factually and empathetically. To this end, he rendered us a great deal of assistance.

He left a wealth of material as noted in addenda D, 'Content of Centenary Library'. I have made extensive use of his major work "The Life Divine", which appeared in serial form in a monthly publication named "Arya", from 15th August 1914 until 1922. This was written, edited and published by Shri Aurobindo. The majority of his books came from this publication.

We should however bear in mind that this external data had its origin in the perceptions of Shri Aurobindo. He stated that he obtained his knowledge and insights while experiencing higher states of consciousness. They were not the results of intellectual analysis and reasoning but of direct intuitive perception of Reality. Unless we approach his work with understanding for the way in which he gained his wisdom, we will not be able to fathom the depths of his thought.

The introspective views of Shri Aurobindo about himself and the different roles

he could play or the titles he could have are important as it gives us an insight into how he viewed himself and his work, and it helps us in our assessment of him.

- 1.1. Shri Aurobindo denies being a philosopher. He arrived at writing and thinking about matters that we can call his philosophy initially from the background of a scholar and a politician, and eventually from a mystic perspective. But whether he sees himself as a philosopher is immaterial. Our task is deal with what he produced as philosophical material.
- 1.2. He was a teacher in the sense that he gave out knowledge, initially to a selected group of readers of his "Arya", later to the community in his ashram and still later to a worldwide audience of people that obtained his books.
- 1.3. Whether the title "Guru" should be bestowed upon Shri Aurobindo is irrelevant. The title does not matter, what is important is the function that he fulfilled. "Sri Aurobindo, in his 'The Teaching of Sri Aurobindo' (referring to himself in the third person), mentions how reliance on the guru is essential for progress in 'the' Yoga. Since 'the' Yoga in his writings always means his Integral Yoga, this is about as close as you can come to him saying he is the guru of the Integral Yoga (well, actually him and the Mother). However, since his Yoga was always evolving, you also have to keep in mind that years later, he wrote that the disciple only has to rely on the Divine. The Mother also made clear in later years, after Sri Aurobindo 'left the body', that someone living outside India could do the Integral Yoga in reliance on the inner Divinity." What is important here is that the Guru is the fount of wisdom, and the gateway to evolution to higher states of consciousness. And this Guru, according to Shri Aurobindo, is also inherent and involved in every human being.
- 1.4. In reading about his relationship with the Mother, it is clear that he accords her the highest honour, according to her the status of "Divine Mother". With time she effectively took over the administration of the ashram, leaving him free to lead the reclusive life necessary for his evolution and according to him, the evolution of the world. He mentions in "Savitri" that they had spent countless lives together in previous lives and in different life forms. His writing reveals a very clear and logical thinker, whereas the impression that one gains from the writing of the Mother is that she is operating on a more emotional or feeling level.
- 1.5. The way in which Shri Aurobindo obtained his knowledge was through revelation and not through a process of reasoning. It is through an opening

to a higher consciousness, through the intuition. Sri Aurobindo described his own process as having a silent mind and simply opening to a "higher" consciousness (which is really, at least in part, what "revelation" means). He writes that "by the development (of) intuition he reaches the threshold of a subliminal self. A last and greatest intuition is an inner awareness of something which he more essentially is, something as high above mind as mind is above the physical life and body. This inner awareness is his intuition of his supramental and spiritual being." The use of the word "intuition" implies that no mental or intellectual exercise is used for attaining knowledge. This is the definition for "intuit". Philosophy is not unaware of the existence of intuition, both Bergson and Spinoza postulated that intuition is a way of knowing ultimate truth. Knowledge is different in different states of consciousness. Shri Aurobindo asserts that intuition is "a power of consciousness nearer and more intimate than the lower ranges of spiritual mind to the original knowledge by identity; it gets the Truth in flashes and turns these flashes of Truth-perception into intuitions - intuitive ideas. Intuition is always an edge or ray or outleap of a superior light. What is thought-knowledge in the Higher Mind becomes illumination in the Illumined Mind and direct intimate vision in the Intuition." It can be argued that all thoughts and hence all knowledge comes from a "source", which, if it cannot be produced on demand here on earth, then it would have to be from a subtler region. Whatever the region might be is irrelevant, what is important is the fact that we can access it. One can postulate that there is a veil between one's consciousness and this source. The intuitive knowledge of these subtle regions is the knowledge that he puts forth in his writings. Thus, his thoughts as written in his philosophical works are empiric of origin and are lucid, logical and coherent as he received knowledge by direct perception. To convey this definite knowledge is difficult. Wild says of Whitehead "(he) is so impressed with the inadequacy of language for the expression of thought and feeling, that --- the philosopher should create an adequate set of terms --- [to convey what he in fact knows and wants to say]. --- he still --- use the word, intuition --- when an idea --- is grasped by the mind as an individual object, a stage which might be covered by the term 'perception'." "This use of the term covers the idea of what I have called the miracle of knowing, that irreducible fact which occurs when the object is absorbed by the subject, when a thing not merely is, but is known." Whitehead "(writes) in 'Adventures of Ideas': 'Our direct intuitions which we enjoy

prior to all verbalization' and in Process and Reality: 'Our logical analysis, in company with immediate intuition (inspectio) enables us to discern a more special society within the society of pure extension'. Shri Aurobindo says that intuition is in its very nature a projection of the characteristic action of higher grades (an intermediate power and plane of consciousness through which the involutory transition from Mind in the Knowledge to Mind in the Ignorance is effected) into the mind of Ignorance. Intuitions appear in the mind, but the mental apparatus as a rule manipulates these intuitive projections, with them losing their comprehensive clarity and completeness. Behind all original thinking or authentic perception there is a veiled intuitive element, a penetration from above, which establishes a connection between mind and the superior spirit-ranges. This penetration establishes the phenomena of genius. This revelatory vision or intuitive perception surpasses our normal mind-action; this is the field of mystic and spiritual experience which extends our consciousness beyond its present limits. It appears that the process of intuitive perception eliminates relativity, in that there is an instantness (no time, only now) and a hereness (no space, only here) involved in the process of intuition. This accords with his (Shri Aurobindo's) conception of the unity of the universe. It appears that a person "intuiting" and another person "thinking" are both performing the same task. One is just more aware of the reality and nature of the process (of obtaining knowledge and of thinking).

1.5.1. In this regard, two further concepts demands attention, feeling and intellect. The question is whether a person is not just "feeling" something, some item or body of knowledge, and then passing it off as "intuition". Of course that is possible but irrelevant. What is important is the appreciation of the actual process of perception, thought comes from the same source as intuition, the difference is that the person intuiting *knows* that he is intuiting, while the person thinking might think that he is, while he is really busy with mental processes restricted to his local mind.

1.5.2. It is plausible that there is a subtle body of thought somewhere. We can argue that this is not within our normal temporal or spatial reality. It just is somewhere. Further, we can access that source, proof of which is that we think. This can be arbitrarily named either intuiting or thinking. I can postulate that the difference between intuiting and thinking is the following. In intuiting, the contact with this source is direct, without logical interventions by the mind. In thinking, what has

been received from the source, has been or is being manipulated, reorganised, managed and checked, effectively being handled in a relative way. Therefore, intuitive thoughts are pure from the source, thinking thoughts are thoughts processed by the mind.

1.5.3. The intellect is that body that deals with what has come to hand (or mind, rather): thoughts in its total variety, and on its different levels. The value of the intellect depends purely on its ability to deal with what it has, and this dealing is related to the extending of the aspects or components of the thought. The only extension possible is to relate that to other realities or, more accurately, to other thoughts of realities. This action is also the definition of intelligence, the ability to perceive relationships. The intellect does not create in any other way but by handling or manipulating what has already been created. "European metaphysical thought-even in those thinkers who try to prove or explain the existence and nature of God or of the Absolute-does not in its method and result go beyond the intellect. But the intellect is incapable of knowing the supreme Truth; it can only range about seeking for Truth, and catching fragmentary representations of it, not the thing itself, and trying to piece them together. Mind cannot arrive at Truth; it can only make some constructed figure that tries to represent it or a combination of figures."

1.6. We should also consider the invaluable falsifiability criterion of Popper in assessing the worth of his contribution to thought. Shri Aurobindo deals in the main with abstract matters. His main interest is the framework and workings of creation. He deals extensively with the realm of consciousness, and makes his postulates and conclusions based on observation or perception during experiences of higher states of consciousness that he had. All this takes place in *his* mind, and it is impossible (or virtually impossible) to objectively verify his insights and experiences, therefore to prove him wrong or a fraud (or right, for that matter). He states that to understand the realms that he writes about, one has to experience it oneself. The normal acceptable logical scientific rules of observation and evaluation of facts cannot be applied there, as it, according to him, requires the possession or development of higher states of consciousness to be able to do the verification. One might then ask whether firstly, these states actually exist, further, whether these higher states of consciousness are the same for all people, and more specifically, whether any higher state of consciousness that I experience will give me

the same insights that Shri Aurobindo had. He did describe a variety of these states, but the question is, seeing that I know that my waking state is different to yours, will my higher state be different to yours too? Or is the one relative to the person experiencing it (waking) a relative reality, and the other (higher states of consciousness) Absolute in its being and therefore universal in its reality? He gives no assurances that will withstand logical scrutiny. His descriptions of the reality in these different realms are unique, and again according to him, fall short of the reality that he is describing. Words apparently are inadequate conceptualisations of the perceived reality. Yet he is still using words to convey his message. It appears as if he requires his audience to accept on faith the revolutionary revelations he presents, knowing full well that they cannot independently verify his statements. Phillips takes him on very convincingly and persuasively in his "Aurobindo's philosophy of Brahman" as discussed under 'The Reception of Shri Aurobindo' in this dissertation.

The matter of his objectivity is also not completely clear. In "The Life Divine" each chapter starts with quotes from the holy Hindu books. The names of the superior beings, for lack of a better term, that he uses are Hindu, such as Brahman, Lord Krishna etc. Now, does he write as a universal man, as an Anglicised Indian, as an Indian, or as a Hindu? Is what he is saying Absolute, or to what degree was he influenced by the poise of a specific type of human being (Anglicised Indian etc.) that he represented? Can one seriously accept that despite these objections, he is a presenter of truth and not a sectarian spokesman or, worse, fanatic? What becomes clear in reading "The Life Divine" is his intense passion in expressing his thoughts and revelations, and his apparent unconcern for acceptance. It is clear that he writes in a complex way with the intention of conveying his message. His prose appears as a harmonious convincing overwhelming flow of thought, with him often using complex sentences and several similar descriptive words grouped together to portray that what he wants to communicate. An arbitrary example will illustrate the point; this sentence was chosen by opening "The Life Divine" at random, but is strangely applicable to our work here to illustrate not only how he says, but also what he says:

"For the essence of consciousness is the power to be aware of itself and its objects, and in its true nature this power must be direct, self-fulfilled and complete: if it is in us indirect, incomplete, unfulfilled in its workings,

dependent on constructed instruments, it is because consciousness here is emerging from an original veiling Inconscience and is yet burdened and enveloped with the first Nescience proper to the Inconscient; but it must have the power to emerge completely, its destiny must be to evolve into its own perfection which is its true nature."

What is also remarkable is that even though his major works were all written over a period of eight years, there is a noteworthy internal coherence and consistency in the body of thought that he presents. Looking at the varied responses of critics, the question should be asked whether it is possible that, in the very use of his complex involved language, he became obscure in a way, it being possible that he can be interpreted in a variety of ways? Now, we could reflect on why his views did not change over that period. Did he *wish* to remain consistent, or could he not help it, was it in fact that he did see the All originally and continued to access and mine that never-changing but multifarious source? One could argue that surely a person changes over time and so does his perception, yet what was intimated in the first chapters of "The Life Divine" for instance, accords with the last chapters. I would argue that he did in fact experience what he did, and that he simply and truthfully recorded an integrated framework of knowledge in his writings. And this was done in a logical clear coherent fashion. The factor of his relationship with the Mother is also not really completely clear. Here again credulity is stretched. He makes claims as to her nature and divinity. Again we are required to accept that she is divine, and his insight into their past history and relationship and also regarding their status in this lifetime is the truth. All this might well be true, but more that one guru has before now made claims that could only be accepted or rejected. We are furthermore presented with the problem of Truth for whom. These different questions should be asked, even if we know it to be futile, no answers will be forthcoming. But the degree of hesitation we then exhibit will temper our beliefs and the degree to which we can conceivably be a gullible audience.

- 1.7. He stated that he wanted to establish the use of his concept of integral yoga, as that would allow an individual to evolve in the fastest most effortless manner to his source, Brahman. He stated that he did not want to establish a new religion, as that would simply be a framework for his philosophy and by establishing a religion, it would become corrupted in a short space of time. But is religion not exactly its core set of values, as

that of integral yoga, and is it not a fact that those values have its original reality in the mind of the author thereof, and that never can the values of the author and the disciple become identical, except within varying approximate ranges? Should therefore his philosophy not be viewed as a religion? Are we perhaps dealing with a megareligion, where the intentions are sublime and noble yet doomed to failure in achieving its high aspirations? Perhaps the reality is, as is the case with all other religions, that with some individuals he will achieve his high esoteric aspirations, but that the mass of his followers will be identical to the mass of the adherents of the other religions, only providing yet another alternate choice.

1.8. Attaining a pretheoretical comprehension of Shri Aurobindo, I must understand him and his work. Understanding comes in varying degrees of depth and my understanding will be partial and unique to me. To understand another person perfectly is impossible. The reason is that one should ideally become that person at the time when he wrote his philosophy. So now I understand him and his thinking. This is good for now, but then the problem arises of both him and his philosophy subtly changing continually, even if it is very little. My understanding of the present or later him will thus be incomplete. However, that does not change my duty, I still have to see his world, his universe, however it shifts, to the best of my ability. I must therefore be aware of both my deliberate intentions that I can control and of the involuntary hidden facets of my being that can so powerfully influence my mode and degree of understanding. Apart from talking to him personally, I have the purest form of information available in that I can read the work of Shri Aurobindo in its original language, English, it thus not suffering from the drawbacks of translations. In performing this task I am accepting the social responsibility of presenting and to a degree interpreting the work of Shri Aurobindo. It is therefore my human abilities or lack thereof that will determine the degree of my success. It will be coloured by the depth of the dialogue we can have and by my ability to understand his mystical existential reality.

1.8.1. We can distinguish three kinds of pretheoretical understanding:

1.8.1.1. Existential understanding, where there is a close relationship between me and the philosophy or philosopher I am dealing with. There is a commitment of "this is mine, this is how I think and feel". This of course is the ideal type of understanding, this is probably how all of life, all of this universe should be dealt with,

as this is our life, this is our universe, we should just "realise" it.

1.8.1.2. The next kind is a weaker form of understanding, that of an insider or a participant where one has sufficient insight and knowledge of the subject to get around comfortably, is accepted and is not committed to, or a member of the group.

1.8.1.3. The last type is that of an outsider's understanding, where the words and concepts are read and heard, but understood, not their, but my way. To a degree, there is a lack of empathy and consequently a limitation on the degree of understanding one can attain under these circumstances.

As to the form applicable to me, however much I wish perfect understanding, it is fluid, and it probably ranges over all the above three.

2. Seeing of patterns is essential in the formulation and designing of theory in science generally, and in religious science in particular. Here it is necessary to theorise in order to make sense of a world that has so many conflicting aspects, from the very positive to the extremes of negativity. Only then can one integrate all those aspects in a comprehensible class, enabling one to transcend those aspects that are unacceptable and negative. The creation of such a theoretical framework orders the data in a way that reveals the connections or patterns that otherwise remains concealed. Then, what is inherent but inaccessible in a jumble of data can be decoded in such way that understanding, which gives explanations of the field under study, is gained. In the work of Shri Aurobindo this also applies. He presents such a wealth of information with a vast range of aspects that one can get lost in the complexities of his work. My reading of him revealed a disciplined framework of a coherent universal vision. This is the work that will be dealt with in this dissertation.

In his philosophy, Shri Aurobindo states that the full cycle of evolution has a purpose. That is the completion of the upward thrust of creation, towards the All, towards of infinite power of being, and that must be the destiny of any world and of everything in it. He says that wherever Cosmos is, and if only one principle is manifest in that region, there all the rest (of the evolutionary steps) must be not merely present and passively latent, but secretly at work. The evolution of the involved is still taking place there. For us, the only question is whether the earth is to be a scene of that total evolution. The ancient seers believed in this possibility for man and held it to be his divine destiny; Shri Aurobindo says that most modern

thinkers do not even conceive of it or, if they did, it would be to deny or doubt it. He referred to a situation on any world, not only the earth, where apparently there is only one of the various possible aspects of involution/evolution present. He outlined the likely future divine evolutionary destiny of life on any planet, not only earth. He spoke about these matters in a knowledgeable fashion like somebody that knew. He said that he had experienced, knew and lived in the transcendent, which gave him the insights he outlined. It is so that even though he did experience this realm, normally humans cannot have this experience of the ultimate, because that is the result of a state of consciousness where one transcends the normal waking state. As they have not experienced transcendence, it is difficult if not impossible to know the ultimate.

The eternal purposeful cycle of creation and thus of involution and evolution is described in "The Life Divine". This is the creation of the universe from the Real Idea, the origin of what is. Before the cycle started, there was only the Absolute. Once the cycle started, the relative came into play. The cycle starts with the involution from the origin, "That One", the Absolute, the Omnipresent reality, which is a paradoxical supramental reality. It is described in terms such as: it is what it is and what it is not, which is beyond, which is Omnipresent, which is THE Reality, materialised and the becoming of the universe. IT is the essence of all the objects of the universe and it is also beyond it. The reason for the manifestation of the Absolute was to experience Itself, and to experience the bliss of its reality and being. What then happens here is that the Absolute is simultaneously a transcendental reality as well as a world-manifestation. We might have an intellectual problem with this, but not so the Absolute; these two apparently conflicting aspects are interrelated and not essentially incompatible expressions of one and the same reality. Regarding the understanding of these paradoxical matters, he says "It looks as if, by attempting to arrive at an explanation by means of intellectual reasoning, we have only befogged ourselves by the delusion of our own uncompromising logic: we have imposed on the Absolute the imposition which our too presumptuous reasoning has practiced on our own intelligence; we have transformed our mental difficulty in understanding the world-manifestation into an original impossibility for the Absolute to manifest itself in world at all." About the manifestation of the Absolute, a degree of relativity is implied in this, in that at one point in time IT decided IT wanted to experience itself. It implies a beginning and an end. But that is not so, Shri Aurobindo states "We see at once that if such an Existence is, it must be, like the Energy, infinite. Neither reason nor experience nor intuition nor imagination bears witness to us of the possibility of a

final terminus. All end and beginning presuppose something beyond the end or beginning. An absolute end, an absolute beginning is not only a contradiction in terms, but also a contradiction of the essence of things, a violence, a fiction. Infinity imposes itself upon the appearances of the finite by its ineffugable self-existence." The view of this strange reality from the relative point of view, is "That which is an apparent discord to the mind because it considers each thing separately in itself," and then from an Absolute perspective "is an element of the general ever-present and ever-developing harmony to the Supermind because it views all things in a multiple unity." It should be borne in mind that even though "(o)ut of the Inconscient, Existence appears in a first evolutionary form as substance of Matter created by an inconscient Energy", this energy is directed by Supermind and is not in itself intelligent in this regard. He said that "(i)f a material energy is not that original Power, then we must seek for it in something above Mind or Life; there must be a deeper occult Reality which has yet to disclose itself in Nature."

The mechanics or the downward stroke of the cycle requires that IT separates, without separating, itself into in the form of Sachchidananda, that aspect of it then descending to Supermind, then in turn to Overmind, to Intuitive mind, Illumined mind, Higher mind, and from there down into mind, life, and matter. All of these states always have the essence of the Absolute in it. That means that matter also, in its essence, is the Absolute. If matter is the Absolute, then that too wishes to experience more of Itself, to return to Itself. That sets the stage, and is the motivation, for the return journey. Up to life and mind the movement goes, right up to higher spiritual planes and to Sachchidananda back to the Source, the Absolute.

He postulates that in any given world there need not be an involution but only a subordination of the other principles down to as little as only one, or their inclusion in one, then evolution is not a necessity of that world-order. In that world on the face of it, apparently, evolution need not take place, because the necessary infrastructure for that is missing. However, the material universe was bound in the nature of things to evolve from its hidden life apparent life, from its hidden mind apparent mind, and it must in the same nature of things evolve from its hidden Supermind apparent Supermind and from the concealed Spirit within it to the triune glory of Sachchidananda. This 'hidden x apparent x' describes the vestigial or near vestigial, what is but not quite is, reminiscent of Derrida's letter "a" in *différance* (which is a verb filled with dynamism) sounding the same and with only an "a" and

an "e" separating them on paper, and a vast abyss in essence. This simply means that come what may, and where it may, it will evolve, if it was created, whatever the apparent reality, due to the fact that Supermind is still at its essence, however much hidden.

Shri Aurobindo's radical philosophy is not so different to some occidental approaches and views, a good example is Heraclitus's account of the cosmos which is also an evolution and involution out of his one eternal principle of Fire, and of the role of war, which is perhaps simply a term for an apparatus effecting change. In the West we have always searched for solutions for the secrets of Nature, why things are thus. We observe things change from one form to another, and we get the idea of evolution. This process is then described but not explained. The tentative explanations are postulates, not comprehensive truths. The way in which it is described is by making a statement of a process of formation, there is no fundamental radical understanding of this process and we do not get an explanation of the being or reason of the change or the process. Our field of perception is limited to the physical and biological data of Nature, it does not attempt except in a summary or a superficial fashion to discover its own meaning. We are content to accept evolution as the general law of a quite mysterious and inexplicable energy. Understanding evolution remains an ongoing problem, as we are continually presented with new facts, but with no final conclusive explanation as to what the real process truly is.

All the evolutionary as well as the involutionary changes Shri Aurobindo mentions take place using energy as a tool. The origin of energy is the Consciousness-Force, Cit, of the Spirit, which manifests itself in many kinds of energies. This cycle, which is enabled by energy, all happens within the vast universe. There is no possibility for us to understand the immensity of the universe, what it contains and how it works. The figures we are given are mind-numbing. The total number of stars in our galaxy is 100,000,000,000, and the number of galaxies total 100,000,000,000. Not only in evolution, but also in the universe, we know that a virtually perpetual mechanical energy is at work, and we do not know or understand the nature of the energy, we do not know where it comes from or what its real purpose is. Some of the speculative alternatives are that it always was there, and will never end, (based on a closed universe theory), perhaps it will run down, (reverse big bang). One thing we seem to accept is that this energy is not intelligent, nor is it of a spiritual nature, but even that is subject to doubt. To explain, if energy is directed to accomplish something, and it does so, then it must

be intelligent enough to follow orders. Further, it is consciousness force. It is a unitary reality. And it is highly intelligent. But what is energy then? I contend that the fact that we know nothing about energy means that we know nothing about the essence of anything. To illustrate the paucity of our knowledge and understanding of probably the most basic aspect of our universe, energy, the following: Everything is (or consists of) energy, energy and matter are interchangeable in terms of nuclear physics. Whatever its essence is, we can say that this energy manifests, then, as a force of a perpetual nature, it is a material necessity. And the energy that is, is vast. It has been calculated that "the quantity known as the zero-point energy (in) a single cubic centimeter of empty space (no matter!) contains immeasurably more energy than all of the nuclear energy in matter in the known universe!" To explain the implication thereof, the following: The real substance of the present infinite universe is this zero-point energy. The total nuclear energy in "our" present universe is equivalent to the zero-point energy found in a volume much smaller than a pinhead. On this vast ocean of zero-point energy, the known universe is nothing more than a mere fluctuation, akin to a slight vibration in a force field, it is like the force of one radio signal compared with the entire nuclear energy of the universe. It does not end there. The question is, what else is beyond this energy, remembering that the electromagnetic waves whose energy are included was, firstly, limited to a length of approximately 10^{-33}cm , and secondly, we do not know what energy is beyond that point, as space, per Max Planck, terminates at that point and becomes foamy, ephemeral and impossible thereafter. Energy, and its resultant action, can be of varying levels of intelligence. The importance of energy for Shri Aurobindo is apparent in these quotations: "Out of the Inconscient, Existence appears in a first evolutionary form as substance of Matter created by an inconscient Energy." Here the level of intelligence is low and involved. Later, "If a material energy is not that original Power, then we must seek for it in something above Mind or Life; there must be a deeper occult Reality which has yet to disclose itself in Nature." Here, energy is not the intelligence of creation, but an unknown original Power is. But he went further and said, "The spiritual man is the sign of this new evolution, this new and higher endeavour of Nature. But this evolution differs from the past process of the evolutionary Energy in two respects: it is conducted by a conscious effort of the human mind, and it is not confined to a conscious progression of the surface nature, but is accompanied by an attempt to break the walls of the Ignorance and extend ourselves inward into the secret principle of our present being and outward into cosmic being as well as upward towards a higher principle." Therefore, the human mind now is utilising an energy that knows what it has to achieve. The

energy changes to a more intelligent type. Part of the upward movement of man as a phenomenon that followed plants and animals, was the mental evolution with the intention "so (that) man the mental being is sublimated by the endeavour of the evolutionary Energy to develop out of him the spiritual man, the fully conscious being, man exceeding his first material self and discoverer of his true self and highest nature." Even though it (energy) remains in the background, any evolutionary development taking place is only through the vehicle energy.

The old classical concept of evolution was the result of a philosophical intuition; the modern view is the result of scientific observation. Each theory misses something, but the older approach had spirit as a component, whereas the modern is more concerned with form and external mechanical matters. Old Indian thinkers considered the psychological elements of the evolutionary process, they analysed mind and sense and the subtle basis of matter and perceived some of the secrets of the basic energy. They did not however look deeply at the details of how Nature really went about this process of evolution. They did recognize not only the manifest Force, but also the masked supporting underlying spiritual being. Through intellectual analysis, knowing of the existence of complementary realities, they postulated another complementary set, i.e. Soul and Force with a basic perpetual line of separation between them. The approach of the modern scientist is to create a scheme or framework of the physical method, which deals with ever-finer aspects of the subject under investigation. In this process, details are worked out as to the mechanics of what is happening, and just incidentally, the miracles involved in each step in bringing about the results of the process are completely overlooked; that is of no import. The mechanics in all evolution is miraculous. But for Shri Aurobindo, evolution of consciousness is the primary object, and nature's "ultimate miracle would be an animal consciousness no longer seeking but possessed of Truth and Light, with the practical omnipotence which would result from the possession of a direct and perfected knowledge." His perception of the evolutionary process is broad based in that it does not only deal with specific life forms, but it starts right at the beginning of the whole process. It can be summed up as follows: "The manifestation of the Being in our universe takes the shape of an involution which is the starting-point of an evolution, - Matter the nethermost stage, Spirit the summit."

For Shri Aurobindo, the principles involved in evolution are important. He says that an intellectual approach to the highest knowledge, the mind's possession of it, is an indispensable aid to this movement of Nature in the human being. Ordinarily, on

our surface, man's chief instrument of thought and action is the reason, the observing, understanding and arranging intellect. In any total advance or evolution of the Spirit, not only the intuition, insight, inner sense, the heart's devotion, a deep and direct life-experience of the things of the Spirit have to be developed, but the intellect also must be enlightened and satisfied; our thinking and reflecting mind must be helped to understand, to form a reasoned and systematised idea of the goal, the method, the principles of this highest development and activity of our nature and the truth of all that lies behind it. Spiritual realisation and experience, an intuitive and direct knowledge, a growth of inner consciousness, a growth of the soul and of an intimate soul-perception, soul-vision and a soul-sense, are indeed the proper means of this evolution: but the support of the reflective and critical reason is also of great importance; if many can dispense with it, because they have a vivid and direct contact with inner realities and are satisfied with experience and insight, yet in the whole movement it is indispensable.

Even though we are aware of the existence of the process of evolution, the details remain a fundamental mystery of Nature. On an intellectual level our discussion of evolution will not readily unveil that reality, it is beyond the human reason. With our present knowledge the scientist can affirm various items, such as an original matter or substance, atomic, electric, or whatever it finally turns out to be, where internal or external energy acts on it. Laws are discovered where predictions are made. This works well, except for the exceptions. (The sun will rise in the east tomorrow. Except for the fact that it turned into a Supernovae during the night and we rise in the sun). Nothing is constant or an unalterable principle. All we can say is that seemingly for now and for here this and that will happen. So, there are large gaps in our knowledge. What we do have is the perhaps restricted knowledge of matter, life and mind. In the cycle of creation for Shri Aurobindo, the evolutionary process is accounted for in the process of involution and evolution.

Evolution takes place in nature. What is Nature? Shri Aurobindo says that apparent Nature is secret God. Shri Aurobindo states that three aspects (Self, Conscious Being and God, or to use the Indian terms, Atman, Purusha, Ishwara), and their powers (the creative self-force consciousness, Prakriti which is Nature-Force, and the conscious Power of the Divine Being, Shakti), base and comprise the whole of existence and all Nature and we are linked in oneness by this triune aspect of the one Reality. This means that the whole of existence, whether actual or potential is

nature. It is a secret spiritual force of self-expression, self-formation, self-creation and man is the first of its creations that begins to be an increasingly self-conscious creature with its human significance or its divine possibility. Nature includes the process or cycle of involution and evolution. The course of evolution implies previous stages and subsequent stages. In involution is contained all that is now present in evolution, and it must also have powers of a nature that we do not know of. It could be latent and inactive or concealed or active. Even though the spirit in things is not apparent from the beginning, it is visible in its increasing manifestation. If we were to consider the reality of physical evolution only, with interest only in the wonderful mechanical splendour and subtlety of creation with the evolution of life eventually spawning mind, the evolution of mind resulting in the soul with its own unique being which in its evolution moves from the limited powers of mind to a dazzling display of the infinities of spiritual being, we will find that the purpose of life then is to fulfil itself, it being a preparation for the future birth of the Spirit.

A certain force innate in the Infinite is eternally bringing out of itself activity that indicates an involution of all the powers of the spirit into an inconscient form and process. From that form there is an ascent and progressive freedom of power after power until the spirit evolves to knowledge of itself, and is set free in its fullness by knowledge and mastery of its works. This evolution is of course initiated in the rudimentary complexity of Matter. But it need not follow or attend to all the details in the given cycle of earth evolution. The infinite Reality is free in the play of its consciousness, it is not bound to involve itself in the nescience of Matter before it can at all manifest. Shri Aurobindo mentions four alternate possibilities. Firstly, using a contrary order of creation of things produces a world in which the unity of spiritual being is the matrix and first condition of any formation or action, the Energy at work is a self-aware spiritual existence in movement, and all its names and forms are a self-conscious play of the spiritual unity. Secondly, it might be an order in which the Spirit's innate power of conscious Force or Will would realise freely and directly its own possibilities in itself and not, as here, through the restricting medium of the Life-Force in matter. Thirdly, it might be an order in which the free play of an infinite mutual self-delight in a multiplicity of beings conscious not only of their concealed or underlying eternal unity but also of their present joy of oneness would be the object. Lastly, it might be a world-order in which the Supermind would be the dominant principle from the beginning; the nature of the manifestation would then be a multiplicity of beings finding through the free and luminous play of their divine individuality all the manifold joy of their

difference in oneness. However, regarding our evolution, we have to rise in consciousness until we discover the secret of Spirit and Nature, that her energies being in essence the supreme spiritual, and to recognise ourselves as pure spiritual nature. This liberation is the crown of our spiritual evolution. The spirit knows it is involved in material energy, it is there with all its powers; life, mind and a greater supramental power are involved in Matter. This material energy would include the essence of Life and mind. The purpose of creation is that of self-expression, and similarly, the birth of the soul in the body is also a mode of its own self-expression. Shri Aurobindo says that true object of the birth of the soul in the human body is to realise the Ananda of the Self in other conditions than the supracosmic, in cosmic being, and to find its heaven of joy and light even in the oppositions offered by the terms of an embodied material existence, by struggle therefore towards the joy of self-discovery.

Therefore all things here are expression, form, energy, action of the Spirit; matter itself is but form of spirit, life but power of being of the spirit, mind but working of consciousness of the spirit. All Nature is a display and a play of God, power and action and self-creation of the one spiritual Being. Nature uses spirit for its evolution and gives it the necessary instruments, the medium, the obstacles, all of these being necessary elements for a gradual and developing creation. This Infinite Spirit within us is not bound or imprisoned by our mind or body. As the ancient sages knew, the object of our human striving is to find and be our Self. For this is the object of the whole immense working of Nature. An involution of spirit in matter is the beginning, but a spiritual assumption of divine birth is the fullness of the evolution. We might be baffled by the contradictions we encounter, we place soul against Nature, the spirit against his creative energy. But eventually we understand that the repeated births we are subjected to are necessary for the perfect evolution so that the soul possesses all its self and all Nature. Therefore all this evolution is a growing of the Self in material nature to the conscious possession of its own spiritual being. It begins with form in which a spirit is housed and hidden; it ends in a spirit which consciously directs its own force and creates or assumes its own forms for the free joy of its being in Nature. Nature holds her own self and spirit involved and suppressed within herself, the spirit holding Nature conscious in himself, all to the purpose to evolve to its utmost pinnacle. Shri Aurobindo asserts that this evolutionary activities must result in the building of a life and action that is in conformity with the truth of the spirit: this is the work of spiritual realisation and experience.

MATTER

Matter is a pulsation of the divine. Its awareness is on the level of the inconscient. It contains within it fixed grades which exist each with its appropriate order of nature, being only firm steps for a progressive ascent of the souls embodied in these forms of matter. A progressive divine manifestation then rises from the inconscient to the superconscient or all-conscient status with the human consciousness as its decisive point of transition. It is the base principle for Life. Shri Aurobindo states that life is already involved in Matter and Mind in Life because in essence Matter is a form of veiled Life, Life a form of veiled Consciousness. The body of man is made of matter, life depends on the body, and mind is possible because of life. In this material universe there is energy and this is the basis of matter. The mechanics as to how exactly this transformation takes place is not known. On this subject matter and the finer aspects thereof, namely atoms, Bohr told Heisenberg: "We must be clear that, when it comes to atoms, language can be used only as in poetry.", and Bohm in turn postulates a system of creation that is based on holomovement which consists of two fundamental aspects: the *explicate* and the *implicate* order. The explicate order is the world and matter that we see, and for Bohm, is the appearance of reality only; the true reality is the unseen implicate order. So obviously, matter and its place and relationship with other components of creation are complex. Shri Aurobindo asserts that out of a particular Energy, a covert involved cosmic infinite Consciousness built the boundless finite of the material universe. There is in this universe an apparent inconscience; this is immanent in all that is. If this universe wishes to evolve, this inconscience is an indispensable condition for the structure of the material world-substance out of which this Consciousness intends to involve itself. The creation by the Infinite out of itself is possible by the manifestation of powers of its own Being within itself. The principle of real powers of the Infinite fulfilling itself indicates an apparent mechanical process, which only appears mechanical because of the veil of Inconscience. It is not truly mechanical but is the constant principle of intelligence and mathematical design and invention in nature.

Matter is ignorant, apparently a representation of Maya. It is inert, without any discernable intelligence, and unable to be anything but stationary, any activity is the result of outside laws of physics. However, the Maya of Matter is not the normal Maya. Maya of Matter for Shri Aurobindo is not bland ignorance, but a powerful enlightened ignorance, namely the power of Brahman to create illusions and to be aware that they are illusions while Mind has at the same time the ability

of taking these illusions for real. If Brahman can operate in this double or manifold fashion, it must be capable of a double action of consciousness, one being an ignorant consciousness and the other a superconscience. This seems logically impossible, and a supra-rational paradox. But if we do accept this supra-rational mystery, and we have to, as we cannot prescribe the limits of its powers to Brahman, then we can accept the reality of the One becoming or always being many and the Many being or becoming the One. The implication of this is that the Infinite and Eternal can by the infinite power of its consciousness create a movement of involution and evolution of itself. This suprarational view of the Infinite is not really a paradox when viewed from a broader non-intellectual base.

Shri Aurobindo's explanation for the evolution in Matter is that the universe is a self-creative process of a supreme Reality whose presence makes spirit the substance of things. An infinite existence and delight of being is the secret Reality behind the appearances of the universe. The Supermind arranged the cosmic order through the three subordinate and limiting terms of which we are conscious here, Matter, Life and Mind. The material universe is then the lowest stage of a downward thrust of the involution with no apparent consciousness, or with an Inconscient consciousness. From this nescience the evolution of matter into a recovered self-awareness is inevitable because at the basis of its being it has a hidden consciousness of the supreme and as it has involved, it must also evolve. This bestows on the individual being an immense importance as this individual is now recognised as the Self of cosmic Being and both the individual and this infinite Being are powers of the Eternal. This explains the necessity for the growth of the individual and his discovery of himself as a condition for the discovery of the cosmic Self and Consciousness and of the supreme Reality.

Shri Aurobindo states that the central motive for an earth existence is a spiritual and consciousness evolution of Matter to the point that the indwelling Spirit can be exposed. Initially this inherent supreme Divine Reality is concealed behind a veil, in a dense material Inconscience by the involution of the Spirit, until the force of creation's Energy operating as a vast occult Intelligence starts the return journey to Itself.

Shri Aurobindo sums up the importance of matter in the following statement: An involution of spirit in matter is the beginning, but a spiritual assumption of divine birth is the fullness of the evolution.

LIFE

Shri Aurobindo says that life is a scale of the universal Energy in which the transition from inconscience to consciousness is managed; it is an intermediary power which is latent or submerged in Matter, delivered by its own force into submental being, delivered finally by the emergence of Mind into the full possibility of its dynamis.

Life is universal Force working so as to create, energise, maintain and modify substantial forms with mutual play and interchange of an overtly or secretly conscious energy as its fundamental character. In everything, also in the energy Force and in Matter there is a subconscious Mind at work, which is responsible for the materialisation of itself and of life. Creation of Life is part of the evolution process, and Supermind is the real creative agency of universal Existence. Shri Aurobindo states that out of this Matter, apparent Life manifests and it delivers out of itself by means of the living body the Mind it contains imprisoned within it. In our world, Life is involved in subconscious Matter; Mind is involved and subconscious in Life, just as Supermind is involved and subconscious in Mind. Subconscious Mind or Intelligence is the basis of amongst others life. Consequently, the world of Mind-Life-Body is the result of this route of evolution. Life involved in Matter has emerged in the form of thinking and mentally conscious life.

However, alternatives can exist. Shri Aurobindo gave an example of yet another possibility of the involution stage. In that, it is possible that involution does not follow the Mind, Life and Matter route. He moves from the restricting confines of earth, and the comfortable security-generating laws and realities resident here, and says that we can conceive of a world otherwise constituted. He states that in any given world there need not be an involution but only a subordination of the other principles to one or their inclusion in one; then evolution is not a necessity of that world-order. There Mind is not involved at the start but consciously uses its innate energy to create original forms of substance which is not, as here, only subconscious in the beginning. It would simply depend on the laws of nature of that planet as to how the involution (and evolution) would take place. Still, though the working of such a world would be quite different from ours, the intermediate vehicle of operation of that energy would always be Life. As an example, I can conceive of a Mental, and not Material, world in this regard, where the 'planet' would be of a mental construct. The life form, the beings populating this planet

would initially be either energy or evolving thought, which aspires to a state of pure thought. The involution/evolution cycle itself would be the same, even if the process were entirely reversed. It follows that wherever Cosmos is, there, even if it seems to have only one basic principle of creation, and whatever manifests in that world seems to be no more than the forms and results of that principle and not in themselves indispensable to cosmic existence, such a front presented by being can only be an illusory mask of its real truth. Where one principle is manifest in Cosmos, there all the rest must be not merely present and passively latent, but secretly at work.

This implies that whatever we can conceive of as a system of being, is possible even if we leave out of our system cardinal fundamentals of Shri Aurobindo's process. And once we have done so, we will find that in elemental seed form, whatever was left out is still there. Everywhere in the universe its reality must have as its destiny the return to the Source. This is the main determining principle of Being. On the face of it, this seems strange, because we cannot conceive of evolution if there was no involution. But quite logically and correctly, if there was no involution, then no evolution is necessary. Brahman is not restricted by any rules it may or may not have made. It is just that our logic is somewhat bound to the temporality and spatiality of creation.

It is not only human life that Shri Aurobindo deals with; all life is his concern. The nervous consciousness of plant-life and the primitive animal develops first, then from that the evolved animal and man follows. At this stage the individual Life regards all cosmic action only as it presents itself to its own individual consciousness. For the individual, the cosmos is limited because his mind operates within a limited reality. The individual is weak and fairly helpless as it cannot really influence or control what is happening to it or to its environment. But with time, it conceives of the possibility of itself awakening to the Power in it. There is the gradual awakening to self. At first this is viewed tentatively without great self-assurance, but the individual becomes more and more aware in its depths that it too is the Will-Force of Sachchidananda which is master of the universe and it aspires to be master of its own world. This results in a growing self-manifestation of the Divine in cosmic existence. From here the route is only upward, until the very end, which is Self.

The possibilities for Man are great. He is presently quite near the bottom of the involution part of the cycle, but he is already higher than matter and life, and on

the upward moving evolution stage, under the influence of the spirit of the Absolute. This movement is imperative as the individual must unfold and reach the universal in him, he must experience and live in the divine light, power, and joy of transcendent Sachchidananda, as this return to his source is the ultimate reason for his existence. This is the human aspiration. It means that nothing short of the highest spiritual achievements will suffice. It has this impulse towards perfection, the search after pure Truth and Bliss; it has a sense of its secret immortality, even though it has no clear and certain knowledge about its existence. Yet, this urge of man towards the higher is there and its attaining is more than a possibility, it is a certainty, as Shri Aurobindo explains. The route is through the development of the higher spiritual essence of man. It is dormant in his higher spiritual potential, where we encounter finer modes of doing and being such as illumination and intuition. We can and we will rise to these higher planes. Then the discord and conflict of humanity is left behind. He has to know the real nature of his mind to enable him to perceive the knowledge of the universe while both using and transcending his mental consciousness.

The justification of individual existence is the eventual unfolding of the qualities of the infinite; divine light, power, the joy of the transcendent. This is the route to the world of Knowledge-Ignorance. The fact that man just does not see, being in a divine ignorance, what he is or what his role implies, is immaterial. The truth is that he has the power to achieve this universal unfolding even if this type of possibility looks unlikely from a human point of view. This high station is totally beyond the conception of Man, as he does not even start experiencing this. However, in "The Life Divine" Shri Aurobindo argues that all is possible, if we do not achieve this beyondness, it is related to the problems of existence as human beings, which problems are essentially caused by lack of harmony. This non-experience of the divine is because inertia is dominant in the active Life we have. Therefore, even though we have not achieved it, we do know that that lesser (than Sachchidananda) harmony, less conflict and divergences exist. That is a start, as that indicates that there is more, it can justify our instinct of a possible unity with the divine. The practical, more animal part of man can be content with the lesser, but his fully awakened mind demands the experience of this infinite existence. The actual goal is the material immortality of a fully organised mind-supporting body, even if the body is of an animal nature, as is the case of man. What is important here is the dominance of the inner spirit or soul over the outer matter.

Evolution is inevitable because of involution. Nature deals with this reality. Nature however is very laidback, in no particular hurry, and evolution is slow and uncertain, uncertain in the sense that the immediate telos is not very evident. With evolution, we experience that greater bliss is to be found in higher states of consciousness. The argument can therefore be made that it is better for man to evolve faster, to make more rapid progress towards the ultimate and to arrive at the experience of Ananda sooner. This destination is inevitable, as the Absolute is manifested in man, in his essence, in what he is, in what he was and in what he will become. Progress however, is not a linear undertaking; it takes place as part of the vast cycle of Being, in the multi-directionality of time, in all dimensions of spatiality. It will lead to an awakening of its inner self, and the eventual outer expression of it is a divine life in an animal body. The Life Divine anticipates man's awakening, his inner spirit gaining total mastery over the outer matter. Shri Aurobindo sees this human aspiration as taking its stand on the belief and intuition that we are souls that can know all the mysteries of this and every other world and become Nature's adepts and masters.

In examining Life, we encounter many questions, its relation to Supermind, what principle causes it, and why it comes into being. Is it a divine principle of the Delight that causes life on the countless worlds of the universe? Here on earth, life, with Matter as its basis, is a form of the cosmic Energy. Life has an essential counterpart called death. However, death's only reality is as a process of life. Substance disintegrates and renews, and this change of form is the unvarying progression of life; death serves life in life's need of change for formal experience. The death of the body is not the ending of Life, but part of a process where one form of life is changed to serve as substance for other forms of life.

Life and its cohort death is the Force that build and maintain and destroy forms in the world. A case can be made for the existence of life in all matter (atoms, stones), not only in the animal and the plant. The question now is, what precisely does life consist of and how does it differ from the "life-giving" activity of Force in inanimate things which is not life? We have associated life with certain qualities: movement, breathing, eating, feeling, desiring. These are however, only processes of life and not life itself. Life is everywhere, whether covert or obvious, it differs only in its forms and the way in which it is organised.

From a human perspective, even when a form appears to us to be dead, this life force still exists in it as a potentiality. The dead can be revived, leading to reports

of near-death experiences. This indicates that life in a latent form was still in the body. At a certain point it is no longer possible to restore the activities constituting life. That results in death, but even then there is Life in the body, which Life is active with the process of disintegration so that the formed substance may escape in its elements and compose new forms. Now the Will in the universal force withdraws from the body and supports a process of dispersion. This is the real death of that particular body. But it is only that previous form of life that has ended in that body, that form of life in its essence is not destroyed, it is only changed. And what remains is matter that is inherently full of potential Life. Life is the dynamic play of a universal Force whose mental consciousness and nervous vitality are always inherent as they become visible and organise themselves in our world in the forms of Matter. Life-Energy puts together different forms, and then again breaks it down in the processes of birth, growth and death. Here Life exposes itself as identical everywhere from the atom to man. Life is a universal operation of Conscious-Force acting subconsciously on and in Matter; it is the operation of the three Gunas that create, maintain, and destroy. There are three stages in this process of change, the lowest is entirely subconscious so as to seem wholly mechanical; the middle stage is that in which it becomes capable of a response on the verge of what we know as consciousness; the highest is that in which life develops conscious mentality.

Life forms and its outward appearances on this and other planets and planes are diverse, but the general principle of Life must be the same everywhere. To understand Life, and its purpose in general and ours in particular, we need to grow conscious of its underlying foundation, the working of Conscious-Force. Only then can we execute with knowledge, as individual soul-forms, the will of God in Life. Life is a link in a chain, above it is Mind with its dividing operation and to which it is compliant. Mind, for mankind, is not evolved enough to transcend its limitations, and therefore its vehicle for manifestation namely Life is subjected to death, suffering and an ignorant way of functioning. The original source of the distortion was the individual soul limiting itself. It has an imposed amnesia, and it is bound to self-ignorance; it regards itself as a separate self-existent individual instead of being part of a blissful holism. Even the universal life in us succumbs to the fallacy of an individual existence and acts as if it is living a separate limited life excluded from the cosmic life around it. It cannot act as a major player, it finds itself buffeted by the Cosmos. But as consciousness develops, the sleep of ignorance fades and Life awakens to its true Power. Life, Force, Power and Will are all the same and its operation is the working of the Master-Consciousness. It is the Will-

Force of Sachchidananda, which is master of the universe, it becomes aware of that and then desires mastery of its own world. The impulse to realise power and knowledge results in an increasing manifestation of the Divine although it cannot become master of its world, free of Death, Desire and Incapacity, because it is a divided individual. It can achieve that only by becoming one again with the All-Will and therefore with the All-Force.

Whether to evolve or not remains the choice of man. A person's present situation could be a comfortable space, in which case he might not want to move forward. If that is his choice, he then wastes time before he inevitably proceeds with his evolution. But if man in totality really refuses to move, then the alternative is that life will evolve and manifest another life form to reach Itself. Evolution is his mission. The Ananda of "That One" will not be denied. So Man must simply keep on evolving. To refuse would lead to the termination of his life form and the extinction of his race.

MIND

The mind has a great deal of uses and serves man well. The libraries and cities and musea, and the expansion of his sphere of influence into space of the cosmos and of the atom attest to that. Both what mind is and what it is not yet, is important to us. For true knowledge, mind is not the only or the best possible instrument; it is merely a clumsy interlude between Nature's vast and precise subconscious action and the vaster infallible superconscious action of the Godhead. Such is Shri Aurobindo's supramental perception of this key instrument of modern man.

Because man is a mental being, he naturally imagines that mind is the one great leader and actor and creator or the indispensable agent in the universe. He has had great success using the incredible power contained in logic and reason. Shri Aurobindo contends that man suffered a certain loss as "the age of intuitive knowledge, represented by the early Vedantic thinking of the Upanishads, had to give place to the age of rational knowledge; inspired Scripture made room for metaphysical philosophy, even as afterwards metaphysical philosophy had to give place to experimental Science. Intuitive thought which is a messenger from the superconscious and therefore our highest faculty, was supplanted by the pure reason which is only a sort of deputy and belongs to the middle heights of our being; pure reason in its turn was supplanted for a time by the mixed action of the reason which lives on our plains and lower elevations and does not in its view

exceed the horizon of the experience that the physical mind and senses or such aids as we can invent for them can bring to us." This loss was a retardation of the development of the intuitive faculty.

Shri Aurobindo asserts that after the evolution of Matter, Nature has arrived at the evolution of the mind of a humanity which is capable of knowing the external world and of knowing itself and the secret things, powers, and forces which are behind a surface external Nature. In man, she built an ego which deals with material life and nature as both its user and as its subject. This life is bound by matter, and this mind is bound by both matter and life. These steps are necessary precursors to the important phase of the evolution of consciousness. Man is here to utilise his world for the service of his individual and collective ego and as a medium in which the Spirit within can evolve to its self-manifestation. In this way he can arrive from a partial to a complete consciousness, and at a complete and perfect individual and social life. If the psychological truth of our being is the real and central truth, more central and important than the physical, this must be its true nature; a conscious being growing towards its own completeness of consciousness and growing too towards its expression and formation in a complete individual and social life.

Shri Aurobindo is of the opinion that thought and the mind do not attain to the essence of Truth. It is possible, and it happens, that there can be a thought-body of Truth, the spontaneous supramental Thought and Word that appears fully formed out of the Source. But that is the exception, the result of homework done. If the mind is not silent, it cannot receive this subtle and powerful aspect of the supernal Truth, nor can it utilise Truth in the relative life. It is at best a half-enlightened Ignorance seeking for truth, using the data and postulates of Ignorance. True knowledge is gained by the development of Quietness, resulting in an utilisation of a mind that can operate only in that Quietness. This quietness is a profound creative silence, and is a full precondition for perceiving true knowledge. Here, reason and logic itself are merely seekers. Mind precedes the instrument of perfect knowledge but can never be that instrument itself. The office of intellect is not to fathom reality, but to fabricate and preside over action; however, intellect cannot comprehend life and reality. Intellect with its logic goes round the object, intuition enters into the object; one stops at the superficial and the appearance, the other enters into the absolute reality of the object.

In using our mind, we understand most things partially. Essential matters confound

us. Shri Aurobindo states that in our evolution a triple enigma confronts us. It is existence, consciousness and the significance of our conscious being. We do not know what existence is or how it came to be at all. Whether it is an eternal fact or a temporary phenomenon, an appearance or something real, or how or why it came into being we are ignorant of. Consciousness of existence is a premier fact and without it, being would not know of its own existence. Things might exist, but consciousness makes being self-aware and gives it significance. But then also, we do not know what is consciousness, or to whom it belongs. The significance of our conscious being in an inconscient material world is the last and worst enigma. We can have questions regarding its sense and justification and whether our individuality is real or apparent, temporary or permanent, or whether it has a meaning in the universe or in something beyond the universe. Shri Aurobindo further says that it is interesting that all these problems arise in our consciousness and in our consciousness alone can be found their solution-or perhaps from a greater consciousness the solution must come. On the nature and validity of our consciousness depends the nature and validity of the discovery we shall make or the conclusions to which we can come. On the power of our consciousness depends the possibility or impossibility of putting into the terms of life the solutions our knowledge discovers. But most of all the appearance and development of consciousness in the inconscient world is the decisive factor, the one thing that gives its existence a light of meaning, a possibility of purpose, a hope of fulfilment and the soul's self-finding. To know, then, the nature of consciousness, its process, its birth, growth and destiny is for us a study of supreme importance. All the problems of existence turn around three things, the nature of being, the nature of consciousness and the secret of the dynamics, the energy of existence by which being and consciousness find each other and manifest what is within them. If we can discover these three things, all is known which we fundamentally need to know; the rest is application and process and consequence.

In his mental evolution, Man must change and accept his own deeper law of being and its processes. He is the psychic being and he must master his energies which gave him this status. He must become the master in a free harmony with a higher law of Nature. There is now a responsibility resting on man. From the individual is demanded an increasing control over his own actions, a more conscious participation in the action of universal Nature. This is his contribution to the evolutionary principle and process. Shri Aurobindo says that this consummation can only take place by an evolution of the consciousness of the individual and humanity beyond its present stage of development; it can take place only if man is

ready to take the turn towards which Nature has been slowly leading him, to discover himself, to know himself as soul and spirit, to see and lay firm hold on the Reality behind world and life and things which he has been seeking for through the ages. With the evolution that already took place in the human life, mind was created with a superior developed intelligence, and with still more unrealised potential. It certainly has the ability to observe, it has consciousness, a will and the ability to choose, but these aspects are very undeveloped, unrefined and partial. It needs to be more. There is as yet not the deeper brilliant way of perceiving that knows things directly, the way of a sure spontaneity and intuition. Its trust is still very much in the intellect and in the security that that faculty provides. It is an externally oriented mechanical logical reasoning methodology which is used, falling far short of its inherent potential of perception and also of being. Its knowledge is partial, forever changing because of the limited ability of both the intellect and the enforced route it has to take in acquiring knowledge, enforced because the mind at this stage knows, and can trust, no other way. Further evolution of the mind still lies ahead. The only question is whether the human creation on this or any other material scene will be its instrument and vehicle, and whether the earth is to be a scene of that emergence in this or any other cycle of Time. There is a route to becoming a conscious and active partner of the Cosmic Spirit. This is the way to growth of the transition from our present state of being to a state of Supernature. Hard work lays ahead, the reality of an intuitive mentality intervening in a mixed mental, vital, physical consciousness would have the result of it getting entangled in it, with the probability of contamination with the restricting force of the Ignorance. Intuitive intelligence is clear and efficient enough to penetrate and modify this other logical reasoning mind, but not sufficient in itself to abolish and transform the mass of the Ignorance and Inconscience. Regardless, even in our present state, a participation of a kind is there and our normal intelligence is sufficiently developed for the universal Conscious-Force to work through it. This is a start on the long evolutionary ladder. More will follow. As the inner psychic mental being becomes prominent, a greater power of choice emerges, and an authentic free will develops. There is a development of a mastery and knowledge, and an opening to a higher being and a higher nature.

Climbing this long evolutionary ladder is very rewarding. Regardless of his present state, he has the potential to, and will, develop further. Shri Aurobindo says that his natural existence would be the instrumentation of a superior Power, an overmental and supramental Consciousness-Force, the power of the original Divine

Shakti. All the processes of the evolution would be felt as the action of a supreme and universal Consciousness, a supreme and universal Force working in whatever way it chose, on whatever level, within whatever self-determined limits, a conscious working of the transcendent and cosmic Being. In place of the Nature of Ignorance with the individual as its closed field and unconscious or half-conscious instrument, there would be a Supernature of the divine Gnosis and the individual soul would be its conscious, open and free field and instrument, a participant in its action, aware of its purpose and process, aware too of its own greater Self, the universal, the transcendent Reality, and of its own Person as illimitably one with that and yet an individual being of Its being, an instrument and a spiritual centre.

At present we know man and we know mind, which informs us of our (not The) universe. Mind only partially perceives and informs us of what truly is, of Truth. But that Truth we need and want. We still also have to operate in the other aspect of creation, the relative world and without mind that would not be possible. Here man is doing very well, in a manner of speaking. Fairly good at creating, brilliant at destruction. It is as if the majority of humanity sets the lowest possible attainable goals and then consistently fails to achieve that. For his future evolution, that cannot continue, as man is not the last creation possible to the capacities of creative evolution in the material universe. New living forms may no longer be appearing freely, but new powers of consciousness is in evidence. When Nature, the Divine Power, had formed *Homo sapiens*, it was to have a conscious being. This being could do all manner of things. It could devise, inquire into itself and things and work consciously both on these things and on self. This is what she had wanted; this is the result of the long slow preparation for the development of consciousness in a being which happens to be man. It took a long time, but the turning point had arrived. This point was necessary for the purposes of Nature, the recreation of life forms higher than animal, the start of the development of higher states of consciousness.

Chapter 5

THE DESTINY OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Shri Aurobindo's vision of humanity is that it forms an integral part of the cycle of creation. Consequently the history of the human being includes involution and in the future it will experience evolution. The origin of man is Brahman and he is

destined to return to Brahman. For Shri Aurobindo, it is vital for man to achieve this ultimate goal, which is the completion of this return journey. In this process he will become a spiritualised divine being, a gnostic man, in a human body. This chapter sets out facets of this journey.

Shri Aurobindo contends that the development of mind was essential to lay a foundation for the future evolutionary processes. He asserts that this was the precursor for the spiritual development which inevitably must follow. If that was not so, if the final fruit of consciousness is Mind, if that was the ultimate, man would go on evolving on this level and eventually become a Man-God. That would be grand, everybody would be happy, except Nature. She has different designs. Beyond Mind is a greater consciousness; there is a supermind and higher spirit. Nature will not stop here; she laboured too long and too unswervingly, first in the animal, then the vital being, until she could manifest out of him man, the thinker. From here She continues with the mental being to what she knows is possible, the manifesting of a spiritual and supramental godhead. With this a new reality dawns. Potentialities beyond our imagination can be realised. Just as there may be, and for Shri Aurobindo is, sense-organs or formations of sense-capacity which see the physical world differently, better and more completely than our present sense-organs and sense-capacity, so there may be other mental and supramental visions of the universe which surpass our own. States of consciousness exist in which Death is only a change in immortal Life, pain a violent backwash of the waters of universal delight, limitation a turning of the Infinite upon itself, evil a circling of the good around its own perfection; this not an abstract conception only, but an actual vision, a constant and substantial experience. To arrive at such states of consciousness may, for the individual, be one of the most important and indispensable steps of his progress towards self-perfection. Man then will develop his potential to a greater degree; his mind, the attainment of higher states of consciousness, become the important aspects and goals of his being. The ancient seers certainly believed in this possibility for man and held it to be his divine destiny. The modern thinker reluctantly considers such a possibility, and then denies or doubts it. His vision of the Superman is limited to that of a human that possesses great degrees of mentality or vitality; he cannot conceive of anything else as he is caught up in a mental limiting defining circle. He does not consider a human in whom the divine spark has been kindled, in whom real wisdom is likely to dwell because of the higher aspiration in him. This spiritual alternative is an inspiring image, but for this evolution to take place, the individual must gain, or regain, the vision of harmony of the totality. Here it is necessary for us to realise

that the way our present consciousness evaluates the universe is not the only possible way, it might not be the complete or the right or the ultimate formulas, even though it could be practically justified for the purposes of human experience and progress. But with time and experience Man comes to know firsthand and intimately the basis of what this very superior is, he experiences the infinite omnipresent Reality. For man, this is the Unknowable known, that which cannot be spoken of, and yet he knows it, he can experience it himself. That something is in himself, it is free and beyond. The higher in man has chosen to exercise its prerogative of infinite choice of being with its own self-conception with the unity, omniscience and omnipotence which are the Divine. It is an aspect of man, the divine in man, that chose so to do this in man, he chose to enjoy through man whatever form of Ananda (happiness, joy, bliss, delight) he wishes. Ananda is the result of self-discovery. All this is now achieved via the route of supreme Ananda, through the joy of finding itself, after having lost itself. It now takes into itself all of the opposites, all being itself, all being the same. Those are all forms of Being and Non-Being.

Shri Aurobindo declares that to achieve all this, man must accept the responsibility of his own evolution. He has to deal with very practical matters such as the issue of survival on the physical, life and mental planes. This necessity for him to survive for as long as possible is crucial to the role he plays is evolution as a longer life gives him more opportunity for life experience. A partial listing of the fields he has to master include the physical, emotional, social, intellectual and supra-intellectual areas. As a member of a community, he has to discover and understand the different disciplines of study and of life. In his role on earth, man had to live and evolve together with other creatures resident here. They are in direct competition for life, food and space, and he had to learn to survive in a manner that involves competition and death, both his and that of his competitors. He had to learn rules and principles that are unique to the laws of nature found on this earth and he had to adapt to that. He also has inherent in him the urge to evolve further. Shri Aurobindo maintains that the ultimate purpose of an individual is to ascend the evolutionary ladder back to the origin of creation. This is a long and arduous journey where man encounters many states and attributes of being, and many forms of consciousness. There is a Cosmic Unity present on the journey that defies the mind to seize and hold, and this Reality cannot be identified with any one definable state of being or quality as this Unity is non-dual, it is unknowable, a true unity and part of the Indivisible. The importance of the journey is paramount, as the individual, with his potential, has a high status; Shri

Aurobindo says that the nodus of Life is the relation between three general forms of consciousness, namely the individual, the universal and the transcendent or supracosmic. Here the individual is not a separate being, it is part of the All, including Brahman. Viewing him otherwise is the belittling and degradation of both the individual and the universe. It is only when we put aside the seemingly irreconcilable difference or reality between Self and the world that we can assert the unity of the Manifested.

At present, man's survival depends upon an understanding of his present predicament. "This predicament consists in part of accelerating crises tending toward human extinction if we do not intelligently modify the course of future trends. ... a plan adequate for dealing effectively with our predicament, requires the greater comprehension and comprehensiveness that can come only with a philosophical perspective." This perspective is very much in evidence in the thinking of Shri Aurobindo. In it is implied a different and brighter future, and it implies change. And change he must. He can only be satisfied with what resonates in himself as what he knows to be good. Sorokin says: "Only as an incarnation of 'a loftier, spiritual, mystical or Divine principle is man an individuality (personality.)' Only as such, in union with God, 'can he become immortal. This highest part in man is also natural to him. The way of liberation of such a true individuality (personality) and the road to its immortality is the way of love.' " Shri Aurobindo said that the earliest preoccupation of man in his awakened thoughts was also the highest which his thought can envisage. It manifests itself in the divination of Godhead. The ancient dawns of human knowledge have left us their witness to this constant aspiration; today we see a humanity satiated but not satisfied by victorious analysis of the externalities of Nature preparing to return to its primeval longings. Shri Aurobindo's earliest formula of wisdom still holds, the desire for God, Light, Freedom, Immortality. This statement appeared in the inaugural number of the monthly philosophical review Arya, launched by him on 15 August 1914.

The long-term view of man is reuniting with Brahman. The short-term view is to survive one lifetime. So, one of the major preoccupations of man at present is development and survival in economic and associated philosophical concerns. The field of economics is important as that determines not only what man does in his day-to-day activities, but why he does so. But the basics of economics are not understood, and/or internalised as man through his competitive evolutionary route has through necessity become selfish; he attends to himself whereas cooperation would be more efficient and effective. Here the basics involved are the laws of

nature; sowing before you reap, living in the now so that your doing now is your focus of attention. This is in contradiction to where the results of the future are the focus, and attention is not on the now; consequently the joy of the present is absent. Further, the fact that an individual is an indivisible part of society is ignored, and society as a result is not a harmonious whole. The fact that life in one incarnation is a small part of total life, is unknown or ignored. Given these views, therefore, the views expressed on the purpose of life are limited in scope and import. Sen argues that the goal of development is the expansion of human capabilities that will give people freedom to do the things that they value. There cannot be any dispute with that proposal, except that it deals with only one life, the present one. But accepting that, if that should win a freedom which is going to be a license to do whatever is conceivable in a vitalistic formulation, then of this great endeavour it can hardly be considered a desirable gain. Indeed, values should be the first objective. But what are or what defines values? Values are what man determines. He is the authority, but because his vision is limited, so is everything he does or thinks. Man is vaguely aware of the need for higher values, but he cannot reach that, it is beyond his present abilities. One of the most pervasive realities of modern man is money. Yet, it is a figment of the mind, it simply is a belief system that is virtually universally accepted, and it implies total faith and trust in that fiction by people who under normal circumstances do not believe in anything. Money is the visible sign of an unseen subtle universal force, and this force in its manifestation on earth, works on the vital and physical planes and is indispensable to the fullness of the outer life. It is a mechanism for administration, harmony and balance and in its origin and its true action it belongs to the Divine (as everything else does), and it also supplements discipline. It should be viewed and treated as such. As money is neither understood nor treated correctly, it is therefore used in a profane fashion. With evolution, in the supramental creation the money-force will be restored to the Divine Power and used as a true, beautiful and harmonious piece of equipment and for the ordering of a new divinised vital and physical existence in whatever way the Divine Mother herself decides in her creative vision.

Shri Aurobindo emphasises the fact that even though the intellect is a wonderful instrument, it is not equipped to deal with the final questions, which of course are the important ones. "Thus one historian quotes the Vedic hymn: ...Who is it knows? Who here can tell us surely from what and how this universe has risen?...He only knows, who from the highest heaven Rules, the all-seeing lord -- or does not He know?" A plaintive cry, and seemingly unheeded, but the very cry is an indication

that the needed philosophy for a holistic understanding of the All is being given attention, and will be dealt with, one way or another. It certainly needs contributions from all the major disciplines. The result should be a universal philosophy that is understandable and believable by people in all cultures and appear able to answer in novel ways, realistically and satisfactorily, questions troubling all persons disturbed by contemporary crises, global and personal. It should serve as a guide to those working for a better future for mankind and for themselves. At the very least the disciplines should unite in discourse and from their very finest and keenest perceptions and understanding arrive at a synthesis after a dialectic of the very highest order.

Even though in this, as in other respects, our philosophies have let us down, and our thinkers did not supply us with a framework large enough to contain realities and manifestations we are presented with, nor with our concerns and our universe, they and we are working on the problem. Whatever underlying philosophies and worldviews and assumptions we use for living (read evolving), we are responsible. The solution could be that of Shri Aurobindo who was a pragmatic and down-to-earth thinker. What he worked out in his theories could adequately serve humanity. Reddy thinks he succeeded. "The uniqueness of the avataric task of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother lies precisely in working out the dynamics of the process, that it succeeds in the here-and-now of the terrestrial scheme. " He could well be correct; a non-denominational framework saw the light of day, one that supplies more answers than we can ask questions.

The force of the intellect is extensive, but other alternate philosophies exist everywhere, especially India, some with considerable intuitive force, even if then it is not matched to the same degree with an intellectual force. One such is the philosophy of the Advaita Vedanta which makes an inquiry into truth and reality; but, unlike pure speculation, according to Bhattacharyya, the truth it reveals is not a theory liable to modification with the advance of scientific knowledge but is positive and ultimate, verified and verifiable. Being the science of reality, it avails itself of all the sources of knowledge, viz. experience and intuition, and embraces all states and conditions through which life passes or is supposed to pass. The fact is of course that any body of knowledge that is experienced from the Absolute is total and complete, and the title scientist or intuitive perceiver is irrelevant. It is the state of consciousness of the perceiver that is important. Higher states of consciousness is the factor that determines the quality of perception and understanding.

Reddy states that for a time man tried, and to a large extent still does, to function the intellectual dualistic way. Here there is a deep dichotomy of spirit and matter. Under the sway of existentialism our literature and art and even religious thought have in a very peculiar way taken us to gross commercialism and vitalistic enjoyment without providing us with any deeper sense of the values of truth, beauty, love, and aesthetic happiness so cherished by a refined soul. Not that thinkers like Descartes did not try, they just did not possess the necessary higher states of consciousness to succeed in experiencing and understanding infinity. They did not have the tools for the onerous task. The mode of operation for humanity to reach the goal should be a very subtle one. It should be the divine way of life. But it is not, even the field where one would expect it, religion, is consigned to an emotional or at best intellectual level. The higher, Divinity is rather conspicuous by its absence. Despite his Vedantic leanings, Shri Aurobindo was no apologist for any one dogma. He stated that of the great religions, both Hinduism and Buddhism are more ideal than most, and may be termed religions of Enlightenment which strive towards this higher. It is in any case higher than operating from the mentioned emotions or intellect where very human and very vulnerable priests represent God. When Sri Aurobindo remarks that 'all we have to do is to find a means of escape out of the Ignorance . . . and the vanity of cosmic existence,' and when he adds that 'it is always the business of man the thinker to know,' he might be speaking for Buddhism as well as Hinduism. Though intellectual inquiry will not suffice unless it leads to a saving Vision, both Buddhism and Hinduism emphasise human research, which implies not only belief but also a practical action towards perfection. "The omniscience of the Supreme Buddha, says Shwe Zan Aung, is 'intuition plus analysis.' " The whole process of man's highest intellectual knowledge is through this mental manipulation and discrimination to the point where the veil is broken and he can see.' This reference to intuition is in apparent contradiction to the contention of Reddy above ("function the intellectual dualistic way"). But it is in reality a synthesis of the intellect ("man's highest intellectual knowledge") and the intuitive faculty. This is the ideal situation where all the faculties are developed and used, not that these two comprise "all". He is more. Reddy says that it is generally realised that "Man (is) not just a worker and skilled craftsman or a participant in commerce or a warrior and conqueror, not even as a man of study and learning, an artist or a philosopher or a scientist, but (is) a man who is in search of life given to the affirmative spirit unfolding his own further possibilities (and is) the one who has to arrive and take charge of his destiny."

Of importance is the understanding of the following concepts that are true worldwide, regardless of which "block" (East, West) we find ourselves. These concepts are germane to the subject matter we are dealing with. The first concept is intuition or subjective intuition, which we can define as a non-inferential knowledge of a concept that is not based on perception, memory or introspection. Related to this is preanalytic thinking which is not tainted by prior explicit theorising and which is said of judgments and, derivatively, by beliefs or intuitions underlying such judgments. Speculation is a form of theorising that goes beyond verifiable observation and specifically, a philosophical approach informed by the impulse to construct a grand narrative of a worldview that encompasses the whole of reality. It is obvious that the views of Shri Aurobindo falls in this category. Informal logic examines the nature and function of natural language. It begins with assertions which reveal something about the person making them. An assertion can be made as a belief, objective fact or knowledge. Assertions have a emotive side and are not impersonal. Historical criticism of the scholar relates to the history of the philosopher and his consequent speculative and critical approaches to philosophy.

We cannot deal with all the philosophers of all the regions of all times, for now we concentrate on India. Indian thinkers seem to utilise the subjective intuitive approach in understanding reality. Sharma expressed the Vedantic opinion that the Indian view generally is that "(t)he eternal Selves are Divine and are untouched by the cosmic process, by the space-time matrix. The true Self is the Unborn and Immutable Spirit of man who always lives in the divine plane." Chaudhuri identifies Non-dualism as the keynote of Indian culture, and the search for this knowledge that will aid in the passage of life and ease the way, the Indian culture "is prompted by an intuitive approach to life and existence--an approach which seeks to understand reality in its undivided wholeness and fundamental oneness." Therefore, says Reddy, for Shri Aurobindo, the subjective intuitive route is the means of gaining knowledge even though apparently it is not a scientific verifiable objective route acceptable to scientists unskilled in the technology of the "East". His approach is essentially a holistic one, and is in essence Vedantic. It is also a practical and not a theoretical philosophy as Reddy noticed: "Sri Aurobindo's political thought only confirms that for Sri Aurobindo 'spirituality explained politics and politics fulfilled itself in spirituality.' " Of further great import is the (unscientific and unproven, to some Western scientists and philosophers) fact of Shri Aurobindo operating in a region that could best be described as higher states of

consciousness. This appears to be beyond the scope and ability of non-Enlightened people to investigate as they lack that mode of perception or observation. This touches upon a very important aspect, the line between this being a statement of fact and it being a proactive immunisation against criticism is very faint. I would imagine that when an alleged enlightened person asserts something like this, it could be that he genuinely cannot deal with questions posed as he just does not have the necessary understanding, his insights fall short and his defence was not only less than from the high intuitive level, but lower than the intellect, from an emotional level where logic is virtually absent. But for a true mystic, it could also be that the audience in fact cannot understand the, to them, "ramblings" of the mystic and that he knows that, hence his refusal to perform the impossible task of teaching those that he "knows" cannot hear. The practical implications of such an alleged superior status of a state of consciousness are that a host of further problems can, and probably will, come to the fore. If it is alleged that something said is beyond the scope and ability of "non-Enlightened" people to understand, then the falsifiability principle of Popper cannot be applied, and utter nonsense propounded cannot be criticised. This leaves the door wide open to arbitrariness, authoritarianism, blind faith, and *sacrificium intellectus*. Here we have the potential of misinterpretation, misuse, excesses, corrupting power and a demise of the critical sieve of the logical intellect. This could be especially damaging to people subjected to subsequent interpretations of originally good philosophies that was, after the departure of the original seer or prophet and when the initial statements or even truths became cast in stone, robbed of the spirit of its truth. This unfortunately is not mere theory as we have ample examples of exactly this in philosophy, religion and politics. This extends to the movement of Shri Aurobindo; when I asked a senior follower why Shri Aurobindo was not better known, he replied in an email: "Perhaps part of the problem is the way he has been presented. There may be a certain arrogance or smugness on the part of some of his students and disciples. I know I myself, when I first expressed an interest, would have been dissuaded had I not had a strong ineradicable feeling within that I must pursue further despite the blockheads who seemed to stand in the way."

Despite the very real danger that a person might be expounding a fallacious 'truth', we still cannot refuse to give a philosopher a hearing. In a clear and intuitively acceptable way, Shri Aurobindo expanded, and at the same time crystallised, the view of the mechanism by which the universe operates. Central to that, says Reddy, is the view that the "Brahman in the universe in the sense of this universe's basal reality is a great discovery which is the authentic motivating force in all our

becoming." Therefore that force is also in us, as we are part of the integrated universe. To Reddy, as an intellectual and steeped as he is in Indian lore, this is a freeing elucidation. I do not know but here I would imagine that Reddy had not internalised the truth of this particular statement before and when the realisation of this truth became his own, he did not discard the intellect but perhaps transcended it. Otherwise, how could he be an intellectual? Sharma states "It is the Divine alone who can know himself in all his aspects and the Supermind is the Divine's own knowledge of himself which is at once his own innate power of self-manifestation. The Supermind is absolute knowledge and power. It is through the Supermind that the Divine manifests itself as this world. It is with the Supermind that the process of self-limitation and self-individualization starts in Brahman."

By explaining the role of man, Shri Aurobindo gives him an entirely new value status. It indicates the greatness of the task at hand, and also the potential of man, it reassures man in that he would hardly have been give such a task if Sachchidananda did not know that he would be able to do what is demanded of him. Reddy expands on this, more in praise of man than anything else, with "What would be the use of man if he were not created to throw a bridge between That which is eternal but unmanifested and that which is manifested, between all the transcendences and splendours of the divine life and all the dark and sorrowful ignorance of the material world? Man is the link between what must be and what is; he is the footbridge thrown across the abyss." Sure, not only be the footbridge, but he should cross it himself. And he can, it has been done and also described. Heidegger's and Whitehead's transcendental inquiries into human experience disclose the spatio-temporal structures that make our experience possible. There is a certain open-endedness, an infinitude about it. It can be used to provide an interpretation of certain special experiences that bring about a unity of our ordinary spatially and temporally heterogeneous experiences in such a way that a wholeness of our existence is illuminated. These experiences can be called holy and our everyday, diverse experiences profane. These are experiences of "That One." A causal account of nature is certainly important to Whitehead's cosmology, and he remarks that in regard to offering explanations of what is at work in process, the most fundamental principle could even be referred to as "the principle of efficient, and final causation". In the state of unity, we cannot isolate Being from Becoming. Moore states "... the world is not made up of things and processes; but that all entities undergo change, and yet remain identical with themselves through all this change." This is very much the thinking of Shri Aurobindo.

For his evolution, man is mainly left to himself for his own evolution. He has to find systems for the mastery over the different situations that he operates in. Some of them are not obvious fields, such as the subtler subconscious. This is reached mainly by "spiritual exercises and forces." Spiritual growth takes place using various techniques; it is enough to say that they are many and ingenious. What is important is that whatever route is chosen, it must work. A consistent clinging to a make-believe world or philosophy that does not deliver is contra productive. It merely delays the inevitable change to a more realistic route. However, even such a detour has its value, as we identify what it is we don't want. That helps us in our search for what we do want.

We operate as best we can in this world of ours. The way we operate is dependent on the underlying philosophy we accept. In considering our worldview we must be prepared to consider the possibility of it being invalid. There just could be a better or more complete worldview to our present one. In fact, our worldview now is the improved and modified model compared with yesterday's. Schlitz says, "My work is striving toward an integral model. Like we find in the writings of Ken Wilber, who was influenced by Sri Aurobindo, the notion is that we must embrace the first-, second-, and third-person perspectives to understand the fullness of consciousness. The first person is my interiority, my subjectivity, that nature of experience that makes me uniquely me, the second person tells me that I am not uniquely me, that I am embedded in a social context that often shapes the things that I think are uniquely me, and the third person is that aspect of experience which is the "it"--the data that we all talk about." And this would certainly not be the end for her. What would take place is further growth, more evolution and a greater degree of consciousness. The spur could be our very dissatisfactions leading to strivings which move us away from the unsatisfactory corporeal to its subtler aspects. That in turn allows us to appreciate the exact tangible we initially did not value. Even the gods we worship are subject to this search for more. Lewis says- "The sole object of genuine worship is a transcendent God.". But Shri Aurobindo would say, no, not only is the transcendent God worthy of worship, so is the immanent God, and all of creation.

The vision of Shri Aurobindo is broad based. It exceeds the universe. Man is one part of a continuum of life that extends not just to the various forms on this planet but to other worlds within this universe as well. And the Puranic author of our account goes still further, for he postulates the existence of parallel universes beyond the outermost reaches of our own.

So, now we have a certain type of framework of our history and the possibilities for our future. Action is up to us. Shri Aurobindo states that the man who dwells in the higher or divine and now hidden hemisphere of his consciousness, having rent the veil, is the true superman and the last product of that progressive self-manifestation of God in world, Spirit out of matter, which is now called the principle of evolution. In this way, Man may himself become the superman, he may become all that he is not yet now; but for that he must exceed himself. It is not by clinging to his present imperfect consciousness that he can take the next step in the evolution. The evolution of the earth nature is not finished but it has brought out from its apparent inconscience the three powers of Mind and Life and Matter already. Shri Aurobindo explains that the material universe, having started from an involution of a self-concealing God in the movement of inconscient Force and the forms of inert Matter, is now on its upward cycle. It is being impelled by the divine impulse within it to the evolution of God through the increasing manifestation of consciousness and conscious power which culminates in a perfect and infinite self-knowledge, self-mastery and self-delight. And we can be part of it. To put it into context, not only is that the potential of human beings, but all of creation can and will reach that ultimate destination. Behind each life type there is a divine idea which determines its form and its limits (limits as it is at that point, not its future realisable potential), and the form circumscribes the potentialities of that life. Therefore the self-fulfilment of the life is contained within certain limits fixed by the nature of the life and the law of its being and action which that nature determines. This evolution, it is thought erroneously, culminates in man as its ultimate high point, but that is not necessarily the case. We cannot take for granted that man will evolve to the spiritual Olympian heights (even though he can), unless he chooses to accept the part and act accordingly. There are alternatives, if we do not put in the necessary evolutionary effort, we can be left behind in some idyllic Eden like backwater, which is still a wonderful spiritual abode, but not nearly the ultimate of our potential. There is always more, and this lesser Eden will soon look like a pot of lentil soup.

As has become clear, the Mind can evolve, and does. For us, the field in which it operates is this earthly life, this physical world with its own processes and motions as factors. This field is restricted; it is below what is higher, and it is more subtle. But bearing in mind that man seems to be by his very nature an animal being with a mental boundary beyond which he cannot pass, his ways of doing must be less than divine. Accepting that Man is not a final product, that he is a transitional

being, both his way of gaining knowledge and this resultant knowledge are imperfect. This knowledge is the basis of his activity, which results in his living and his doing being very imperfect. His knowledge of himself is of the same variety; it traces out the processes of thinking, demarcates the observed constituents of personality. Then men are evaluated by the external and visible, from what they say and do, not from what they are, for that cannot be seen. His discoveries are by analysis or by making a synthesis, fitting together the fragments of things. In this way it gains a form of knowledge, it eventually discovers the phenomenon, but misses the reality; Mind then knows things as objects but knows nothing about things in themselves.

Shri Aurobindo asserts that the evolution of Mind, in this Transcendent, would have us end in a Man-God, crown of the earthly cycles. But Mind is not all; for beyond mind is a greater consciousness; there is a supermind and spirit. As he did from matter to life, from life to mind, so now he must pass from mind to supermind, from man to superman; this is the gulf that he has to bridge, the supreme miracle that he has to perform before he can rest from his struggle and discontent and stand in the radiance of that supreme consciousness, glorified, transmuted, satisfied with his labour. The superman with his yet unborn glory is the aim and goal of the future. Life is infinitely varying, incorporating constantly opposed self-expressions. In all that, the Reality is still one and not a sum of diversities.

He says that the Soul of man wanders in this cycle of Brahman for many lives thinking itself different from the Cause. The progressive revelation of a transcendent Reality seems to be the meaning of the universe. A self-aware existence unfolds itself in the individual. When we recognise that there are in the universe knowable realities beyond the range of the senses, and that in man are presently unknown powers and faculties which determine rather than are determined by the material organs through which they keep in touch with the world of the senses, we are ready for the ascent to the divine Life which is the human journey. We must do the Work of works, which is reaching the infinite; this is man's real business in the world. The conscious existence involved in the form comes, as it evolves, to know itself by intuition and self-experience. As Human consciousness is eternally seeking Sachchidananda, when it becomes itself inwardly, it also passes on to its forms and modes this delight of the Supreme. This becoming of the infinite Bliss-Existence-Consciousness in mind and life and body is the transfiguration intended. The utility of individual existence is for fulfilment of, and for transcendence of life. The universe and the individual are the appearances

into which the Unknowable descends. Conversely, the revelation also takes the form of an ascent, and both the ascent and the revelation are progressive. The world moves from the slumber of material Nature into the varied and disordered rhythm of Life, upward out of Life into Mind where the unit becomes awake to itself and its world. In that awakening the universe gains self-conscious individuality. Mind does this stage of the work to continue evolution, but not to complete it. Mind is of acute and specific but limited intelligence and takes the confusing resources offered by Life and improves, adapts, varies and classifies it, and then hands the reworked reserves over to our inherent divinity, Supermind.

Shri Aurobindo is confident that our world has still to evolve beyond Mind to a higher principle, in which universe and individual become aware of, and possess that which they both are. The disorders of life and mind come to an end when discerning the secret of a more perfect order than the physical. Matter below life and mind contains, but does not possess, in itself the balance between a perfect poise of tranquillity and the action of an immeasurable energy. At present, before attaining this clarity, Mind is in a sleep of an imprisoned consciousness. It is driven by its real self but it cannot yet seize nor share it, it has not yet the awakened joy of its own harmonious energies. Then Life and Mind awaken to the sense of this want in the form of a seeking ignorance and a troubled desire which are the first steps towards self-knowledge. And when they exceed themselves they reach their self-fulfilling. Beyond life and mind we recover a tranquillity based on its divine truth. This is the creation of ineffable bliss of an absolute peace and self-mastery. In that attainment our ignorance realises its full light.

Shri Aurobindo explains that the universe and the individual are necessary to each other in their ascent. The Universe is a diffusion of the divine All in infinite Space and Time, the individual its concentration within limits of Space and Time. The Universe here seeks the divine totality it feels itself to be but cannot entirely realise. To achieve that, it creates in itself a self-conscious concentration of the All through which it can aspire to that infinity. In the conscious individual, God entirely becomes Nature; Nature seeks to become progressively God. It is by means of the universe that the individual is impelled to realise himself, as it is his foundation. The universe comes to the individual as Life out of which he has to disengage some supreme order and harmony. This is after all the real sense of man's progress. He cannot rest permanently until he reaches some highest good. He is the greatest of living beings exactly because he is the most discontented, because he feels most the pressure of limitations. He alone, perhaps, is capable

of being seized by the divine frenzy for a remote ideal. To the Life-Spirit, therefore, the individual in whom its potentialities centre is pre-eminently Man. It is this Man who is supremely capable of incarnating God. This Man is the thinker, the mental person or soul in the mind of the ancient sages. The animal life emerging out of Matter is only the inferior term of his existence. The life of thought, feeling, will, and conscious impulsion is an interlude before reaching his true station. This practical affirmation of something essentially superior to his present self is the basis of the divine life in the human being. Man moves, relying on his mind, and that Mind at last negates God for a Beyond. There is a transcending of Himself, denying the conception and perceiving reality. Here a divine transmutation becomes conceivable. Here, human language fails, but at least we may find in it some code of hints which will help the light of the soul and throw upon the mind some reflection of the indescribable plan.

He asserts that the methodology of this change from the starting point to Life in the relative realm is the ascending through four statuses: physical matter, vitality, mind and spirit. The first is the urge of physical energy, the second that of vitality, where elements of one life are broken up and entered into others, including those of our subtler life-energy, the third status occurs with the emergence of the mental being and the fourth being the development of love, help and unity towards others. Love initially develops because it is required for mutual help in the struggle for survival, for both the individual and the species. There develops a desire for others, for a wife, a child, a friend a helper. It can grow in quality to it being the finest which again is the Absolute, Brahman. Here the soul grows, it has an apparent form and a true form. The apparent or surface form is the desire-soul, whereas the true form is the psychic being. They are present on two levels, the surface and on the subliminal. The surface action of the desire-soul is associated with ignorance and the true one with the subliminal psychic entity. Even though both forms are in its basic nature the same, it seems that between the two forms there is a veil, and behind the veil, a witness showing the way. That witness is the secret soul, the inner voice of the mystic.

In life, we observe the temporality of the individual, but Shri Aurobindo maintains that the individual is eternal. Man represents an Omnipresent Reality, that is immanent in each individual. In his cosmic self-manifestation, after a descent into an apparent material inconscience took place, there is an awakening of the individual out of the Inconscience and an evolution of his being into the spiritual and supramental consciousness and power of the Reality, into his own universal

and transcendent Self and source of existence. It is on this foundation that we have to base our conception of a truth in our terrestrial being and the possibility of a divine Life in material Nature. There our chief need is to discover the origin and nature of the Ignorance which we see emerging out of the inconscience of matter or disclosing itself within a body of matter and the nature of the Knowledge that has to replace it, to understand too the process of Nature's self-unfolding and the soul's recovery to its origin which is Brahman. This is the key to our divine unfolding.

Shri Aurobindo postulates an integral theory of knowledge to explain this aim of life of the evolution to return to the source, which is the reason for our existence. There are four main theories of existence. They are the supracosmic, the cosmic and terrestrial, the supraterrrestrial, and the integral.

The supracosmic contends that the supreme reality has meaning and it alone is entirely real whereas human existence has no real meaning. The only true truth is the supracosmic or the Absolute. If this were true, then our only real option is to get away from all living, whether terrestrial or celestial, as soon as our inner evolution makes that possible. But from any viewpoint of real knowledge, all this self-delusion is insane.

The cosmic-terrestrial view is the exact opposite of the supracosmic, and it considers cosmic existence as real, in fact, accepts it as the only reality. However, it normally only looks at life in the material universe. God, if God exists, is an eternal Becoming; or if God does not exist, then Nature is a perennial becoming.

The supraterrrestrial view admits the reality of the material cosmos and it accepts the temporary duration of earth and human life as the first fact we have to start from; but it adds to it a perception of other worlds or planes of existence which have an eternal or at least a more permanent duration; it perceives behind the mortality of the bodily life of man the immortality of the soul within him. A belief in the immortality, the eternal persistence of the individual human spirit apart from the body is the keyword of this conception of life. That of itself necessitates its other belief namely in planes of existence higher than the material or terrestrial, since for a disembodied spirit there can be no abiding place in a world whose every operation depends upon some play of force, whether spiritual, mental, vital or material, in and with the forms of Matter. There arises from this view of things the idea that the true home of man is beyond and that the earth-life is in some way or

other only an episode of his immortality.

There always are three essential characteristics in all these varying statements of the common principle: first, the belief in the individual immortality of the human spirit; secondly, as a necessary consequence, the idea of its sojourn on earth as a temporary passage or a departure from its highest eternal nature and of a heaven beyond as its proper habitation; thirdly, an emphasis on the development of the ethical and spiritual being as the means of ascension and therefore the one proper business of life in this world of Matter. Mind and life itself cannot grow into their fullness except by the opening up of the larger and greater consciousness to which mind only approaches. Such a larger and greater consciousness is the spiritual, for the spiritual consciousness is not only higher than the rest but more embracing. Universal as well as transcendent, it can take up mind and life into its light and give them the true and utmost realisation of all for which they are seeking, for it has a greater instrumentality of knowledge and intensity of love and joy and beauty. These are the things for which our mind, life and body are seeking. In this integration the supracosmic Reality stands as the supreme Truth of being; to realise it is the highest reach of our consciousness. But it is this highest Reality which is also the cosmic consciousness. A perfect self-expression of the spirit is the object of our terrestrial existence. The individual separating himself from the All to reach the Highest, loses himself in the supreme heights; including in himself the cosmic consciousness, he recovers his wholeness of self and still keeps his supreme gain of transcendence; he fulfils it and himself in the cosmic completeness. In his self-integration the soul of the individual must awake to universality and to transcendence. The supraterrrestrial existence is also then a truth of being. Earth-life is the scene of the evolutionary unfolding of the being which moves towards the revelation of a supreme spiritual light and power and joy and oneness, but includes in it also the manifold diversity of the self-achieving spirit. There is an all-seeing purpose in the terrestrial creation. It is true that the soul can ascend into worlds of a greater consciousness beyond the earth, but it is also true that the power of these worlds, the power of a greater consciousness has to develop itself here. All the higher powers of Consciousness exist because they are powers of the Supreme Reality. Our terrestrial being also has the same truth. Its present appearance is a veiled and partial figure, we have to bring a wider meaning into our human life and manifest in it the much more that we secretly are. Our mortality is only justified in the light of our immortality.

Shri Aurobindo is of the opinion that an integration of this kind would not be

possible if a spiritual evolution were not the sense of our birth and terrestrial existence; the evolution of mind, life and spirit in Matter is the sign that this integration, this completed manifestation of a secret self-contained in it is its significance. A complete involution of all that the Spirit is and its evolutionary self-unfolding are the double terms of our material existence. There is a possibility of self-expression by an always unveiled luminous development of the being, a possibility also of various expressions in perfect types fixed and complete in their own nature: that is the principle of becoming in the higher worlds; they are typical and not evolutionary in their life principle; they exist each in its own perfection, but within the limits of a stationary world-formula. But there is also a possibility of self-expression by self-finding, a deployment which takes the form and goes through the progression of a self-veiling and an adventure of self-recovery: that is the principle of becoming in this universe of which an involution of consciousness and concealment of the spirit in Matter is the first appearance. An involution of spirit in the Inconscience is the beginning; an evolution in the Ignorance with its play of the possibilities of a partial developing knowledge is the middle, and the cause of the anomalies of our present nature, -our imperfection is the sign of a transitional state, a growth not yet completed. The purpose of this earth life then is a progressive manifestation of its soul to the revelation of Being in a perfect Becoming.

Evolution is the methodology used for the task of returning to the Self. Evolution gains entry to spiritual consciousness and in the process it must develop forms, advance consciousness, and it must facilitate integration. Ignorance must be replaced by the action of knowledge and true consciousness. Involution is the basis for evolution as it has in itself the necessary components to develop. The interaction between what exists and that which exists, creates new and unique forms and possibilities. But it is the original principle of existence which in the end brings about the required complete transformation

Humanity is involved with its process of ascent and integration. As far as consciousness is concerned, for Shri Aurobindo it is present, whether latent or active, in matter life, mind, supermind. Matter is asleep, but active in it is a very alive and awake invisible existence. The plant is awake in its own placid way, animal beings are awake in their senses and mind. Man too is aware in a range or spectrum which depends on his state of consciousness. What is exhibited is his imagination, intelligence, creative ability, and his spirit which is nearly ready and is preparing for the next part of the journey on the evolutionary road. He has already

acquainted himself with his physical-mental person, his vital person and his mental thinking ability. It is here where his intelligence develops to the point where it becomes aware of the subliminal plane and influences. Further development at this level produces the sage. The seer and mystic develop from functioning at higher and invisible levels, when the spiritual person comes to the fore. These beings do not lose what they had gained on their evolutionary road; they add to that what they now have. They form the vanguard for the evolution of consciousness of the human race

Shri Aurobindo contends that humanity is subjected to a "Sevenfold Ignorance" which man has to overcome with the "Sevenfold Knowledge". The purpose thereof is a conscious spiritual evolution transforming the ignorant mental life into higher states of consciousness, gaining the divine life of the truth-conscious spirit. Ignorance is not evil or malicious; it is the absence of true unlimited knowledge. This process again is a facet of evolution. This requires an intense effort, and the beneficial results affect all aspects of a human, physical, vital, mental and contribute to the expansion of the force of consciousness.

The sevenfold ignorance and its antithesis are:

1. The original ignorance, where we do not know the truth of the Absolute as source of the spirit and the creation of the universe whereas in knowledge we become aware of that reality
2. The cosmic ignorance, which implies that we do not know the true spirit or Being and thus we cannot enable the Being to enter the Becoming of life. Knowledge gives comprehension of the spaceless, timeless Being and enables that to enter the Becoming of life.
3. The egotistic ignorance leaves us unaware of our Oneness with the universe and we consider us as separate there from. Knowledge then affirms our universal self, and the holistic unity of all things.
4. The temporal ignorance implies that we do not know our timeless psychic and soul being, where knowledge gives us an immortal perspective.
5. The psychological ignorance renders us oblivious of our internal realities, the superconscious, the subconscious, the intraconscious, and the circumconscious. Knowledge opens that area to our awareness.
6. The constitutional ignorance causes an unawareness of our physical, vital and mental parts and its relationship to higher consciousness, which is corrected by knowledge
7. The practical ignorance disallows us to use our thought, will and activities in expressing the Divine spiritual reality, correction of which brings about a

true harmony with the Divine.

All these changes take time, evolution takes time. In the evolutionary process both the body (and the consequent consciousness), as well as the individual soul in the body evolves. For this to take place over time, and if all is not achieved in one incarnation, then rebirth has to take place for the necessary progressive experience. This rebirth occurs wherever there is a suitable venue for optimum learning. This is not restricted to earth, it could also take place on other worlds or planes. Whatever the conditions and circumstances of lives on other worlds might be, and however interesting it is, what is important is that this is an ongoing process affecting the development of the immortal soul.

The immortal soul that survives after death changes in a sense. The "I" we know must consent to change to enable it to become greater, better, more luminous in knowledge, more moulded in the image of the eternal inner beauty, and more progressive towards the divinity of the secret imperishable unborn and eternal Spirit. The psychic entity within is the Person that we are; but the "I" we know in this life is only one step of the many leading to a higher degree of consciousness and being. It is this inner Person that was before life and that survives death. We might desire survival of what is familiar, that is our mind, our life and even our body but that is possible only if the mind, life or body could assume something of the immortality and divinity of the indwelling Spirit. This could be possible if our mental being became one with the inner mind and inner mental Purusha and simultaneously be so plastic and open to the progressive action of the Infinite that the soul no longer needs to dissolve the old form of mind and create a new one in order to progress. The same applies to the vital being when the wall between the inner self and the outer man have broken down and the permanent mental and vital being from within, the mental and vital representatives of the immortal psychic entity, would govern life. Our mind-nature and our life-nature could then be a continuous progressive expression of the soul and not a nexus of successive formations preserved only in their essence. Our mental personality and life-personality would then subsist without dissolution from birth to birth; they would be in this sense immortal, persistently surviving, continuous in their sense of identity. This would be the victory of soul, mind and life over the Inconscience and the limitations of material Nature. However, such a survival could only persist in the subtle body; the being would still have to discard its physical form, pass to other worlds and in its return put on a new body. The awakened mental and vital Purusha, preserving the mind-sheath and the life-sheath of the subtle body which

are usually discarded, would return with them into a new birth and keep a vivid and sustained sense of a permanent being of mind and life constituted by the past and continuing into the present and future. The material body however could not be preserved even by this change. This consummation of a triple immortality might be the summit of rebirth but the true immortality would still be the eternity of the Spirit.

For Shri Aurobindo, in this evolutionary progression the movement from Matter further is towards higher consciousness. This process produces changes, both in outward form and in the values of consciousness. For humans, because of the already completed evolutionary work, the consciousness change is primary. This is in preparation for the emergence of a supramental level in the future. What probably will happen is that a few groundbreaking souls will forge ahead, preparing the way for the rest of humanity. Whatever form develops, be it human, as we know it or something else, is immaterial. What is important is that the true reality of consciousness evolves.

This evolution of the spiritual man, according to Shri Aurobindo, again has many facets. Initially there were tentative steps of an emerging spirit. It was evident in ordinary actions of humanity. It is however not an activity of the mind. With time and experience and in an inner stillness the human being perceives this element of spirit. It knows this to be a new dimension, but it might not know that this is only partial and temporary. The experience continues as a growth of an intrinsic self-existent consciousness. Initially it is just there, and it apparently does not affect activity, it is merely some pleasant new phenomena that are observed. But as it develops, it becomes more, and the human experiences higher states of consciousness. This transforms both the human and his actions. The reality of this new dimension is an inner awakening, completely different to the known mind, life and body. It is different from productions or realities of the mind. Its effects are an evolution of both the outer personality and the inner being. This change was long in coming due to the nature of the journey. Up till now, the apparent, the visible, has been nature's concern. Following development took place only when the necessary apparatus was in place and ready. Because of the temptations of a lower existence, to succeed in this evolution a degree of austerity and discipline was required. This leads to the spiritual life, the constant experience of the spiritual reality.

The instruments for spiritual evolution are many and varied. Shri Aurobindo

mentions religion, occultism, spiritual thought and an inner realisation. These elements are not separate from or unconnected to each other. Rudiments of one are found in the others. This is so because they represent somewhat of aspects of us, in our entirety. According to Shri Aurobindo, the field of occultism deals with our inner workings. Religion represents the hidden powers and spirit of the world. Spiritual thought is thinking by the mind with the higher as its object of activity. Inner realisation is the becoming and establishing of the direct experience of the higher, in the field of higher states of consciousness. This evolution of awakening to the spiritual world is bound to take place, it is tentative at first but later dominant and unstoppable.

The process of religion experienced extremes. Often initially the practice and theory is unfinished, flawed and produces intolerance and vicious dogmatism. Claims of Divine authority are simply not true. All is done on faith, without there being either clarity as to what is believed, or valid grounds for such belief. But religion has a purpose, and that is to prepare a person for the spiritual consciousness which will evolve. For that reason religion is valuable, and should rather be altered to eliminate what is wrong than be discarded. The stages of religion runs parallel to the stages of development of humanity, from primitive levels to that of a high spiritual discipline.

Occultism endeavors the achievement of control over matter, and contact with what is, to us, beyond. The field of interest is other worlds, other beings and possession of mysterious knowledge. Generally it is not well developed and was largely replaced by science. It is important as it can make us aware of the possibility of the discovery of hidden realities and capabilities.

Spiritual thought is an integration of the thinking mind and the higher regions. It is not the complete solution as the spiritual regions is beyond the ambit of the mind, but the discipline of clear thinking helps in attaining a reasoned idea of reality and the field that is being examined. It helps in controlling the mind and in determining what is significant, and is the basis of analytical rational philosophy. This faculty builds a connection between the two regions, that of thought and that of intuition.

The facet of the spiritual experience is important in that from here, even if the mind or past valid knowledge differs from this aspect, there is confidence that the reality of this field is authentic. It is often people that had spiritual experiences

that become spiritual leaders. A superior spiritual life has this as a starting point. Transformation on the subtle level of the spirit causes major and positive changes in life.

Shri Aurobindo identifies three transformations that take place following the development of the spiritual faculty of man. The first transformation is that of an surfacing of the psychic being. This enables us to contact the divine effortlessly. We obtain spiritual guidance and we partake of the spiritual world. The second transformation is the interaction through the descent from and ascent to the endless and timeless spiritual consciousness above. This leads to higher states of consciousness which are followed by the third, supramental transformation.

These transformations lead the ascent towards supermind. A subtle and hidden indiscernible consciousness develops and this removes the barricade between the inner and outer realities of a person. From that follows the psychic and spiritual transformations which prepare the being for the development of the further levels of consciousness namely higher, illumined, intuitive, and overmind. These are complex and interrelated higher states of consciousness. They are classed together as supramental, and are not completely described or understood. The more we experience higher states of consciousness, the better can we understand the nature of this domain.

Shri Aurobindo says that Supermind is the highest of these states and cannot be adequately conceptualised as we do not have experience or knowledge that can relate to that reality. This is beyond duality and has its being in the field of paradox. The lower states of consciousness must be transcended, and there should be an movement from above to us before we can have some form of true understanding of this state. We can, by using our intelligence, fathom things. This however is not sufficient to deal with Supermind. For that, from our side we should develop inwardly, and gain knowledge of our self and the way we truly operate on a subtle level. This firstly gives us greater control of our development and by developing the intuition, we can perceive deeper and further than with the mind. In this way we broaden the nature of our intelligence by adding the factor of intuition to it. Shri Aurobindo postulates three conditions for the opening and surrendering to Supernature. This is important as it is a prerequisite to the supramental transformation. Both aspects of our being, our nature-soul or natural powers and our spiritual being must will a surrender. Also, it is necessary for the whole being to have advanced far enough in its higher development to enable

further growth. Then it must consciously wish to surrender to this higher truth. This can facilitate the activity on the higher levels. Now it prepares for the third condition to be met. As the surface consciousness is not sufficient for the establishment of the supreme, the person must operate from the psychic level, his charkas must be open, and he must have an awareness of the higher light of bliss. Man cannot control the descent of the supreme, it is not within his control. He can aid this process by making the necessary preparations, and by having the desire for the descent, then he has done what he was capable of doing. The descent will take place in its own way, whether palpable or subtle. A greater awareness is created and an understanding of higher, illumined, intuitive and overmind follows. With higher mind, clear thinking, a sense of unity and a broad vision is experienced. Illumined mind is a field of light and ecstasy, force and power. It operates with inner sight. The intuitive mind supplied the thought and vision of the previous states. Here consciousness can perceive the depth of reality of what is, what exists.

Shri Aurobindo contends that the overmind change is the final consummating movement of the dynamic spiritual transformation; it is the highest possible status-dynamis of the Spirit in the spiritual-mind plane. It takes up all that is in the three steps below it and raises their characteristic workings to their highest and largest power, adding to them a universal wideness of consciousness and force, a harmonious concert of knowledge, a more manifold delight of being. Certain aspects arising from its own characteristic status and power prevents it from being the final possibility of the spiritual evolution. It is a power, though the highest power, of the lower hemisphere; although its basis is a cosmic unity, its action is an action of division and interaction, an action taking its stand on the play of the multiplicity. Operating on the level of the overmind requires a human being to live in and through the inner being, with the ego being diminished to vanishing point. An integrated realisation of the supreme is necessary. The individual must have sufficiently realised his universality, he must have developed his individual mind in the boundlessness of a cosmic mentality, enlarged his individual life into the immediate sense and direct experience of the dynamic motion of the universal life, opened up the communications of his body with the forces of universal Nature, before he can be capable of a change which transcends the present cosmic formulation and lifts him beyond the lower hemisphere of universality into a consciousness belonging to its spiritual upper hemisphere. Besides he must have already become aware of what is now to him superconscient; he must be already a being conscious of the higher spiritual Light,

Power, Knowledge, Ananda, penetrated by its descending influences, new-made by a spiritual change. This whole evolutionary movement is complex beyond description, as all the factors in the universe play a role therein. Powers develop as they will, with overlapping developing and undeveloped states. To secure a solid grounding for the different states, integration of what has been achieved takes place. This all results in a person being able to live in more than one state of consciousness at a time.

Shri Aurobindo affirms that from the point of view of a human being, he will develop further to the status of the gnostic being. Development towards this gnostic state is measured and sure. No great haste is needed, as it requires a continuation of evolution resulting in a great diversity. It will be the goal of the spiritual life, and here the experience of the divine is perpetual. Action is from the divine; life is in total harmony with all of existence. Evolution continues but now as a divine being, as the gnostic being is based on a divine identity. In effect, the infinite universal spirit now guides his being. The individual would be a true reflection of the Supreme One. In his cosmic nature, he will have the awareness of all forces, and his actions will be the play of Lila and of Ananda. Activity in the world will reflect knowledge, power and harmony. His evolution will allow him to know and uncover ever more, his every desire will be fulfilled spontaneously. In life, the vibrations of pain can and will be changed to Ananda. Here the reality of the gnostic being leads to a state of bliss.

In the final chapter of "The Life Divine" Shri Aurobindo outlines the different aspects of life in perfection. He says that our endeavour has been to discover what is the reality and significance of our existence as conscious beings in the material universe and in what direction and how far that significance once discovered leads us, to what human or divine future. In the process of evolution, life and consciousness played the dominant role. The striving was towards perfection. The growth towards divine life is an inward one. This results in an automatic transformation of the outward apparent reality. When individuals reach the level of gnostic beings, they can form harmonious groups of a perfect nature. Even if it encounters and deals with ignorance, it will not be affected adversely by it, but will influence that positively.

Shri Aurobindo asserts that the whole cycle was for Brahman to experience Ananda. The result is that the purpose of creation is the expansion of happiness, for all that is created, including man. That was the spur that started the whole

cycle of relativity and creation. If we now don't succeed in knowing and enjoying bliss, it does not bode well for the rest of the trip and the final outcome. So, about our journey, we as humans are evolving. We have free choice, we are imperfect and we are bound to err to a greater or lesser degree as we live and as we choose. As a result, we often appear strange or weird in our conduct in many ways. It is as if we are not comfortable with ourselves, we do not trust our instincts. Yet, those instincts that advise and urge us to live a joyful life, we could very well succumb to. It is in precisely that direction that our ride is heading. So, why not accept our humanity, more, why not indulge in life! We are here in any case, and if that route is wrong, we can repent at leisure in some type of afterlife, but at least we have something worthwhile to repent. Or perhaps, let us play it safe and renounce, and then, with Joshua Heschel think: "Man is a creature of magnificent splendor and pompous aridity." Then, by grasping firmly and simultaneously both ends of the paradox we can experience the fundamental law of existence enunciated in the Isha Upanishad: "All this [the universe] is for habitation. Having renounced, enjoy!"

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

Shri Aurobindo was a scholar, politician, writer and mystic. He spent about forty dedicated years to spiritual development and the teaching of spiritual knowledge. He had a broad subjective vision, which appears authentic, and his vision gave a rare insight into what is possible in the field of consciousness. He wrote that he had the rare privilege of experiencing higher states of consciousness, which ability he developed using yogic techniques. He said that this ability is innate in man and only awaits his necessary intention to develop it, and the required effort to do so. As a mystic, he experienced the realities he wrote about. In his writing, he quoted his own experiences as being similar to those written of in the Vedas, the Upanishads and other literature. There are differences too, depending on whose expressed views on the holy books are considered. His writing in "The Life Divine" was clear and comprehensible compared with some of these books. His philosophy is essentially non-denominational. What he wrote about is a pure form of Godhead, which is both transcendent and immanent.

From his spiritual experiences came the insight of the existence of a hierarchy of the different stages of being. This Being is universal, it is everywhere, in and beyond space and time, and more profound and subtler than we can ever conceive of and it is comprised of the origin which is Brahman or "That One", Sat, Chit, Ananda (which latter three forms the trinity Sachchidananda), Supermind, Overmind, Intuitive Mind, Illumined Mind, Higher Mind, Mind, Life, and Matter. This gives four divisions; firstly, the origin which is "That One", secondly, the Sachchidananda aspect of "That One", thirdly, the range of higher states of consciousness which covers the states from higher mind up to Supermind, and lastly material creation which is Mind, Life and Matter. The process whereby everything came into being is contained in a cycle of involution and evolution. Involution is that leg of the cycle where the development of existence takes place due to a downward movement, starting with "That One", descending through all the stages mentioned above, to eventually becoming Matter. The evolution stage is the return leg using the reverse route back to the origin. The reason for creation, and hence involution and evolution is for "That One" to experience itself, to have partaken of ananda or joy.

Of interest to humans, evolution is a process they are engaged in and the first stage thereof is the mere existence of Matter. Matter is the lowest point of involution and hence the starting point of evolution. It appears totally unconscious but is in fact inconscient. Shri Aurobindo calls Matter "Magic", because of its potential. This potential contains the Godhead and all the other stages of involution in seed form. It is this potential that elevates it from mere unconsciousness to it being inconscient. The difference lies in a state of being: inconscience is the Supreme's self-involved, self-oblivious consciousness-force that is at the basis of the material world. This means that the Absolute, being at the basis of everything that is and that is not, is also present in matter, but very deeply hidden. The implication thereof is that in Matter is embedded all the potential of "That One" and consequently also the potential to return to "That One".

This return journey is initiated when Matter stirs, when the inconscient or essence of Matter moves towards the next phase, Life. Here life is without emotion and reasoning, initially it just is. Its activities in and responses to the environment are mechanical. There are many forms of life, and not all terrestrial. Each individual life is in a different form, each suited to the environment it finds itself in, being a function of its underlying causative creative intelligence. (Slightly different norms

and rules apply to other types of universa, such as "intangible" mental ones, but for now we deal with our own universe only.)

From this point, the next step is Mind. Here the consciousness of the now more complex individual develops further, to the point where it has the ability to think and to reason. With time, practice and experience the individual diversifies his thinking in both a horizontal and a vertical direction. Horizontal is in the sense that it looks at things on the logical and reasoning level ever more finely, and vertical in that it delves into the subtler regions, where the spiritual facet of being is dominant. Here it encounters and experiences different realities which it evaluates subjectively, as being either positive or negative, pleasure or pain, good or bad. The reality of that evaluation is that it takes place on a continuum. All that exists on a continuum, and its eventual subjective value is determined by its position on the continuum relative to other points or states.

After Mind the development taking place is towards higher states of consciousness which is beyond intellectual conception. Here, mental speculation or attempted verbalisation is inadequate. Without the necessary tools, - higher states of consciousness - conceptualisation of such states are partial and hence not correct. It is beyond the capabilities of the mind to grasp. This becomes more comprehensible if we realise that the reality in waking consciousness differs, not only from person to person, but also from time to time in the same person. Suffice to say that it is a field very far removed from the "normal" type of perception we encounter in ordinary life. To succeed in developing this type of consciousness is difficult, in that we are taxed to the extreme. We have to use the mind to transcend the mind. We have to move from one type of consciousness to a higher more subtle level. Here the range of experience available supplies an evolving soul with what is required for being and life anywhere else. For Shri Aurobindo, the soul is that psychic part of our Being that is our essence, that aspect that is immortal and which is in reality the divine spark that survives and thrives, even on earth. This is the true and real "I". This is what reincarnates and evolves. And once having made it here, a soul is endowed with the best available skills, resilience and qualities. "Anywhere else", as Shri Aurobindo makes it clear, includes other universes. This universe is just one of many, and of diverse kinds.

Viewed against the above background, we realise that whatever our conceptions are, they are limited and restricted, and inadequate for knowing anything of the greater unseen reality. The fact is that concepts are pragmatically useful, but

restricted. A concept is a very personal creation; it is unique to any particular person at any particular point in space and time. In creating a concept, a reality is taken by the mind, and it is changed, it is "relieved" of its ultimate all-inclusive state of Being, placed on a parallel track and dressed in a more manageable (for the intellect) form where the intellect, which cannot handle the Ultimate, can work with it. Of course, the concept is in its turn a creation with its own absolute Being, but it is not the Being of the original object, and any discussion or handling of this concept results in the creation of a new range of concepts, which new concepts are yet one further step removed from the original Absolute and subsequent relative Being we are dealing with. Shri Aurobindo greatly respects the mind for its abilities and for what it can do, but because of the inadequacy of the mind in dealing with deeper realities, he is very critical about the central and commanding position that the intellect occupies in life and living.

The communication that Shri Aurobindo has with his readers is somewhat complex, in that he insists on the absolute validity of the reality of being beyond that of the normal everyday life. He wants to convey the importance and the truths that he perceived in this beyondness field, with only the language of this relative world at his disposal. Consequently, the task is difficult, the field that he deals with is ill understood as understanding thereof depends on the possession of an unusual state of consciousness. So, it could well be that we do not fully understand Shri Aurobindo and that his legacy is only a tantalising portrayal of what is and what could be, leaving the homework for finding the hidden deeper reality behind that to us.

Regardless, today we are in need of a holistic philosophy to establish a better future. Our times demand a radical type of knowledge; the trend of "progress" must be raised to a higher dimension, to where a harmony of cosmic proportions underlies thought and life. These thoughts are available now, of interest is the fact that three holistic philosophers - all contemporaries - lived and wrote powerful messages dealing with exactly this theme; A N Whitehead (1861-1947), J C Smuts (1870-1950) and Shri Aurobindo (1879-1950). Coincidentally, all three studied at Cambridge University. Their thinking, internalised and lived, could well create an earth that will reveal the true reality and nature of what is now homo sapiens, moving him/her onwards towards the heights of Self.

Many alternative solutions to the problems of the future of humanity are offered, some are in place, others remain theory. The various alternatives can be roughly

classed in the following categories: those with a strong emotional (feeling) underpinning, those with an intellectual foundation (logical), and those with a supra-intellectual base (intuitive). In practice, the emotional category contains mainly the various religions where the faculty higher than feeling namely logic does not fit in. Here logic, if used at all, is mainly to justify a feeling base that does not withstand radical scrutiny. The excesses in the history of religion do not necessarily inspire confidence in that route. The next category, the regime of logic, represents the intellectual style where rules and regulations are in charge. Here feeling has been left behind and the higher intuition is as yet unknown, resulting in an inflexible and heartless administration in the no-man's-land in between. For the common good, sensible management of life is essential, but the quality and type of bureaucracy engendered by pure logic should be replaced with something higher. The astute alternative is a community life of a higher order, where intuition and truth are the guiding factors, resulting in a consequent harmonious society. At present, this is only found in small evolved, homogenous and close-knit groupings such as rare families and rarer small communities. For this type community to develop, the group as a whole must evolve. It then becomes a team with the necessary skills and knowledge for this field of higher living. The factor that must develop here is not more of the intellect, that is only a (very necessary) prerequisite, but higher states of consciousness, exactly what Shri Aurobindo teaches. This is not a new religion, he is on record stating that he did not want to start a new religion, as he knew that such an organisation would suffer the fate of all other religions in becoming formalised and dogmatised, losing the soul and essence of the spirit of what it really was all about.

The subject of consciousness is of primary importance to Shri Aurobindo. Consciousness, according to Shri Aurobindo, is a function of something; it cannot exist independent of some underlying reality. I read this to assert that consciousness is analogous to the shadows on the wall of Plato's cave. This implies that consciousness, like the shadows, represents the original object which gave rise to the shadows. The shadows constitute a secondary reality; some thing else is primary. And even then the original objects are not the true reality, they in turn are shadows of something more real. There is a long journey of stages of discovery and growth ahead from the reality of the images to greater reality right up to the point where ultimate reality in its sun-like clarity is experienced. This is explained in his cosmology, where we find that in the beginning was Brahman which spawned Sachchidananda (sat, chit, ananda). These components are all one, yet also separate. Sat is being, and chit - consciousness-force - is an agent

for creation. It is not too farfetched to imagine that sat depends on chit for its consciousness component, and chit on sat for its beingness. Without the one, the other would not be. (Ananda is left out now, as it is not germane to the argument.) Thus, the original consciousness, however complex it might be, has its foundation on being, which is something other than itself; it is a factor of Brahman. Following from that, we can reasonably expect that in the involution phase "lesser" factors or aspects of creation, all being based on Brahman and all existing because of Brahman, the consciousness that is present in it or them is also based on either Brahman or on the part of creation that it (Brahman) is the consciousness of. Therefore, where being is, there is consciousness. If we accept that, then consciousness is simply a phenomenon of some type or class of being indicating what the nature is of such underlying reality. It is immaterial what type or class of being we address, be it human or a more exotic form (to us) such as a unicorn (we in turn are exceedingly exotic and strange to unicorns). If we talk of it (something), we have then just created it, and being created, it has being. Even though we will never know exactly what the totality of the elements of that being is unless we become omniscient, the type of consciousness that it displays fully reflects its underlying reality, the beingness of the object. If we are serious in understanding reality, then the implications of the above are that the subjects of study, consciousness and pure consciousness (and pure consciousness events (PCE) too, but they are arguably 'shadows' of consciousness) not being primary, should be replaced by the primary being itself as a subject of investigation and discussion. That is the direction to true reality, to the Absolute. This would place crispness into the ongoing discussion of the whole field of PCE; also, the entrance level to the field would simultaneously be raised considerably to that of mystics (persons that have had mystic experiences), bringing legitimacy to their presence in the forum. This is because where the constructivists, conceptualists and theorists leave off, that is where the real issues begin.

Following from the previous paragraph, which is partly about communication of consciousness, the subsequent comments could be considered. To understand communication on the level at which we are on earth, as well as its shortcomings, we should examine the ideal, that of communication in the spirit world. The nature of communication in the spirit world is by means of telepathy. It is a considerate type of telepathy where an individual would see or hear or intuit - not the right words, but used for explanation - what the other individual wishes to put across. The communication would be complete in that every finest part and beyond of what is being communicated, would be available and transmitted completely. This

communication would be unaffected by space or time. This perfection of communication is due to the nature of the spirit world. That region is an unpolluted aspect of Sachchidananda, open to infinity and truth, in a state of unity with the Absolute and its two inseparable poles of the self-unfolding; the One and the many. The only possible mode of operating there is on this basis of the Absolute essence, of truth. Here, the spirits communicate, they need to attain nothing, their mode of being is one of bliss and playfulness, it plays with forms of knowledge and forms of conscious power, it is ever tranquil and unaffected by the possibility of mental error and the inappropriate methodology and lack of verity of our human striving will, as it cannot and does not depart from truth and oneness, it never falls from the inherent light and the natural harmony of its divine existence. In contrast, the very process of evolution that humanity went through - and which in fact, is still in progress - is steeped in the nature of duality and separation, and that implies not only separation from another person to whom information is given, but also from the object which is the subject of discussion. Here object would cover all that can be considered and that can be spoken about. All this has a reality; in whatever class (real, animal, fictitious, mystic, matter, spirit, whatever) it can be grouped. Here communication is about the object, it is not clear or precise, but it is generally round about the matter under consideration. It does not give/talk/present It; it talks about It, using anthropomorphic symbols of diverse kinds - most popular being visual and auditory - but without ever touching It. It is a self-deluding logic which affirms that the actual reality of an object or a subject can be conveyed or transmitted using the above tools. The only way that can be achieved is by going to the essence of the other (object, subject and person) with one's own essence, and here we are referring to consciousness, and to meld therewith (the other), and with the very least of intentionality, to desire that transfer of knowledge to take place. That then happens, that is true communication. The process is very much more radical than the pragmatic but inefficient and ineffective methodology now in use, and it is also, in every aspect, totally complete.

He wrote holistically. Every chapter deals with a different facet of his philosophy, yet as we read, we realise that not only every chapter but also every paragraph seems to contain the total knowledge of the book in seed form. It follows that his views and thinking are totally integrated and disciplined. The type of understanding that the book demands cannot be obtained with intellectual and purely logical means; one could argue that a developed intuitive faculty is a prerequisite for understanding his work and thinking. A lot of the realities and

truths he writes about are paradoxical. As we have been trained in the relative world of our earth, with the laws applicable here, some of what he says is just not acceptable nor comprehensible to the mind, or to society. The questionable laws and realities I refer to are the acceptance of the following: the ultimate dualistic nature of the universe, the separation of the one and the other, the primacy of unidirectionality of time, the reality and emptiness of space, the separation of Matter and Spirit, the reality of appearances (including Death), the error of suffering and evil, the fact that knowledge is anthropomorphic, what you see (and hear and taste and smell and feel) is what you have, and also the fact that knowledge is, in the intellectual world, sanctioned by the authority of Science.

In studying Shri Aurobindo, it became clear that he had an intense desire for humanity to know and experience its own infinite reality; he wanted to provide that knowledge which is of a practical and lasting value for the evolution of mankind. He foresaw that the point in the history of mankind has been reached with Man ascending to Divinity (and of Divinity descending into Man). He persuasively presented his reasons for such a viewpoint. He believed sincerely that man has the ability to evolve to the nearly unbelievable state of a divine life in a human body here on earth. However, despite his visions of an enlightened humanity, he has achieved little to date. He is virtually unknown by the scholarly community. Few people follow his teachings. Some small groups live according his ideas and ideals, but he has received very little press. This state of affairs could have a lot to do with the nature of his work. He did not write in a popular way, and his material is a bit difficult to understand. Even so, I believe he has a great deal to offer humanity.

Contents of The Integral Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo: A Commemorative Symposium.

Haridas Chaudhuri and Frederic Spiegelberg

CONTENTS PREFACE BY THE EDITORS	11
< http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672 &keywords=chaudhuri&WebLogicSession=QA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrQdLCugg8D8F7 -1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600670>	
PART ONE: PHILOSOPHY	
1. HARIDAS CHAUDHURI: The Integral Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo	
17 < http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672	

&keywords=chaudhuri&WebLogicSession=QA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0lizfrQdLCugg8D8F7l-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600676>

2. SATISCHANDRA CHATTERJEE: Mind and Supermind in Sri Aurobindo's	
--	--

Integralism

35

<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672>

&keywords=chaudhuri&WebLogicSession=QA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0lizfrQdLCugg8D8F7l-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600694>

3. FREDERIC SPIEGELBERG: Sri Aurobindo and Existentialism	47
--	----

<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672>

&keywords=chaudhuri&WebLogicSession=QA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0lizfrQdLCugg8D8F7l-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600706>

4. S. K. MAITRA: Sri Aurobindo and Spengler: Comparison between The Integral	
---	--

and The Pluralistic Philosophy of History

60

<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672>

&keywords=chaudhuri&WebLogicSession=QA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0lizfrQdLCugg8D8F7l-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600719>

5. CHARLES A. MOORE: Sri Aurobindo on East and West	81
--	----

<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672>

&keywords=chaudhuri&WebLogicSession=QA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0lizfrQdLCugg8D8F7l-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600740>

6. K. C. VARADACHARI: Sri Aurobindo and the Future of Philosophical Studies	
--	--

11

1 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672>

&keywords=chaudhuri&WebLogicSession=QA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0lizfrQdLCugg8D8F7l-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600770>

7. ERNEST WOOD: The Concept of Integral Unity	
--	--

12

0 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672>

&keywords=chaudhuri&WebLogicSession=QA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0lizfrQdLCugg8D8F7l-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600779>

8. RAYMOND F. PIPER: Cosmic Integration	
--	--

12

4 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672>

&keywords=chaudhuri&WebLogicSession=QA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0lizfrQdLCugg8D8F7l-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600783>

9. R. S. SRIVASTAVA: The Integralist Theory of Evolution	
---	--

13

3 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672>

&keywords=chaudhuri&WebLogicSession=QA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0lizfrQdLCugg8D8F7l-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600792>

10. N. A. NIKAM: The Problem of Creation: Concepts of Mâyâ and Lîlâ	
--	--

14

3 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672>

&keywords=chaudhuri&WebLogicSession=QA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0lizfrQdLCugg8D8F7l-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600802>

11. RUTH REYNA: Integralism: A Philosophie Perennis	
--	--

14

9 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672>

&keywords=chaudhuri&WebLogicSession=QA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0lizfrQdLCugg8D8F7l-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600808>

12. J. N. MOHANTY: Integralism and Modern Philosophical Anthropology	
---	--

5 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672>
&keywords=chaudhuri&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrOdLCugg
8D8F7l-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600814>

PART TWO: EPISTEMOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

13. NINIAN SMART: Integral Knowledge and the Four Theories of Existence

167 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672>
&keywords=chaudhuri&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrOdLCugg
8D8F7l-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600826>

14. H. P. SULLIVAN: The Integration of Knowledge

17

4 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672>
&keywords=chaudhuri&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrOdLCugg
8D8F7l-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600833>

15. INDRA SEN: The Indian Approach to Psychology

18

4 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672>
&keywords=chaudhuri&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrOdLCugg
8D8F7l-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600843>

16. RICHARD P. MARSH: The Organismic Psychology of Andras Angyal in Relation to Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy of Integral Nondualism

19

2 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672>
&keywords=chaudhuri&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrOdLCugg
8D8F7l-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600851>

PART THREE: YOGA AND ETHICS

17. PITIRIM A. SOROKIN: The Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo

205 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672&offset=1>
&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrOdLCugg8D8F7l-
1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600864>

18. RISHABHCHAND: The Philosophical Basis of Integral Yoga

21

3 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672&offset=1>
&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrOdLCugg8D8F7l-
1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600872>

19. HAJIME NAKAMURA: Practice of Selfless Action

22

3 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672&offset=1>
&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrOdLCugg8D8F7l-
1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600882>

20. ANILBARAN ROY: Gîtâ, the World Scripture

23

1 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672&offset=1>
&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrOdLCugg8D8F7l-
1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600890>

21. JAY R. MCCULLOUGH: The Integral Approach in Sri Aurobindo and Jacob

Boehme

23

9 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672&offset=1&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrQdLCugg8D8F7/-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600898>>

PART FOUR: LITERATURE

22. K. D. SETHNA: The Poet of Integralism

257 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672&offset=1&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrQdLCugg8D8F7/-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600916>>

23. ARABINDA BASU : The Integration of Spiritual Experience

27

0 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672&offset=1&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrQdLCugg8D8F7/-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600929>>

24. JUDITH M. TYBERG (JYOTIPRIYA): The Drama of Integral Self-Realization

28

4 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672&offset=1&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrQdLCugg8D8F7/-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600943>>

PART FIVE: MISCELLANEOUS

25. SWAMI SIVANANDA: Sri Aurobindo: The Consummate Expression of the Indian Spirit of Synthesis

297 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672&offset=1&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrQdLCugg8D8F7/-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600956>>

26. T. M. P. MAHADEVAN: The Significance of Sri Aurobindo

29

9 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672&offset=1&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrQdLCugg8D8F7/-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600958>>

27. SISIR KUMAR MITRA: The Nineteenth-Century Upsurge

30

3 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672&offset=1&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrQdLCugg8D8F7/-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600962>>

28. SIDNEY KARTUS: World Unity

31

3 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672&offset=1&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrQdLCugg8D8F7/-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600972>>

29. TARAKNATH DAS: The Political Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo

32

1 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672&offset=1&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrQdLCugg8D8F7/-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600980>>

30. A. B. PURANI: Sri Aurobindo: A Brief LifeSketch

33

2 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672&offset=1&WebLogicSession=OA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrQdLCugg8D8F7/-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24600991>>

NOTES ON THE CONTRIBUTORS	

34

1 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672&offset=1&WebLogicSession=QA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrQdLCugg8D8F7/-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24601000>>

BIBLIOGRAPHY: A Complete List of all the Published Books of Sri Aurobindo in English	
---	--

34

8 <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?action=getPage&docId=24600672&offset=1&WebLogicSession=QA7MjGFszit0R0kOe0eKmg0kkoGT5VGYPJ0IizfrQdLCugg8D8F7/-1464973877569331949/-1407384828/6/10001/10001/443/443/10001/24601007>>

NOTES ON THE CONTRIBUTORS TO The Commemorative Symposium

ARABINDA BASU. Spalding Lecturer in Indian Philosophy and Religion, University of Durham, Durham, England. Spalding Visiting Lecturer, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel. Member, Committee of Experts on Translation of Representative Works, International Council for the Study of Philosophy and Humanities. B.A. and M.A., University of Calcutta.

SATISCHANDRA CHATTERJEE. Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Calcutta. Visiting Professor at the University of Hawaii, 1952. Author of: *The Nyaya Theory of Knowledge; Fundamentals of Hinduism; Problems of Philosophy; An Introduction to Indian Philosophy* (co-author with D. M. Datta). M.A., P.R.S., and Ph.D., University of Calcutta.

HARIDAS CHAUDHURI. Professor of Indian Philosophy and Chairman of the Department of South Asia, American Academy of Asian Studies, San Francisco. President, Cultural Integration Fellowship, California. Lecturer in Indian Culture, Rudolph Schaeffer School of Design, San Francisco. Formerly Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy, Krishnagar Government College, West Bengal. Fellow of Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy, Rishikesh, India. Delegate to: The Silver Jubilee Session of the Indian Philosophical Congress, Calcutta, 1950; The Sixth National Conference of the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO, San Francisco, 1957. Author of: *Sri Aurobindo: The Prophet of Life Divine; The Philosophy of Integralism; The Rhythm of Truth; Prayers of Affirmation; Indian Culture* (co-editor with Dr Matilal Das); and some books in Bengali. M.A. and D.Phil., University of Calcutta.

TARAKNATH DAS. One of the co-workers of Sri Aurobindo during the first Indian

Independence Movement. Lecturer in different American colleges and universities including The Catholic University of America, City College of New York, Queen's College, New York University, Columbia University, University of Hawaii, University of Southern California, University of Maryland, and Pace College, New York City. Co-founder and the present Director of Taraknath Das Foundation, New York. Author of: *Is Japan a Menace to Asia*; *India in World Politics*; *Indian Struggle for Freedom*; *Foreign Policy in the Far East*; and others. A.B. and M.A., University of Washington. Ph.D., Georgetown University; Ph.D.(Hon.), University of Munich, Germany.

SIDNEY KARTUS. Member of the Arizona State Legislature (1944-56). Observer for Arizona State Legislative Council of Colorado River Litigation before U.S. Supreme Court. Re-elected member of Arizona House of Representatives for 1959-60. Author of reports and articles on reclamation, historical and other subjects including the pamphlet *Aurobindo: Prophet of Modern India*.

S. K. MAITRA. Honorary Professor of Philosophy and formerly Head of the Department of Philosophy, Banares Hindu University. Director of The Indian Institute of Philosophy, Amalner, 1917-18. President, Indian Philosophical Congress, 1948. Author of: *The Neo-Romantic Movement in Contemporary Philosophy*; *The Philosophical Currents of the Present Day*; *Social Organization in North-East India in Buddha's Time*; *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo*; *Studies in Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy*; *The Meeting of the East and West in Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy*; *The Spirit of Indian Philosophy*; *Whither Philosophy*; and numerous articles published in different journals. M.A. and Ph.D., University of Calcutta.

T. M. P. MAHADEVAN. Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras. Visiting Lecturer in Cornell University, 1948-9. President, Indian Philosophical Congress, 1955. Delegate to Goethe Bicentennial Convocation at Aspen, Colorado, and to East-West Philosophers' Conference at the University of Hawaii, 1949. Publications include: *The Philosophy of Advaita*; *The Upaniads: An Anthology*; *The Fundamentals of Logic*; *Whither Civilization and Other Broadcast Talks*; *Ātma: A Study in Early Advaitar Broad*; *Time and the Timeless*; *The Idea of God in Āiva-Siddhānta*; *Outlines of Hinduism*. M.A. and Ph.D., Madras University.

RICHARD P. MARSH. Lecturer in English and Assistant Professor of Radio-TV, San Francisco State College. Formerly Lecturer at College of San Mateo, California.

Writer, producer and staff announcer at different radio stations of Northern California. Member of the Guild for Psychological Studies, San Francisco and Middleton. Winner of the Aurobindo Essay Contest in Northern California, 1958. A.B., S.F. State College; M.A., University of California; Ph.D., College of the Pacific, through The American Academy of Asian Studies.

JAY R. McCULLOUGH. Assistant Professor of Philosophy, San Jose State College, California. A travelling scholar of oriental culture in the Far East in 1956. Member, Board of Governors, American Academy of Asian Studies. Publications include: 'Indian Theism and the *Importance of Moral Acts*,' in *The Review of Religion*, November 1956; 'Human Understanding in a Technical Age', in *The Ananai*, Shimizu, Japan, January 1958; and others. B.S. and M.A., University of Arizona; Ph.D., College of the Pacific, Stockton, through The American Academy of Asian Studies.

SISIR KUMAR MITRA. Professor of History of Civilization and Joint Director of Education, Sri Aurobindo International University Centre, Pondicherry. Formerly Lecturer in Cultural History at Rabindranath Tagore Viswabharati (World University), Shantiniketan . Author of: *Cultural Fellowship of Bengal; India's Cultural Empire and Her Future; The Vision of India; The Dawn Eternal; The Secret of India's Evolution; The Liberator--Sri Aurobindo; India and the World; Sri Aurobindo and the New World.*

JITENDRANATH MOHANTY. Lecturer in Philosophy, Calcutta University. Lecturer at Sri Aurobindo P thamandir, Calcutta. Publications include: *Nicolai Hartmann* and *A. N. Whitehead; A Study in Recent Platonism*. B.A. and M.A., Calcutta; Dr. Phil., Göttingen , Germany.

CHARLES A. MOORE. Chairman, Department of Philosophy, University of Hawaii. Former Member of the Department of Philosophy, Yale University. Sometime Acting Director, Oriental Institute, University of Hawaii. Chairman, East-West Philosophers' Conferences, 1939, 1949. Editor and co-author, *Philosophy --East and West*. Co-editor, Jungiro Takakusu *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*. Co-editor, *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*. Programme Director of the Philosophy and Religion Section, the sixth conference of the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO, San Francisco, 1957. Director, East-West Philosophers' Conference, Honolulu, 1959. A.B. and Ph.D., Yale. Sabbatical study as Guggenheim Fellow in India and at Oxford, 1947-8.

HAJIME NAKAMURA. Professor of Indian and Buddhist Philosophy, University of Tokyo. Visiting Professor, Stanford University, 1951-2. Delegate to: Congress on

Cultural Freedom in Asia, Rangoon, 1955; The Buddhist Symposium held by the Government of India, New Delhi, 1956. Member of The Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. Poona; The American Oriental Society; The International Academy of the Jains. Editor of: *The Bulletin of the Okurayama Oriental Research Institute*; *Monumenta Nipponica*; *Science of Thought*. Author of: *A History of Early Vedanta Philosophy*, four vols. (in Japanese) (awarded the Imperial prize by the Academy of Japan); *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, two vols. (in Japanese) (translated by the Japanese Commission for UNESCO into English); and sixteen other books in Japanese. D. Lit., University of Tokyo.

N. A. NIKAM. Professor of Philosophy, Mysore University. General Secretary, Indian Philosophical Congress. Associate Fellow, Silliman College, Yale. Member of: Executive Committee of the International Institute of Philosophy, Paris; Executive Committee of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies, Brussels; UNESCO International Committee on Inquiry into the Teaching of Philosophy; East-West Philosophers' Conference, Canberra, 1957; UNEESCO East-West Colloquium, Brussels, 1958; Institute on Ethics, New York. Writer of the Annual Proceedings of the Indian Philosophical Congress. Author of: *An Introduction to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*; the article entitled 'Realism' in *History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western*; *The Writs of Asoka* (under publication by the Chicago University Press). M.A., St John's College, Cambridge.

RAYMOND F. PIPER. Professor of Philosophy, Syracuse University, 1917-54. Visiting Lecturer, University of California, summer 1926. Delegate to: International Congresses of Philosophy, 1920, 1926, 1937; International Congress of Aesthetics, Paris, 1937. Member of: Phi Beta Kappa; American Philosophical Association; American Society of Aesthetics; University Methodist Church. Publications include: *The Fields and Methods of Knowledge* (co-author with Dr Paul W. Ward); *Preface to Philosophy: Book of Readings* (co-author with Chancellor Wm P. Tolley and Dr Ross E. Hoople); *The Hungry Eye: An Introduction to Cosmic Art*; four articles in *Encyclopedia of the Arts*. A.B., Wisconsin; S.T.B. and Ph.D., Boston.

A. B. PURANI. Member of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. Translator of Sri Aurobindo's main works in Gujrati. Visiting Lecturer in South Africa under the sponsorship of the Tagore Gandhi Trust Association, 1954. Visiting Lecturer in the United Kingdom, 1955. Author of: *Sri Aurobindo: His Life and Teachings*; *On Art*; *Sri Aurobindo's Svitri : An Approach and a Study*; *Sri Aurobindo in England*. B. A., St Xavier's College, Bombay.

RUTH REYNA. Research scholar in Indian Philosophy in the University of Florida. Member of: Phi Beta Kappa; Pi Epsilon Theta, and the like. Author of *Contemporary Interpretations of the Concept of Maya in Hinduism* (in the press). A.B., University of Southern California; M.A., Florida State University.

RISHABHCHAND. Member of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. Author of: *The Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo*, two vols.; *The Divine Collaborators*; *In the Mother's Light*, two parts. B.A., University of Calcutta.

ANILBARAN ROY. Extension Lecturer, Sri Aurobindo International University Centre, Pondicherry. Formerly Professor of Philosophy, West Bengal. Sometime member of the Bengal Legislative Council. Author of: *The Gītā*; *The Message of the Gītā as Interpreted by Sri Aurobindo* (editor); *Mother India*; *The World Crisis*; *Songs from the Soul*; *India's Mission in the World*; *Sri Aurobindo and the New Age*; and several books in Bengali.

INDRA SEN. Professor of Psychology, Sri Aurobindo International University Centre, Pondicherry. Former Professor of Psychology, Delhi College. Author of: *Integral Education* (compiled from the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother); and *Science and Culture* (compiled). M.A. and Ph.D.

K. D. SETHNA. Member of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. Editor of *Mother India*. Author of: *Essays on Wells, Shaw, Chesterton and Hardy*; *The Secret Splendour*; *The Adventure of the Apocalypse*; *The Poetic Genius of Sri Aurobindo*; *Evolving India*; *The Indian Spirit and the World's Future*; *The Passing of Sri Aurobindo*. B.A., Bombay University; Ellis Prize winner.

SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA. Founder and Director of The Life Divine Society, Rishikesh. Founder and Chancellor of Yoga-Vedanta Forest University, Rishikesh. A practising physician in the Federated Malaya States, 1913-23. A wandering monk, 1924-36. Author of about 200 books including: *Principal Upaniṣads*; *World Religions*; *Rāja Yoga*; *Hatha Yoga*; *Kundalinī Yoga*; *Yoga Vedānta Dictionary*; *All About Hinduism*; *Brahma Sūtras*; *Mind, Its Mysteries and Control*; *The Moral and Spiritual Regeneration of the World*; *Spiritual Experiences*; *Srimad Bhagavad Gītā*; etc.

NINIAN SMART. Lecturer in the History and Philosophy of Religion, University of London. Former Lecturer in the University of Wales. Visiting Lecturer in Philosophy at Yale University, 1955-6. Author of a book on Buddhism and Vedānta which is

shortly to appear. B.A. and M.A., London.

PITIRIM A. SOROKIN. Professor of Sociology and Director of the Harvard Research Centre in Creative Altruism. Author of: *Contemporary Sociological Theories; Social and Cultural Dynamics; Social Mobility; Crisis of Our Age; Reconstruction of Humanity; The Ways and Power of Love; Social Philosophies of an Age of Crisis;* and many other works translated into many languages. Editor of: *Explorations in Altruistic Love and Behavior: A Symposium; Forms and Techniques of Altruistic and Spiritual Growth: A Symposium.* M.A. and Ph.D.

FREDERIC SPIEGELBERG. Professor of Asiatic and Slavic Studies, Stanford University, since 1941. Former Lecturer at Columbia University, University of Rochester, University of California, Berkeley, etc. Sometime Director of Studies, American Academy of Asian Studies, San Francisco. Visiting Lecturer, Institute for Analytical Psychology, Zurich, Switzerland, autumn 1956. Publications include: *The Bible of the World* (co-editor); *Alchemy as a Way of Salvation; The Religion of No-Religion; Spiritual Practices of India; The Living Religions of the World.* Research in India under a Rockefeller grant, 1949. S.T.M., Hamburg; Ph.D., Tiibingen. Fellow of Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy Rishikesh.

RAMA SHANKAR SRIVASTAVA. Professor of Philosophy, Ranchi College, Behar. Member of the Board of Philosophical Studies, Behar University. Former Head of the Department of Philosophy, Gaya College. Author of *Sri Aurobindo and the Theories of Evolution* (in the press). M.A., Banares Hindu University; D. Litt., Patna University.

H. P. SULLIVAN. Research scholar at the School of Oriental Studies, University of Durham, England. B.D., University of Chicago.

JUDITH M. TYBERG. Founder and Director, East-West Cultural Centre, Los Angeles, 1953. Visiting Lecturer at different cultural centres in England, Wales, Germany, Scandinavia, etc., 1935-6. Research work in Banares Hindu University and Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1947-50. Professor of Sanskrit, American Academy of Asian Studies, San Francisco, 1951. Author of: *First Lessons in Sanskrit Grammar and Reading; The Sanskrit Key to India's Wisdom.* M.A., M.Th. and Ph.D., The Theosophical University, Point Loma; M.A. in Indian Religion and Philosophy, Banares Hindu University.

K. C. VARADACHARI. Reader in Philosophy, Sri Venkatesvara University, Andhra.

Former Lecturer at Madras Christian College and Union Christian College. Author of: Metaphysics of Sri R m n uja's r i b h s y a; Theory of Knowledge in r i R m n uja's Philosophy; Living Teaching of the Ved n t a; Idea of God; Aspects of Bhakti; Introduction to Logic; and other works on Mysticism, Yoga and Psychology. M.A. and Ph.D., Madras University.

ERNEST WOOD. President and Dean, American Academy of Asian Studies, San Francisco, 1957-58. Formerly Founder and President, Wood National College, Madanapalle, 1913; Founder and Principal, D.G. Sind National College, Hyderabad, 1917; Organizing Secretary, National University of India, 1917. Publications include: The Glorious Presence; Practical Yoga; Great Yoga Systems of India; Yoga Dictionary; Mind and Memory Training; Occult Training of the Hindus; The Bhagavadg t Explained; and many others.

Glossary

Glossary of English Terms in Integral Yoga Literature

This is an index to terms which appear in Sri Aurobindo's works; it is not a general glossary of English terms. In particular, the terms appearing in the **Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library** <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/sa/sa-over.html>> only are included in this glossary.

References:

1. Definitions used are close paraphrases of Sri Aurobindo's or the Mother's words.
2. Bracketed numbers with an "s" [S.....] refer to volume and page of volumes in the Sri Aurobindo Centenary Library (SABCL), 1976, Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust. Bracketed numbers with an "M" [M.....] refer to the Collected Works of the Mother, 1977, Sri Aurobindo Ashram.
3. Dictionary: Dictionary of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga, compiled from the writings of M.P. Pandit, 1966 Sri Aurobindo Ashram.
4. Integral Yoga: The Integral Yoga; Sri Aurobindo's Teaching and Method of Practice, 1993 Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust.

A

Absolute (the)

the supreme reality of that transcendent Being which we call God. Indian thought

calls it *Brahman*, European thought the Absolute because it is a self-existent which is absolved of all bondage to relativities. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

adverse forces

see hostile forces <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>

ascent and descent

the two-sided practice of the Integral Yoga, an ascent of the consciousness to the higher planes, a descent of the power of the higher planes into the earth-consciousness so as to drive out the power of darkness and ignorance and control the nature. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

aspiration

the call of the being for higher things, for the Divine, for all that belongs to the higher or divine consciousness. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

assimilation

a quiet settling in of what has come down. [Dictionary <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

"Assimilation is very important and periods necessary for it should not be regarded with impatience as stoppages of the yoga." [S24:1186 <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

C

calm

a still, unmoved condition which no disturbance can affect; a strong and positive quietude, firm and solid. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

central being

the portion of the Divine in us which supports all the rest and survives through death and birth. It has two forms -- above, it is the *Jivatman*, our true being, of which we become aware when the higher self-knowledge comes; below, it is the psychic being which stands behind mind, body and life. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

collectivity (gnostic)

a true community...which can exist only by the inner realisation of every one of its members, by a real, concrete unity and identity of everyone with the other members

of the community. [M9:140 <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

concentration

"concentration means gathering of the consciousness into one centre and fixing it in one object or in one idea or in one condition." [S25:391

<<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

consciousness

the self-aware force of existence. The essence of consciousness is the power to be aware of itself and its objects; but it is not only power of awareness of self and things, it is or has also a dynamic and creative energy. Consciousness is not synonymous with mentality, which is only a middle term; below mentality, it sinks into vital and material movements which are for us subconscious; above, it rises into the Supramental which is for us the superconscious. [Integral Yoga

<<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Consciousness-Force

the Conscious Force that builds the worlds; a universal Energy that is the power of the Cosmic Spirit working out the cosmic and individual truth of things. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

consecration

the devoting of all that comes to one, all one's experience and progress to the Divine. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

conversion

a turning of the being away from lower things towards the Divine. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

cosmic being

the manifold self-expression of the spirit. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

cosmic consciousness

the consciousness of the universe, of the cosmic spirit and cosmic Nature, with all the beings and forces within it. In the cosmic consciousness the limits of the ego, personal mind and body disappear and one becomes aware of a cosmic vastness which is or is filled by a cosmic spirit and aware also of the direct play of cosmic forces. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

D

descent

see ascent and descent <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>.

desire-soul

the surface soul in us, which works in our vital cravings, our emotions, aesthetic faculty and mental seeking for power, knowledge and happiness; the true soul is the subliminal psychic essence. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Divine (the)

the Supreme Being from which all comes and in which all lives. In its supreme Truth the Divine is absolute and infinite peace, consciousness, existence, power and delight. The Transcendent, the Cosmic (Universal) and the Individual are three powers of the Divine, overarching, underlying and penetrating the whole of manifestation. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

dynamic mind

that part of the mind proper which is concerned with the putting out of mental forces for the realisation of ideas; it thinks, plans and acts in order to achieve things. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

E

earth-consciousness

the separate global consciousness of the earth which evolves with the evolution of life on the planet. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

ego

the separative sense of individuality which makes each being conceive of itself as an independent personality. Ego implies the identification of one's existence with the outer mental, vital and physical self. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

emotion being

the emotional vital. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

emotional vital (the)

that part of the higher vital being which is the seat of various feelings, such as love, joy, sorrow, hatred, and the rest. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

environmental consciousness

something that each person carries around him, outside his body, by which he is in

touch with others and with the universal forces. [Integral Yoga

<<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

equality

samata, equality of soul and mind to all things and happenings, equanimity founded on the sense of the one Self, the one Divine everywhere; the capacity to remain unmoved within all conditions. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

evolution

the progressive unfolding of Spirit out of the density of material consciousness; a heightening of the force of consciousness in the manifest being so that it may be raised into the greater intensity of what is still unmanifest, from matter into life, from life into mind, from mind into spirit. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

experience

"is a word that covers almost all the happenings in yoga. ... When the consciousness undergoes, sees or feels anything spiritual or psychic or even occult, that is an experience... Feeling and vision are the main forms of spiritual experience."

[S23:877-878 <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

exteriorisation

the consciousness going out of the body. [Integral Yoga

<<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

externalising mind

that part of the mind proper which is concerned with the expression of ideas in life (not only by speech, but by any form it can give.) [Integral Yoga

<<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

F

faith

a dynamic intuitive conviction in the inner being of the truth of supersensible things which cannot be proved by any physical evidence but which are a subject of experience; the soul's witness to something not yet manifested, achieved or realised, but which yet the Knower within us feels to be true or supremely worth following or achieving; the soul's belief in the Divine's existence, wisdom, power, love, and grace.

[Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Falsehood

not Ignorance (Avidya), but an extreme result of it. Falsehood is created by an Asuric power which intervenes in this creation and is not only separated from Truth and therefore limited in knowledge and open to error, but in revolt against the Truth or in the habit of seizing the Truth only to pervert it. This Power puts forth its own perverted consciousness as true knowledge and its willful distortions or reversals of the Truth as the verity of things. Whenever these perversions created out of the stuff of ignorance are put forward as the Truth of things, that is the Falsehood, in the yogic sense. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Force (the)

the Divine Force, the one Energy that alone exists and alone makes universal or individual action possible, for this Force is the Divine itself in the body of its power; in the individual it is a Force for illumination, transformation, purification, for all that has to be done in the yoga. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Force (the Mother's)

the higher Force of the Divine that descends from above to transform the nature; the Divine Force which works to remove the ignorance and change the nature into the divine nature. [Integral Yoga]

G

Gnosis

a supreme totally self-aware and all-aware Intelligence. The Divine Gnosis is the Supermind. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

God

the Absolute, the Spirit, the Self spaceless and timeless, the Self manifest in the Cosmos and Lord of Nature. God is the All and that which transcends the All. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Godhead

the one supreme divine Being. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Gods

Personalities and Powers of the dynamic Divine. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Grace (Divine Grace)

the help of a higher Divine Force other than the force of Karma, which can lift the

sadhak beyond the present possibilities of his nature. [Integral Yoga
<<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

H

higher consciousness

the higher spiritual or divine consciousness. [Integral Yoga
<<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

hostile forces

anti-divine, not merely undivine forces that are in revolt against the Divine, against the Truth and Light, and opposed to the yoga. [Integral Yoga
<<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

I

Ignorance (the)

Avidya, the Ignorance of oneness; the separative consciousness and the egoistic mind and life that flow from it and all that is natural to the separative consciousness and the egoistic mind and life; the consciousness of the divided Many divorced from the unifying knowledge of the One Reality. [Integral Yoga
<<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Illumined Mind

see spiritualised mind <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>.

Immanent (the)

not a He, but an It. The Impersonal Brahman is inactive, aloof, indifferent, not concerned with what happens in the universe; It is everywhere, all-pervading, without form or limit in any place or time. [Integral Yoga
<<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Inconscience (the)

the Supreme's state of self-involved, self-oblivious consciousness and force which is at the basis of the material world; this state is the apparent opposite of the Supreme and in it there can be darkness, inertia, insensibility, disharmony and disintegration. Not really inconscient at all, it is rather a complete "sub"-conscience, a supposed or involved consciousness. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

inner being

the inner mind, inner vital, inner physical, with the psychic behind as the inmost.

[Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

inner mind

that which lies behind the surface mind (our ordinary mentality); this inner or subliminal mind senses directly all the things of the mind-plane, is open to the action of a world of mental forces, and can feel the ideative and other imponderable influences which act up on the material world and the life-plane but which at present we can only infer and cannot directly experience. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

inner physical

the physical part of the inner being. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

inner vital

the vital part of the inner being. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Insentience

absence of sense-perception. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Integral Yoga

a union (yoga) in all the parts of our being with the Divine and a consequent transmutation of all their now jarring elements into the harmony of a higher divine consciousness and existence; this yoga implies not only the realisation of God but the entire consecration and change of the inner and outer life till it is fit to manifest a divine consciousness and become part of a divine work. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

intellect

that part of the mind proper which is concerned with ideas and knowledge in their own right; its function is to observe, inquire, understand and judge. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Intermediate Zone

a zone of formations, a borderland where all the worlds meet, mental, vital, subtle physical, pseudo-spiritual, but there is no order or firm foothold; this zone is a passage between the physical and the true spiritual realms. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Intuition

see spiritualised mind <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>.

Intuitive Mind

see spiritualised mind <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>.

K

Knowledge (the)

the knowledge of the One Reality, the consciousness of Unity.

Knowledge by identity

"The supermind knows most completely and securely not by thought but by identity, by a pure awareness of the self-truth of things in the self and by the self, *atmani atmanam atmana*. [S21:801-02 <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

L

liberation

"The sense of release as if from jail (which) always accompanies the emergence of the psychic being or the realisation of the self above. It is therefore spoken of as a liberation, *mukti*. It is a release into peace, happiness, the soul's freedom."
[S23:1001 <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Life

Being at labour in Matter to express itself in terms of Conscious Force; an energy of Spirit subordinated to action of mind and body, which fulfills itself through mentality and physicality and acts as a link between them. [Integral Yoga
<<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

life-force (Prana)

the life-energy itself, not material energy, but rather a different principle supporting Matter and involved in it. It supports and occupies all forms and without it no physical form could have come into being or could remain in being. [Integral Yoga
<<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Light (the)

primarily a spiritual manifestation of the Divine Reality illuminative and creative; spiritual Light is not knowledge, but the illumination that comes from above and liberates the being from obscurity and darkness. [Integral Yoga
<<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

lower vital

see vital <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>.

M

material vital

that part of the lower vital turned entirely to physical things, full of desires and greeds and seekings for pleasure on the physical plane. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Matter

Being manifested as substance; substance of the one Conscious Being. A self-formed mask and robe of the divine Spirit, matter is not fundamentally real, but a form of the force of Conscious Being. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

mechanical mind

a part of the mind closely connected with the physical mind; its nature is to go on repeating without use whatever has happened - recent events, impressions, old habitual thoughts or ways of thinking and feeling. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

mental physical

mechanical mind.

mental plane

a world of mental existence in which neither life, nor matter, but mind is the first determinant; mind there is not determined by material conditions or by the life-force, but itself determines and uses them for its own satisfaction. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

mental vital

that part of the higher vital being which gives a mental expression by thought, speech or otherwise to the emotions, desires, passions, sensations and other movements of the vital being. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

mind

the words "mind" and "mental" are used to connote specially the part of the nature which has to do with cognition and intelligence, with ideas, with mental or thought perceptions, the reactions of thought to things, with the truly mental movements and formations, mental vision and will etc. that are part of man's intelligence. The ordinary mind has three main parts: mind proper, vital mind, and physical mind. The **mind proper** is divided into three parts: the thinking mind or intellect, concerned with ideas and knowledge in their own right; the dynamic mind, concerned with the putting out of mental forces for the realisation of the ideas; and

the externalising mind, concerned with the expression of ideas in life.

The **vital mind** or desire mind is a mind of dynamic will, action, desire; it is occupied with force and achievement and satisfaction and possession, with enjoyment and suffering, giving and taking, growth and expansion, etc.

The **physical mind** is that part of the mind which is concerned with physical things only; limited by the physical view and experience of things it mentalises the experience brought by the contact of outward life and things, but does not go beyond that. The mechanical mind, closely connected with the physical mind, goes on repeating without use whatever has happened.

Overtopping the ordinary mind, hidden in our own superconscious parts, there are higher ranges of Mind, gradations of spiritualised mind leading to the **Supermind**. In ascending order they are: Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuitive Mind, Intuition and Overmind. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

See spiritualised mind <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>.

Mother (the Divine Mother)

the consciousness and force of the Divine; the Divine in its consciousness-force. The Mother is the divine conscious Force that dominates all existence, upholding us and the universe. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

N

Nature

Prakriti, the outer or executive side of the Conscious Force which forms and moves the worlds. The higher, divine Nature (*Para Prakriti*) is free from Ignorance and its consequences; the lower nature (*Prakriti*) is a mechanism of active Force put forth for the working of the evolutionary Ignorance. The lower nature of an individual is his mind, life and body. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Non-Being

Non-Existence, Nothingness. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

O

occultism

the knowledge and right use of the hidden forces of nature; true occultism means a search into supraphysical realities and an unveiling of the hidden laws of being and Nature, of all that is not obvious on the surface. [Integral Yoga

<<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

opening

the release of the consciousness by which it begins to admit into itself the working of the Divine Life and Power; the ability of the consciousness on the various levels to receive the descent of the Higher Consciousness above. [Integral Yoga

<<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

outer being

the surface being, our ordinary exterior mind, life, body consciousness. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

P

peace

a deep quietude bringing not merely a release but a certain happiness or Ananda of itself, a harmony that gives a feeling of liberation and full satisfaction. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

perfection (siddhi)

"a growth out of a lower undivine into a higher divine nature." [S21:671 <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Person (the)

the human birth in this world is on its spiritual side a complex of two elements, a spiritual Person and a soul of personality; the former is man's eternal being, the latter is his cosmic and mutable being. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

physical consciousness

the physical mind, the physical vital as well as the body consciousness proper. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

physical nature

not the body alone, but the whole physical mind, vital, material nature. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

physical self

the physical conscious being; the material being; *annamaya purusa*. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

physical (the)

the physical consciousness and body. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

physical vital

the part of the vital that is turned entirely upon physical things, full of desires and greeds and seekings for pleasure on the physical plane. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

plasticity

to be able to identify oneself with the Supreme in the Becoming; a suppleness necessary to receive the Supermind. [M10:115 <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

possession (by hostile forces)

an intervention from the non-human worlds in which the hostile forces act on humans. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Presence (the)

the sense and perception of the Divine as a Being felt as present in one's existence and consciousness or in relation with it. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

psychic

of or relating to the soul (as distinguished from the mind and vital). Used in the sense of the Greek word "psyche", meaning "soul", the term "psychic" refers to all the movements and experiences of the soul, those which rise >from or directly touch the psychic being. It does not refer to all the more inward and all the abnormal experiences in which the mind and vital predominate; such experiences, in Sri Aurobindo's terminology, would be called psychological (surface or occult), not psychic. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

psychic (the)

psychic being; psychic essence; soul. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

psychic being

the evolving soul of the individual, the divine portion in him which evolves from life to life, growing by its experiences until it becomes a fully conscious being. From its place behind the heart-centre, the psychic being supports the mind, life and body, aiding their growth and development. The term "soul" is often used as a synonym for "psychic being", but strictly speaking there is a distinction: the soul is the psychic essence, the psychic being is the soul-personality put forward and developed by the psychic essence to represent it in the evolution. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

See also psychic <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>.

psychic entity

psychic essence. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

psychic essence

the soul in its essence; the divine essence in the individual, the divine spark which supports the evolution of the being in Nature. In the course of the evolution the psychic essence grows and takes form as the psychic being. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

psychicisation (psychic transformation)

the psychic change in which the psychic being comes forward to dominate the mind, vital and physical and change the lower nature. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

pulling

drawing down too eagerly the divine force or a spiritual experience, instead of letting it descend quietly. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

purity

freedom from soil or mixture. The divine purity is that in which there is not mixture of the turbid ignorant movements of the lower nature. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Q

quiet

absence of restlessness or disturbance. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

R

Real-Idea

"is a truth-perception which is self-effective; for it is the idea and will of the Spirit in direct action..." [S19:986 <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

realisation

the reception in the consciousness and the establishment there of the fundamental truths of the Divine; the making real to ourselves and in ourselves of the Self, the transcendent and universal Divine. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Reality (the)

a Truth of all existence which is greater and more abiding than all its formations and manifestations; behind the appearance of the universe is the Reality of an infinite existence, an infinite consciousness, an infinite force and will, an infinite delight of being. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

receptivity

the power to receive the Divine Force and to feel its presence and allow it to work, guiding one's sight and will and action; the capacity of admitting and retaining the divine workings. [Integral Yoga] "One may be receptive, yet externally unaware of how things are being done and of what is being done. The force works...behind the veil; the results remain packed behind and come out afterwards, often slowly, little by little" [S24:1361 <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

rejection

rejection of the falsehood of the mental, vital and physical Powers and Appearances that still rule the earth-Nature. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

revelation

is direct sight, the direct hearing or inspired memory of Truth, *drsti*, *sruti*, *smrti*; it is the highest experience." [S17:89 <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

S

Self (the)

the Atman, the universal Spirit, the self-existent Being, the conscious essential Existence, one in all. The Self is being, not a being; it is the original and essential nature of our existence. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Self-knowledge

the knowledge of the Self. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

sheaths

the oldest Vedantic knowledge tells us of five degrees of our being, the material, the vital, the mental, the ideal, the spiritual or beatific and to each of these grades of our soul there corresponds a grade of our substance, a sheath as it was called in the ancient figurative language. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

silence

freedom from thoughts and vital movements, when the whole consciousness is quite

still; not only cessation of thoughts but a stillness of the mental and vital substance.

[Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

sincerity

to mean what one says, feel what one professes, be earnest in one's will; sincerity in the sadhak means that he is really in earnest in his aspiration for the Divine and refuses all other will or impulse except the Divine's; it means to allow no part of the being to contradict the highest aspiration towards the Divine. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

soul

the psychic essence or entity, the divine essence in the individual; a spark of the Divine that comes down into the manifestation to support the evolution of the individual. In the course of the evolution, the soul grows and evolves in the form of a soul-personality, the psychic being. The term "soul" is often used as a synonym for "psychic being." [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Spirit

the Consciousness above mind, the Atman or universal Self which is always in oneness with the Divine. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

spiritual

of the spirit. All contacts with the Self, the Higher Consciousness, the Divine above are spiritual. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

spiritualisation

the spiritual change in which there is the established descent of the divine peace, light, knowledge, power, bliss from above, the awareness of the Self and the Divine and of a higher cosmic consciousness and the change of the whole nature to that. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

spiritualised mind (gradations of)

higher ranges of Mind overtopping our normal Mind and leading to Supermind; these successive states, levels or graded powers of being are hidden in our own superconscious parts. In ascending order the gradations of spiritualised mind are:

Higher Mind

a luminous thought-mind whose instrumentation is through an elevated thought-power and comprehensive mental sight. In the Higher Mind one becomes constantly and closely aware of the Self, the One everywhere and knows and sees habitually

with that awareness.

Illumined Mind

a mind no longer of higher thought, but of spiritual light; here the clarity of the intelligence, its tranquil daylight, gives place or subordinates itself to an intense lustre, a splendour and illumination of the Spirit.

Intuitive Mind

a mind of intuitive reason characterised by its intuitions, its inspirations, its swift revelatory vision, its luminous insight and discrimination; it is a kind of truth-vision, truth-hearing, truth-memory, direct truth-discernment.

Intuition

a power of consciousness nearer and more intimate than the lower ranges of spiritual mind to the original knowledge by identity; it gets the Truth in flashes and turns these flashes of Truth-perception into intuitions - intuitive ideas. Intuition is always an edge or ray or outleap of a superior light. What is thought-knowledge in the Higher Mind becomes illumination in the Illumined Mind and direct intimate vision in the Intuition.

Overmind

full of lights and powers, the Overmind sees calmly, steadily, in great masses and large extensions of space and time and relation, globally, it creates and acts in the same way. The Overmind is a delegate of the Supramental Consciousness, its delegate to the cosmic Ignorance. The Supramental is the total Truth-Consciousness; the Overmind draws down the truths separately and gives them a separate identity. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

spirituality

"an awakening to the inner reality of our being, to a spirit, self, soul which is other than our mind, life, and body" [S19:857 <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

subscient (the)

the subscient or subconscious of the individual is that submerged part of his being in which there is no waking conscious and coherent thought, will, feeling or organised reaction, but which yet receives obscurely the impressions of all things and stores them up; from it too all sorts of stimuli, of persistent habitual movements can surge up into dream or into the waking state. In the ordinary man the subscient includes the larger part of the vital being and the physical mind and the secret body-

consciousness. It is not to be confused with the subliminal: the subliminal is an inner consciousness larger than our surface existence. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

subliminal

inner, not on the waking surface. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

subliminal (the)

the inner being, taken in its entirety of inner mind, inner life, inner physical, with the soul or psychic entity supporting them. The subliminal in man is the largest part of his nature; it is not subconscious, but conscient and greater than the waking consciousness. The subconscious is that which is below the ordinary physical consciousness, the subliminal that which is behind and supports it. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

subtle body

a subtler material existence behind our outer body which provides the substance not only of our physical but of our vital and mental sheaths. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

sunlit path (the)

when the psychic being comes out in its inherent power; is usually or habitually in front; a natural spirit of faith and surrender; a bright settled faith and happy bhakti. [S24:1610, 1616, 1621 <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Superconscient (the Superconscience)

something above our present consciousness from which the higher consciousness comes down into the body; it includes the higher planes of mental being as well as the native heights of supramental and pure spiritual being. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Supermind

the Supramental, the Truth-Consciousness, the Divine Gnosis, the highest divine consciousness and force operative in the universe. A principle of consciousness superior to mentality, it exists, acts and proceeds in the fundamental truth and unity of things and not like the mind in their appearances and phenomenal divisions. Its fundamental character is knowledge by identity, by which the Self is known, the Divine Sachchidananda is known, but also the truth of manifestation is known because this too is that. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Supramental (the)

See Supermind <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>

surrender

to consecrate everything in oneself to the Divine, to offer all one is and has, not to insist on one's ideas, desires, habits, etc. but to allow the divine Truth to replace them by its knowledge, will and action everywhere. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

symbol

the form of one plane that represents a truth of another. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

T**thinking mind**

that part of the mind proper which is concerned with ideas and knowledge in their own right; its function is to observe, inquire, understand and judge. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

trance

degrees of consciousness less and less communicable to the waking mind.
[Dictionary <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

transformation

bringing down of the higher, divine consciousness and nature into the lower nature of mind, life and body, and the replacement of the lower by the higher. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

triple transformation

"First is the psychic transformation, in which all is in contact with the Divine through the individual psychic consciousness. Next is the spiritual transformation in which all is merged in the Divine in the cosmic consciousness. Third is the supramental transformation in which all becomes supramentalised in the divine gnostic consciousness." [S22:95 <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Truth-Consciousness

the Supermind; the consciousness of essential truth of being (satyam), of ordered truth of active being (rtam), and the vast self-awareness (brhat) in which alone this consciousness is possible. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

V

veil (the)

the veil of Ignorance. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

vital (the)

the life-nature made up of desires, sensations, feelings, passions, energies of action, will of desire, reactions of the desire-soul of man and of all that play of possessive and other related instincts, anger, greed, lust, etc., that belong to this field of nature. The vital part of man is a true instrument only when its feelings and tendencies have been purified by the psychic touch and governed by the spiritual light and power.

The vital has three main parts:

higher vital

the mental vital and emotional vital taken together. The mental vital gives a mental expression by thought, speech or otherwise to the emotions, desires, passions, sensations or other movements of the vital being; the emotional vital is the seat of various feelings, such as love, joy, sorrow, hatred and the rest.

central vital or vital proper

dynamic, sensational and passionate, it is the seat of the stronger vital longings and reactions, such as ambition, pride, fear, love of fame, attractions and repulsions, desires and passion of various kinds and the field of many vital energies.

lower vital

made up of the smaller movements of human life-desire and life-reactions, it is occupied with small desires and feelings, such as food desire, sexual desire, small likings, dislikings, vanity, quarrels, love of praise, anger at blame, little wishes of all kinds, etc. The material vital is that part of the lower vital turned entirely upon physical things, full of desires and greeds and seekings for pleasure on the physical plane. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

vital physical

the nervous part of the being, the life-force closely enmeshed in the reactions, desires, needs, sensations of the body. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

vital plane

the plane connected with the life-world or desire-world, a plane in which life and

desire find their untrammelled play and their easy self-expression and from there throw their influences and formations on our outer life. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

W

wideness

the expansion of consciousness that comes when one exceeds or begins to exceed the individual consciousness and spread out toward the universal; it is felt as a great substantial vastness giving the sense of oneness free and infinite. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

will

a force put upon a thing to be changed. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Will (Divine)

something that has descended here into an evolutionary world of Ignorance, standing at the back of things, pressing on the Darkness with its Light, leading things presently towards the best possible in the conditions of a world of Ignorance and leading it eventually towards a descent of a greater power of the Divine, which will not be an omnipotence held back and conditioned by the world as it is, but in full action and therefore bringing the reign of light, peace, harmony, joy, love, beauty and Ananda. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Witness (the)

the witness Purusha, a consciousness or Purusha calm and detached from the outer actions of Nature. [Integral Yoga <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/>>]

Contents of Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library *Integral Yoga Literature - By Sri Aurobindo*

(Note: there is another edition of the collected works of Sri Aurobindo <<http://www.miraura.org/lit/sa/newedition.html>> currently in publication by the Pondicherry Ashram, and a new edition (Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo

<<http://www.miraura.org/lit/sa/cwsa.html>>) for which some volumes have been released, but some are still forthcoming.)

Volume 1 **Bande Mataram**, Early Political Writings -- I (1893-1908): *New Lamps for Old; Bhawani Mandir; The Doctrine of Passive Resistance*; editorials and comments from the *Bande Mataram*; Speeches.

Volume 2 **Karmayogin**, Early Political Writings -- II (1909-1910): *Uttarpara Speech; the Ideal of the Karmayogin; An Open Letter to My Countrymen*; other essays, notes and comments from the *Karmayogin*; Speeches.

Volume 3 **The Harmony of Virtue**, Early Cultural Writings: *The Harmony of Virtue; Bankim Chandra Chatterjee; The Sources of Poetry and Other Essays; Valmiki and Vyasa; Kalidasa; The Brain of India*; Essays from the *Karmayogin*; Art and Literature; Passing Thoughts; *Conversations of the Dead*.

Volume 4 **Writings in Bengali**: *Hymn to Durga*; Poems; Stories; The Veda; The Upanishads; The Puranas; The Gita; Dharma; Nationalism; Editorials from *Dharma*; Stories of Jail Life; Letters.

Volume 5 **Collected Poems**, The Complete Poetical Works: Short Poems; Sonnets; Longer Poems; *On Quantitative Metre; Ilion*; Poems in New Metres; Metrical Experiments

Volume 6 **Collected Plays and Short Stories**, Part One: *Perseus the Deliverer; Vasavadutta; Rodogune; Eric*

Volume 7 **Collected Plays and Short Stories**, Part Two: *The Viziers of Bassora; Prince of Edur; The Maid in the Mill; The House of Brut; The Prince of Mathura; The Birth of Sin; Vikramorvasie (The Hero and the Nymph)*. Short Stories: *Idylls of the Occult; The Phantom Hour; The Door at Abelard; The Devil's Mastiff; The Golden Bird*. Juvenilia.

Volume 8 **Translations**, From Sanskrit and Other Languages: From Sanskrit: passages from the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Bhagavad Gita*, Kalidasa; *The Century of Life* (The *Nitishataka* of Bhartrihari); etc. From Bengali: *Songs of Bidyapati; Bande Mataram (Hymn to the Mother)*; thirteen chapters from *Anandamath* (Bankim Chandra Chatterji's novel); etc. From Tamil: opening of the *The Kural*, etc. From Greek and Latin: opening of the *Odyssey*, etc.

Volume 9 **The Future Poetry** and Letters on Poetry, Literature and Art.

Volume **10 The Secret of the Veda:** *The Secret of the Veda; Selected Hymns; Hymns of the Atris; Other Hymns; Interpretation of the Veda; The Origins of Aryan Speech.*

Volume **11 Hymns to the Mystic Fire:** Foreward; *The Doctrine of the Mystics;* Translations (Hymns to Agni from the Rig-veda translated in their esoteric sense); Supplement.

Volume **12 The Upanishads**, Texts, Translations and Commentaries: *Philosophy of the Upanishads; On translating the Upanishads; The Upanishads;* Early translations of some Vedantic Texts; Supplement.

Volume **13 Essays on the Gita:** First Series. Second Series, Part One: The Synthesis of Works, Love and Knowledge; Part Two: The Supreme Secret.

Volume **14 The Foundations of Indian Culture** and the Renaissance in India: *Is India Civilised?; A Rationalistic Critic on Indian Culture; A Defence of Indian Culture* (Religion and Spirituality, Indian Art, Indian Literature, Indian Polity); *Indian Culture and External Influence; The Renaissance in India.*

Volume **15 Social and Political Thought:** *The Human Cycle; The Ideal of Human Unity; War and Self-Determination.*

Volume **16 The Supramental Manifestation** and Other Writings: *The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth; The Problem of Rebirth; Evolution; The Superman; Ideals and Progress; Heraclitus; Thoughts and Glimpses;* Question of the Month from the Arya; *The Yoga and Its Objects.*

Volume **17 The Hour of God** and Other Writings: *The Hour of God;* Evolution -- Psychology -- The Supermind; *On Yoga; Thoughts and Aphorisms; Essays Divine and Human;* Education and Art; *Premises of Astrology;* Reviews; *Da yananda -- Bankim -- Tilak -- Andal -- Nammalwar; Historical Impressions;* Notes from the Arya.

Volume **18 The Life Divine**, Book One and Book Two, Part One. Book One: Omnipresent Reality and the Universe; Book Two: The Knowledge and the Ignorance -- The Spiritual Evolution; Part I: The Infinite Consciousness and the Ignorance.

Volume **19 The Life Divine**, Book Two part Two: The Knowledge and the Spiritual Evolution.

Volume **20 The Synthesis of Yoga**, Parts One and Two: Introduction: The Conditions of the Synthesis; part I: The Yoga of Divine Works; Part II: The Yoga of Integral Knowledge.

Volume **21 The Synthesis of Yoga**, Parts Three and Four. Part III: The Yoga of Divine Love; Part IV: The Yoga of Self-Perfection.

Volume **22 Letters on Yoga**, Part One: The Supramental Evolution; Integral Yoga and Other Paths; Religion, Morality, Idealism and Yoga; Reason, Science and Yoga; Planes and Parts of the Being; The Divine and the Hostile Powers; The Purpose of Avatarhood; Rebirth; Fate and Free-Will, Karma and Heredity, etc.

Volume **23 Letters on Yoga**, Parts Two and Three. Part Two: The Object of Integral Yoga; Synthetic Method and the Integral Yoga; Basic Requisites of the Path; The Foundations of Sadhana; Sadhana Through Work; Sadhana Through Meditation; Sadhana Through Love and Devotion; Human Relationships in Yoga; Sadhana in the Ashram and Outside; Part Three: Experiences and Realisations; Visions and Symbols; Experiences of the Inner and the Cosmic Consciousness.

Volume **24 Letters on Yoga**, Part Four: The Triple Transformation -- Psychic, Spiritual Supramental; Transformation of the Mind; Transformation of the Vital; Transformation of the Physical; Transformation of the Subconscious and the Inconscious; Difficulties of the Path; Opposition of the Hostile Powers.

Volume **25 The Mother**: With Letters on the Mother and Prayers and Meditations (translations from *Prieres et Meditations de la Mere*).

Volume **26 On Himself**, Compiled from Notes and Letters: Part One: Sri Aurobindo on Himself: Life Before Pondicherry; Beginnings of Yoga; His Path and Other Paths; Sadhana for the Earth-Consciousness; The Master and the Guide; The Poet and the Critic; Reminiscences and Observations; Messages; Some Early Letters; Part Two: Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother: Leaders of Evolution; Identity of Their Consciousness; Difficulties of the Path-finders; Helpers on the Way.

Volume **27 Supplement**: Supplementary material arranged by volume.

Volume **28 Savitri** -- A Legend and a Symbol, part One: The Book of Beginnings; The Book of the Traveller of the Worlds; The Book of the Divine Mother.

Volume **29 Savitri** -- A Legend and a Symbol, Parts Two and Three. Part Two: The Book of Birth and Quest; The Book of Love; The Book of Fate; The Book of Yoga; The Book of Death; Part Three: The Book of Eternal Night; The Book of the Double Twilight; The Book of Everlasting Day; Epilogue: The Return to Earth; Sri Aurobindo's Letters on Savitri.

Volume **30 Index and Glossary**: Sri Aurobindo, a Life Sketch; Chronology; Contents of the Centenary Library; Bibliography; List of Essays, Speeches and Shorter Works; Title Index of Poems; Index; Glossary of Sanskrit Terms; etc.

"THAT ONE"

TM ©

sat ı chit ı ananda

TM ©

Supermind ı overmind ı intuitive mind ı illumined
mind ı higher mind

TM ©

mind ı life ı matter \supseteq 4 \in

Maheshwari (Wisdom)

Imperial Maheshwari is seated in the wideness above the thinking mind and will and sublimates and greatens them into wisdom and largeness or floods with a splendour beyond them.

For she is the mighty and wise One who opens us to the supramental infinities and the cosmic vastness, to the grandeur of the supreme Light, to a treasure house of miraculous knowledge, to the measureless movement of the Mother's eternal forces.

Tranquil is she and wonderful, great and calm for ever.

Nothing can move her because all wisdom is in her; nothing is hidden from her that she chooses to know; she comprehends all things and all beings.

Partiality she has none but she follows the decrees of the Supreme and some she raises up and some she casts down into the darkness. To the wise she gives a greater and more luminous freedom; on the hostile she imposes the consequence of their hostility; the ignorant and foolish she leads according to their blindness.

In each man she answers and handles the different elements of his nature according to their need and their urge to prosper in the ways of the Ignorance or to perish.

For she is above all, bound by nothing, attached to nothing in the universe.

Her compassion is endless and inexhaustible.
Even her rejections are only a postponement, her punishments a
grace.

The Truth of things is her one concern, knowledge her center of
power and to build our soul and our nature into the divine Truth
her mission and her labour.

Mahasaraswati (Detailed Perfection)

Mahasaraswati is the Mother's Power of Work and her spirit of
perfection and order. The youngest of the four she is the most
skillful in executive faculty and nearest to physical Nature.

Maheshwari lays down the large lines of the world-forces,
Mahakali drives their energy and impetus, Mahalakshmi discovers
their rhythms and measures, but Mahasaraswati presides over their
detail of organization and execution, relation of parts and effective
combination of forces and unfailing exactitude of result and
fulfillment. The science and craft and technique of things are
Mahasaraswati's province. Always she holds in her nature and can
give to those whom she has chosen the intimate and precise
knowledge, the subtlety and patience, the accuracy of intuitive
mind and conscious hand and discerning eye of the perfect worker.

Her action is laborious and minute and often seems to our
impatience slow and interminable, but it is persistent, integral and
flawless. Moulding and remoulding, she labours each part till it
has attained its true form, is put in its exact place in the whole and
fulfills its precise purpose. When her work is finished, nothing has
been forgotten, no part has been misplaced or omitted or left in a
faulty condition; all is solid, accurate, complete, admirable.
Nothing short of a perfect perfection satisfies her and she is ready
to face an eternity of toil if that is needed for the fullness of her
creation. Therefore of all the Mother's powers she is the most
long-suffering with man and his thousand imperfections. Kind,
smiling, close and helpful, not easily turned away or discouraged,
insistent even after repeated failure, her hand sustains our every
step on condition that we are single in our will and straightforward
and sincere.

If you desire this transformation, put yourself in the hands of the
Mother and her Powers without cavil or resistance and let her do

unhindered her work within you. Three things you must have, consciousness, plasticity, unreserved surrender. For you must be conscious in your mind and soul and heart, aware of the Mother and her Powers and this working; for although she can and does work in your obscurity and your unconscious parts and moments, it is not the same thing as when you are in an awakened and living communion with her. Mahalakshmi

(Beauty and Harmony)

Above the Wisdom of Maheshwari and the Force of Mahakali, is the subtler mystery of Mahalakshmi, the miracle of eternal beauty, and unseizable secret of divine harmonies, the compelling magic of an irresistible universal charm and attraction that draws and holds things and forces and beings together and obliges them to meet and unite that a hidden Ananda (bliss) may play from behind the veil and make of them its rhythms and its figures. There is no aspect of the Divine Shakti more attractive to the heart of embodied beings. All turn with joy and longing to Mahalakshmi, for she throws the spell of the intoxicating sweetness of the Divine: to be close to her is a profound happiness and to feel her within the heart is to make existence a rapture and a marvel; grace and charm and tenderness flow out from her like light from the sun and wherever she fixes her wonderful gaze or lets fall the liveliness of her smile, the soul is seized and made captive and plunged into the depths of an unfathomable bliss. And yet it is not easy to meet the demand of this enchanting Power or to keep her presence.

Harmony and beauty of the mind and soul, the thoughts and feelings; harmony and beauty in every outward act and movement and in the life and surroundings, this is the demand of Mahalakshmi. All that is ugly and mean and base, all that is poor and sordid and squalid, all that is brutal and coarse repels her advent. If she finds herself in men's hearts surrounded with selfishness and hatred and jealousy and malignancy and envy and strife, if treachery and greed and ingratitude are mixed in the sacred chalice, if grossness of passion and unrefined desire degrade devotion, in such hearts the gracious and beautiful Goddess will not linger. It is through love and beauty that she lays on men the yoke of the Divine. Life is turned into a rich work of celestial art and all existence into a poem of sacred delight. Even the simplest and commonest things are made wonderful by her intuition of

unity and the breath of her spirit. Admitted to the heart she lifts wisdom to pinnacles of wonder and reveals to it the mystic secrets of the ecstasy that surpasses all knowledge. **Mahakali**

(Force)

Mahakali is of another nature. Not wideness but height, not wisdom but force and strength are her peculiar power. There is in her an overwhelming intensity, a mighty passion of force to achieve, a divine violence rushing to shatter every limit or obstacle. All her divinity leaps out in a splendour of tempestuous action. Terrible is her face to the demonic Asura, dangerous and ruthless her mood against the haters of the Divine; for she is the Warrior of the Worlds who never shrinks from battle. Intolerant of imperfection she deals roughly with all in man that is unwilling and she is severe to all that is obstinately ignorant and obscure. Indifference, negligence and sloth in the divine work she cannot bear and she smites awake at once with sharp pain, if need be the untimely slumberer and the loiterer. Her love is as intense as her wrath and she has a deep and passionate kindness. Her anger is dreadful to the hostile, she is loved and worshipped by the great, the strong and the noble; for they feel that her blows beat what is rebellious in their material into strength and perfect truth, hammer straight what is wry and perverse and expel what is impure or defective. But for her what is done in a day might have taken centuries. Nothing can satisfy her that falls short of the supreme ecstasies, the highest heights, the noblest aims, the largest

vistas. Works Consulted

Ackrill, J. L. Aristotle the Philosopher. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1981.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=25493294>>

Ahmad, Aijaz. "Reconciling Derrida: 'spectres of Marx' and Deconstructive Politics."

New Left Review a.208 (1994): 88-106. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=98681871>>

Antosik, Stanley. "Utopian Machines: Leibniz's "Computer" and Hesse's "Glass Bead Game". Germanic Review 67.1 (1992): 35-45.

Arrington, Robert L. "Gilmore, Richard A. Philosophical Health: Wittgenstein's Method in "Philosophical Investigations." " The Review of Metaphysics 56.1 (2002): 173+.

Arthos, John. "Who Are We and Who Am I? Gadamer's Communal Ontology as Palimpsest." Communication Studies 51.1 (2000): 15.

Axtell, G. S. "Comparative Dialectics: Nishida Kitaro's Logic of Place and Western Dialectical Thought." Philosophy East & West XLI.2 (1991): 163-184.

Audi, Robert. Ed. The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Bahm, Archie J. The Philosopher's World Model. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=15338606>>

Barnard, Gustav. A Simple Plan for Enlightenment. Benton Harbor, MI: Patterson Printing, 1997.

Berg, Steven, and Albert E. Gunn. "The Mask of the Enlightenment. Nietzsche's Zarathustra." The Review of Metaphysics 52.2 (1998): 478.

Bernstein, Jeremy ""Alma De'atei," The-World-That-Is-Coming: Reflections on Power, Knowledge, Wisdom, and Progress". Cross Currents. 51.3. (Fall 2001): 308.

Berthold, Daniel. "Hegel." CLIO 32.3 (2003): 354+.

Bhattacharyya, Haridas, ed. The Cultural Heritage of India. 2nd ed. Calcutta: The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1953. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=20745889>>

Boeri, Marcelo D. "The Stoics on Bodies and Incorporeals." The Review of Metaphysics 54.4 (2001): 723+.

Bohm, David. "Science, Spirituality, and the Present World Crisis." Re-vision 15.4 (1993): 147-152.

Borradori, Giovanna. "Deleuze, Gilles. Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life." The Review of Metaphysics 56.4 (2003): 869+.

Bowne, Borden P. Metaphysics: A Study in First Principles. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1882. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=4772981>>

Boyer, Pascal. "Functional Origins of Religious Concepts: Ontological and Strategic Selection in Evolved Minds." Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute 6.2 (2000): 195.

Bradshaw, David. "Neoplatonic Origins of the Act of Being." The Review of Metaphysics 53.2 (1999): 383.

Braibanti, Ralph. "15 The Research Potential of Pakistan's Development." Pakistan:

- The Long View. Eds. Ziring, Lawrence, Ralph J. D. Braibanti, and W. Howard Wiggins. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1977. 430-479.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=58965502>>
- Braud, William G. "Human Interconnectedness: Research Indications." Re-vision 14.3 (1992): 140-148.
- Brown, Michael H. "A Psychosynthesis Twelve Step Program for Transforming Consciousness: Creative Explorations of Inner Space." Counseling and Values 45.2 (2001): 103.
- Burke, B. David. "Transcendence in Classical Sankhya." Philosophy East & West 38.4 (1988): 19-29.
- Bruteau, Beatrice. Worthy is the World: The Hindu Philosophy of Shri Aurobindo. Cranbury, New Jersey: Associated University Press, 1971.
- Buck, Harry M. "The Other Half of My Soul: Bede Griffiths and the Hindu-Christian Dialogue." Journal of Ecumenical Studies 35.1 (1998): 121+.
- Calcagno, Antonio. "Beyond Postmodernism: Langan's Foundational Ontology." The Review of Metaphysics 50.4 (1997): 817+.
- Casey, Edward S. "Smooth Spaces and Rough-Edged Places: The Hidden History of Place." The Review of Metaphysics 51.2 (1997): 267+.
- Celenza, Christopher S. "Pythagoras in the Renaissance: The Case of Marsilio Ficino." Renaissance Quarterly 52.3 (1999): 667.
- Chaudhuri, Haridas, and Frederic Spiegelberg, eds. Integral Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo: A Commemorative Symposium. London: Allen & Unwin, 1960.
- Christian, James L., ed. Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence: The First Encounter. Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1976. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=96870931>>
- Coffey, P. Epistemology; Or, the Theory of Knowledge; an Introduction to General Metaphysics. Vol. 2. Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1958.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=57858156>>
- Coffey, P. Epistemology: The Theory of Knowledge, an Introduction to General Metaphysics. Vol. 1. New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1917.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=59631812>>
- "Ghose, Aurobindo ." The Columbia Encyclopedia . 6th ed. 2000.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=8134619>>
- Comans, Michael. "The Question of the Importance of Samadhi in Modern and Classical Advaita Vedanta." Philosophy East & West XLIII.1 (1993): 19-38.
- Cook, Francis H. Hua-yen Buddhism. University Park: The Pennsylvania University Press, 1977.
- Cooper, Ron L. Heidegger and Whitehead: A Phenomenological Examination into the Intelligibility of Experience. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1993.
- Coward, Harold G. "Speech Versus Writing in Derrida and Bhartrhari." Philosophy East & West XLI.2 (1991): 141-162.

- Dahlstrom, Daniel. "Hans-Georg Gadamer." The Review of Metaphysics 55.4 (2002): 905+.
- Dallmayr, Fred. "Western Thought and Indian Thought: Comments on Ramanujan." Philosophy East & West 44.3 (1994): 527-542.
- De Nys, Martin J. "If Everything Can Not-Be There Would Be Nothing: Another Look at the Third Way." The Review of Metaphysics 56.1 (2002): 99+.
- Defoort, Carine, and Cheryl Wicker-Siegel. "Special Feature." Philosophy East & West XLI.3 (1991): 395-412.
- Desmond, William. "Being, Determination, and Dialectic: On the Sources of Metaphysical Thinking." The Review of Metaphysics 48.4 (1995): 731+.
- Doyle, John P. "Another God, Chimerae, Goat-Stags, and Man-Lions: A Seventeenth-Century Debate about Impossible Objects." The Review of Metaphysics 48.4 (1995): 771+.
- Doyle, John P. "Between Transcendental and Transcendental: The Missing Link." The Review of Metaphysics 50.4 (1997): 783+.
- Dreyfus, Hubert L. *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=82311679>>
- Durland, Karann. "Ten Problems of Consciousness: A Representational Theory of the Phenomenal Mind." The Review of Metaphysics 52.205 (1998): 184.
- Ehrlich, Leonard H. Philosophy as Faith. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1975.
- Elwood, Brian D. "The Problem of the Self in the Later Nishida and in Sartre." Philosophy East & West 44.2 (1994): 303-316.
- Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *Young Emerson Speaks: Unpublished Discourses on Many Subjects*. Ed. Arthur Cushman McGiffert. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1938. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=2905688>>
- Farrer, Austin. *Finite and Infinite: A Philosophical Essay*. Westminster, England: Dacre Press, 1943. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=6303540>>
- Feenberg, Andrew. "Experience and Culture: Nishida's Path 'To the Things Themselves'." Philosophy East & West 49.1 (1999): 28-44.
- Felt, James W. "Why Possible Worlds Aren't." The Review of Metaphysics 50.1 (1996): 63+.
- Fenner, Peter. "Spiritual Inquiry in Buddhism." Re-vision 17.2 (1994): 13-24.
- Feynman, Richard P. Six Easy Pieces. New York: Addison-Wesley, 1994.
- Fetzer, Glenn W. "Dupin's Parmenidean Echoes." French Forum 27.2 (2002): 117+.
- Fitts, Michael A. "Can Ignorance Be Bliss? Imperfect Information as a Positive Influence in Political Institutions." Michigan Law Review 88.5 (1990): 917-

- Flavour, Fivel. "Hegel's Eudaemonia." CLIO 29.2 (2000): 193.
- Fleming, Ed, and Albert E. Gunn. "European Existentialism." The Review of Metaphysics 52.2 (1998): 466.
- Forman, Robert K. C. ed The Problem of Pure Consciousness New York: Oxford University Press US. (1990)
- Forman, Robert K. C. "Paramartha and Modern Constructivists on Mysticism: Epistemological Monomorphism Versus Duomorphism." Philosophy East & West XXXIX.4 (1989): 393-418.
- Forman Robert K. C. ed The Innate Capacity: Mysticism, Psychology, and Philosophy. New York: Oxford University Press US. (1998)
- Fort, Andrew O. "Dreaming in Advaita Vedanta." Philosophy East & West XXXV.4 (1985): 377-386.
- Fost, Frederic F. "Playful Illusion: the Making of Worlds in Advaita Vedanta." Philosophy East & West 48.3 (1998): 387-405.
- Frisina, Warren G. "Heaven's Partners or Nietzschean Free Spirits?" Philosophy East & West 45.1 (1995): 29-60.
- Gandhi, Kishore, ed. The Evolution of Consciousness. New York: Paragon House, 1986. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=85978089>>
- Garfield, Jay L. "Dependent Arising and the Emptiness of Emptiness: Why Did Nagarjuna Start with Causation?" Philosophy East & West 44.2 (1994): 219-250.
- Garfield, Jay L. "Epoche and Sunyata: Skepticism East and West," Philosophy East & West XL.3 (1990): 285
- Gatti, Hilary. "Giordano Bruno and the Stuart Court Masques." Renaissance Quarterly 48.4 (1995): 809+.
- Gerson, Lloyd P. "Plotinus's Metaphysics: Emanation or Creation?" The Review of Metaphysics 46.3 (1993): 559+.
- Gleick, James. Genius. London: Pantheon Books, 1992.
- Ghose, Sisirkumar. "13 Consciousness and Culture." The Evolution of Consciousness. Ed. Gandhi, Kishore. New York: Paragon House, 1986. 190-194. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=85978089>>
- Goswami, Amit. "Creativity and the Quantum: a Unified Theory of Creativity." Creativity Research Journal 9.1 (1996): 47-61.
- Grimew, Johan. "Some Problems in the Epistemology of Advaita." Philosophy East & West XLI.3 (1991): 291-301.
- Groth, Miles. "Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity." The Review of Metaphysics 54.1 (2000): 147.
- Gupta, Bina, and William C. Wilcox. "'Tat Tvam Asi': an Important Identity

- Statement or a Mere Tautology." Philosophy East & West 34.1 (1984): 85-94.
- Gupta, Bina ed. Sexual Archetypes, East and West. New York: Paragon Press, 1987.
- Halpern, Diane F. Thought and Knowledge An Introduction to Critical Thinking. 3rd ed. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1996.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=57201004>>
- Haney, William S. "Beckett out of His Mind: The Theatre of the Absurd." Studies in the Literary Imagination 34.2 (2001): 39+.
- Hawley, John C., ed. Through a Glass Darkly: Essays in the Religious Imagination. New York: Fordham University Press, 1996.
- Heisig, James W. "Non-I and Thou: Nishida, Buber, and the Moral Consequences of Self-Actualization." Philosophy East & West 50.2 (2000): 179-207.
- Hinton, Timothy. "Kant and Aquinas on the Priority of the Good." The Review of Metaphysics 55.4 (2002): 825+.
- Hoffheimer, Michael, and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. "G.W.F. Hegel: The Transcendental Idea of God." CLIO 24.4 (1995): 419+.
- Hogan, Desmond. "Langton, Rae. Kantian Humility: Our Ignorance of Things in Themselves." The Review of Metaphysics 56.1 (2002): 185+.
- Honderich, Ted, ed. The Oxford Companion to Philosophy. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Jacobs, Jonathan. "Metaethics and Teleology." The Review of Metaphysics 55.1 (2001): 41+.
- Janssens, David. "The Problem of the Enlightenment: Strauss, Jacobi, and the Pantheism Controversy." The Review of Metaphysics 56.3 (2003): 605+.
- Jaspers, Karl. Philosophy of Existence. Trans. Grabau, Richard F. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=10559010>>
- Jenni, Kathie. "The Moral Responsibilities of Intellectuals." Social Theory and Practice 27.3 (2001): 437.
- David W. Orme-Johnson, and John T. Farrow, ed. Scientific Research on the Transcendental Meditation Program, Seelisberg: MERU Press, 1971.
- Jones, Richard H. "Must Enlightened Mystics Be Moral?." Philosophy East & West XXXIV.3 (1984): 273-293.
- Jones, Richard H. "Vidya and Avidya in the Asa Upanishad." Philosophy East & West 31.1 (1981): 79-87.
- Jung, Hwa Yol. "Edward O. Wilson's Theory of Consilience: A Hermeneutical Critique." International Journal of Public Administration (2002): 1171+.
- Kane, Pat. "There's Method in the Magic." New Statesman 23 Aug. 1996: 24+.
- Katz, Steven T., ed. Mysticism and Language. New York: Oxford University Press,

1992.

Keepin, William. "Lifework of David Bohm River of Truth." Re-vision 16.1 (1993): 32-46.

Kelly, John C. "Wittgenstein, the Self and Ethics." The Review of Metaphysics 48.3 (1995): 567+.

Kitaro, Nishida. Last Writings: Nothingness and the Religious Worldview. Trans. Dilworth, David A. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1987.

Kjellberg, Paul. "Skepticism, Truth, and the Good Life: a Comparison of Zhuangzi and Sextus Empiricus." Philosophy East & West 44.1 (1994): 111-133.

Kline, George L., ed. Alfred North Whitehead: Essays on His Philosophy. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963.

Kovacs, George. "The Presocratics after Heidegger." The Review of Metaphysics 54.2 (2000): 439+.

Kremer, Jergen W. "The Dark Night of the Scholar: Reflections on Culture and Ways of Knowing." Re-vision 14.4 (1992): 169-178.

Kruger, J S. Along Edges. University of South Africa: Pretoria, 1995.

Larson, Gerald James. "The Relation Between 'Action' and 'suffering' in Asian Philosophy." Philosophy East & West. 34 4. (1984): 351.

Lawrence, David. "Asiva's Self-Recognition and the Problem of Interpretation." Philosophy East & West 48.2 (1998): 197-231.

Lawrence, Fred. "The Fragility of Consciousness: Lonergan and the Postmodern Concern for the Other." Theological Studies 54.1 (1993): 55+.

Lawson, Todd. "Creation and the Timeless Order of Things: Essays in Islamic Mystical Philosophy." Journal of Ecumenical Studies 35.1 (1998): 129+.

Lee, Jung H. "Problems of Religious Pluralism: a Zen Critique of John Hick's Ontological Monomorphism." Philosophy East & West 48.3 (1998): 453-477.

Leclerc, Ivor. Whitehead's Metaphysics: An Introductory Exposition. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=10305727>>

Leighton, Joseph Alexander. Man and the Cosmos: An Introduction to Metaphysics. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1922. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=53193525>>

Levinson, Henry Samuel. Santayana, Pragmatism, and the Spiritual Life. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=43113658>>

Lewis, H. D. Our Experience of God. London: Allen & Unwin, 1959. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=6473753>>

Linker, Damon. "From Kant to Schelling: Counter-Enlightenment in the Name of Reason." The Review of Metaphysics 54.2 (2000): 337+.

- Long, Eugene Thomas. "Quest for Transcendence." The Review of Metaphysics 52.205 (1998): 3.
- Lorenzo, David J. Tradition and the Rhetoric of Right: Popular Political Argument in the Aurobindo Movement. Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1999. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=9183909>>
- Loy, David. "The Path of No-Path: Sankara and Dogen on the Paradox of Practice." Philosophy East & West XXXVIII.2 (1988): 127-146.
- Macy, Joanna, and Donald Rothberg. "Asking to Awaken." Re-vision 17.2 (1994): 25-33.
- Mahadevan, T. M. P. "The Significance of Sri Aurobindo." Integral Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo: A Commemorative Symposium. Eds. Chaudhuri, Haridas, and Frederic Spiegelberg. London: Allen & Unwin, 1960. 299-302.
- Malkovsky, Bradley. "Advaita Vedanta and Christian Faith." Journal of Ecumenical Studies (1999): 397.
- Marshall, Henry Rutgers. Consciousness. New York: Macmillan, 1909. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=59611266>>
- Marshall, Terence E., and Albert E. Gunn. "Final Causality in Nature and Human Affairs." The Review of Metaphysics 52.2 (1998): 451.
- Marso, Lori J. "The Stories of Citizens: Rousseau, Montesquieu, and De Stael Challenge Enlightenment Reason." Polity 30.3 (1998): 435+.
- Martin, Gottfried. Kant's Metaphysics and Theory of Science. Trans. Lucas, P. G. Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 1955. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=268429>>
- Maxfield, Melinda. "The Journey of the Drum." Re-vision 16.4 (1994): 157-163.
- McDermott, Robert A. "The Spiritual Mission of America." Re-vision 16.1 (1993): 15-25.
- McDermott, A. Robert. The Essential Aurobindo. Great Barrington, MA: Lindisfarne Books, (2001).
- Merchant, Vasant V. "The Contributions of India: The Seer-Scientists and the Renaissance in India." International Journal of Humanities and Peace 18.1 (2002): 4+.
- Merchant, Vasant V. "Savitri: A Legend & a Symbol - Sri Aurobindo's Modern Epic, the Vision of Savitri - Sri Aurobindo's Greatest Odyssey of the Spirit." International Journal of Humanities and Peace 16.1 (2000): 29.
- Miller, Fred D. Jr. "Aristotle's Philosophy of Soul." The Review of Metaphysics 53.2 (1999): 309.
- Miller, Mitchell. ""Unwritten Teachings" in the 'Parmenides.'" The Review of Metaphysics 48.3 (1995): 591+.
- "MIND." The Review of Metaphysics 54.1 (2000): 200.

- "MIND." The Review of Metaphysics 53.4 (2000): 1005.
- "Monist." The Review of Metaphysics 54.1 (2000): 202.
- Moore, Jared Sparks. *Rifts in the Universe: A Study of the Historic Dichotomies and Modalities of Being*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1927.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=1225068>>
- Muldoon, Mark S. "Silence Revisited: Taking the Sight out of Auditory Qualities." The Review of Metaphysics 50.2 (1996): 275+.
- Myers, Michael W. "Sankaracharya and Ananda." Philosophy East & West 48.4 (1998): 553-567.
- Nalimov, Zhanna Drogalina. "Nalimov's Conception of Human Nature." Re-vision 12.3 (1990): 19-30.
- Narayanan, Vasudha. "Water, Wood, and Wisdom: Ecological Perspectives from the Hindu Traditions." Daedalus 130.4 (2001): 179.
- Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *Religion & the Order of Nature*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=78825962>>
- Newton, Michael. Destiny of Souls. St Paul: Llewellyn Publications, 2000.
- Newton, Michael. Journey of Souls. St Paul: Llewellyn Publications, 1998.
- Nicholson, Kelly. The Transcendence of Materialism. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997.
- Nishitani, Keiji. "Ontology and Utterance." Philosophy East & West 31.1 (1981): 29-43.
- Norris, Christopher. "Theory-Change and the Logic of Enquiry: New Bearings in Philosophy of Science." The Review of Metaphysics 53.1 (1999): 21.
- Odin, Steve. "Sri Aurobindo and Hegel on the Involution-Evolution of Absolute Spirit." Philosophy East & West 31.2 (1981): 179-191.
- Ornatowski, Gregory K. "Transformations of "Emptiness" on the Idea of Sunyata and the Thought of Abe and the Kyoto School of Philosophy." Journal of Ecumenical Studies 34.1 (1997): 92+.
- Park, David. *The Image of Eternity: Roots of Time in the Physical World*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=91109514>>
- Paul, Diana Y. "The Structure of Consciousness in Paramartha's Purported Trilogy." Philosophy East & West XXXI.3 (1981): 297-319.
- Perl, Eric D. "The Presence of the Paradigm: Immanence and Transcendence in Plato's Theory of Forms." The Review of Metaphysics 53.2 (1999): 339.
- Perrett, Roy W. "Dualistic and Nondualistic Problems of Immortality." Philosophy East & West. 35.4. (1985): 333.
- Perrett, Roy W. "Is Whatever Exists Knowable and Nameable?" Philosophy East &

- West 49.4 (1999): 401-414.
- Perrett, Roy W. "The Problem of Induction in Indian Philosophy," Philosophy East & West XXXIV.2 (1984): 174.
- Phillips, Stephen H. "Padmapada's Illusion Argument." Philosophy East & West 37.1 (1987): 3-23.
- Phillips, Stephen H. Aurobindo's Philosophy of Brahman. Electronic Edition (2001).
- Price, Robert M. "Religious and Secular Humanism: What's the Difference." Free Inquiry. 22. 3. (Summer 2002): 47+.
- Possenti, Vittorio. "Nature, Life and Teleology." The Review of Metaphysics 56.1 (2002): 37+.
- Potter, Karl H. "The Karmic a Priori in Indian Philosophy," Philosophy East & West 42.3 (1992): 407.
- Raina, M.K., and Ashok K. Srivastava. "India's Search for Excellence: A Clash of Ancient, Colonial, and Contemporary Influences." Roeper Review 22.2 (2000): 102.
- Raj, Selva J. "Adapting Hindu Imagery: A Critical Look at Ritual Experiments in an Indian Catholic Ashram." Journal of Ecumenical Studies (2000): 333+.
- Ralston, Steven M. "The "Veil of Ignorance": Exploring Ethical Issues in the Employment Interview." Business Communication Quarterly 63.1 (2000): 50.
- Rao, K. Ramakrishna. "Anomalies of Consciousness: Indian Perspectives and Research." The Journal of Parapsychology 58.2 (1994): 149+.
- Reddy, Ananda. "Glimpses of Vedantism in Sri Aurobindo's Political Thought." International Journal of Humanities and Peace 18.1 (2002): 116.
- Reddy, V. Manamohan, and Aurobharati Trust. "Apropos of the New Millennium." International Journal of Humanities and Peace 16.1 (2000): 10.
- Reichberg, Gregory M. "Beyond Privation: Moral Evil in Aquinas's De Malo." The Review of Metaphysics 55.4 (2002): 751+.
- Rice, Cale Young. A New Approach to Philosophy. Lebanon, TN: The Cumberland university press, 1943. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=61933183>>
- Robertson, John. "The Enlightenment." History Review (1997): 40+.
- Rosen, Stanley. "Leo Strauss and the Possibility of Philosophy." The Review of Metaphysics 53.3 (2000): 541.
- Rothberg, Donald. "Spiritual Inquiry." Re-vision 17.2 (1994): 2-12.
- Rothberg, Donald. "Understanding Mysticism: Transpersonal Theory and the Limits of Contemporary Epistemological Frameworks." Re-vision 12.2 (1989): 5-21.
- Rothman, Tony, and George Sudarshan. Doubt and Certainty. Reading, MA: Perseus Publishing, 1998.
- Runde, Jochen. "On Popper, Probabilities and Propensities." Review of Social

- Economy 54.4 (1996): 465+.
- Schellhammer, Erich P. "Alterity and Transcendence." The Review of Metaphysics 54.2 (2000): 452+.
- Scherer, Irmgard. "The Problem of the a Priori in Sensibility: Revisiting Kant's and Hegel's Theories of the Senses." The Review of Metaphysics 52.2 (1998): 341.
- Schilbrack, Kevin. "Etaphysics in Dogen." Philosophy East & West 50.1 (2000): 34-55.
- Schlitz, Marilyn. "Boundless Mind: Coming of Age in Parapsychology." The Journal of Parapsychology 65.4 (2001): 335+.
- Schlagel, Richard H. "The Waning of the Light: The Eclipse of Philosophy." The Review of Metaphysics 57.1 (2003): 105+.
- Srinivasan, Thaiyar M. "Healing and Consciousness." International Journal of Humanities and Peace 18.1 (2002): 105+.
- Sharma, Chandradhar. *Indian Philosophy: A Critical Survey*. London: Rider, 1960.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=6077639>>
- Sherburne, Donald W. "Some Reflections on Sartre's Nothingness and Whitehead's Perishing." The Review of Metaphysics 48.1 (1994): 3+.
- Siderits, Mark. "Buddhist Reductionism." Philosophy East & West 47.4 (1997): 455-478.
- Simon, Yves R. *An Introduction to Metaphysics of Knowledge*. Trans. Kuic, Vukan, and Richard J. Thompson. New York: Fordham University Press, 1990.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=52319491>>
- Slater, Robert Lawson. *Paradox and Nirvana: A Study of Religious Ultimates with Special Reference to Burmese Buddhism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=6128214>>
- Smith, Ernest J. "John Berryman's Short Fiction: Elegy and Enlightenment." Studies in Short Fiction 30.3 (1993): 309+.
- Smuts, J. C. *Holism and Evolution*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=1068695>>
- Solomon, Robert C., and Kathleen M. Higgins. *A Short History of Philosophy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=83241788>>
- Sorokin, Pitirim A., ed. Explorations in Altruistic Love and Behavior: A Symposium. Boston: Beacon Press, 1950.
- Sorokin, Pitirim A. *The Reconstruction of Humanity*. Boston: The Beacon Press, 1948. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=6515404>>
- Steele, Springs. "Christian Insight Meditation: A Test Case on Interreligious Spirituality." Buddhist-Christian Studies (2000): 217.
- Stenger, Victor J. "New Age Physics: Has Science Found the Path to the Ultimate?"

- Free Inquiry. 16.3. (Summer 1996): 7+.
- Stenger, Victor J. *Physics and Psychics: The Search for a World beyond the Senses*. Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1990.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=91147962>>
- Stiernotte, Alfred P., ed. *Mysticism and the Modern Mind*. New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1959.
- Taliaferro, Charles, and Albert E. Gunn. "Events of Grace: Naturalism, Existentialism, and Theology." *The Review of Metaphysics* 52.2 (1998): 449.
- Taylor, Jonathan. "The Emerging Geographies of Virtual Worlds." *The Geographical Review* 87.2 (1997): 172.
- Taylor, Richard. *Metaphysics*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1963.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=94950180>>
- Teasdale, Wayne. "The Interspiritual Age: Practical Mysticism for the Third Millennium." *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 34.1 (1997): 74.
- Timm, Jeffrey R. "The Celebration of Emotion: Vallabha's Ontology of Affective Experience." *Philosophy East & West* 41.1 (1991): 59-75.
- Trapnell, Judson B. "Indian Sources on the Possibility of a Pluralist View of Religions." *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 35.2 (1998): 210+.
- Tucker, Mary Evelyn. "Religious Dimensions of Confucianism: Cosmology and Cultivation." *Philosophy East & West* 48.1 (1998): 5-45.
- Underhill, Evelyn. *Worship*. New York; London: Harper, 1937.
- Upadhyaya, K. N. "Indian Tradition and Negation." *Philosophy East & West* 38.3 (1988): 281-289.
- Van Nortwick, Thomas. *Somewhere I Have Never Traveled: The Hero's Journey*. New York: Oxford US, 1995. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=62525750>>
- Vaughan, Frances. "True and False Mystical Experiences: Some Distinguishing Characteristics." *Re-vision* 12.1 (1989): 4-10.
- Vedder, Peter. "Metaphysics in Ordinary Language." *The Review of Metaphysics* 54.1 (2000): 167.
- Verene, Donald Phillip. "Metaphysical Narration, Science and Symbolic Form." *The Review of Metaphysics* 47.1 (1993): 115+.
- Wagar, W. Warren. *Good Tidings: The Belief in Progress from Darwin to Marcuse*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=12566371>>
- Walsh, Roger. "Shamanism and Early Human Technology: the Technology of Transcendence." *Re-vision*. 12.1. (1989): 34-40.
- Walsh, Roger. "Shamanic Cosmology. a Psychological Examination of the Shaman's Worldview." *Re-vision* 13 2. (1990): 86-100.
- Walsh, Roger. "The Transpersonal Movement: a History and State of the Art." *Re-*

vision 16.3 (1994): 115-122.

Ward, Keith. Religion and Human Nature. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=23456315>>

Ward, Keith. Religion and Revelation: A Theology of Revelation in the World's Religions. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.
<<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=24672109>>

Washburn, Michael. "Two Patterns of Transcendence." Re-vision 13.1 (1990): 3-15.

Weberman, David. "The Nonfixity of the Historical Past." The Review of Metaphysics 50.4 (1997): 749+.

Westphal, Kenneth R. "'Hegel's' Epistemology? Reflections on Some Recent Expositions." CLIO 28.3 (1999): 303.

Wilber, Ken. "Boomeritis vs. Spiritual Growth in the New Millennium." Tikkun Nov. 1999: 34.

Wilber, Ken. "Paths Beyond Ego the Coming Decade." Re-vision 15.4 (1993): 188-192.

Wilber, Ken. ed. The Holographic Paradigm. Boston & London: Shambala Publications, 1985.

Whicher, Ian. "Yoga and Freedom: a Reconsideration of Patanjali's Classical Yoga." Philosophy East & West 48.2 (1998): 272-322.

Wolfe, George. "Inner Space as Sacred Space: The Temple as Metaphor for the Mystical Experience." Cross Currents. 52. 3. (Fall 2002): 400+.

Wood, Robert E. "Individuals, Universals and Capacity." The Review of Metaphysics 54.3 (2001): 507+.

Wood, Robert E. "Taking the Universal Viewpoint: A Descriptive Approach." The Review of Metaphysics 50.4 (1997): 769+.

Wright, Dale S. "Rethinking Transcendence: the Role of Language in Zen Experience." Philosophy East & West 42.1 (1992): 113-138.

Wright, Peggy A. "A Psychobiological Approach to Shamanic Altered States of Consciousness." Re-vision 16.4 (1994): 164-172.

Wyschogrod, Michael. Kierkegaard and Heidegger: The Ontology of Existence. London: Routledge & Paul, 1954. <<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=1757109>>

Xiao-Ming, Wu. "Philosophy, Philosophia., and Zhe-Xue." Philosophy East & West 48.3 (1998): 406-452.

Zuckert, Catherine H. "Plato's 'Parmenides': A Dramatic Reading." The Review of Metaphysics 51.4 (1998): 875+.

Zuckert, Catherine H. "Who's a Philosopher? Who's a Sophist? the Stranger V. Socrates." The Review of Metaphysics 54.1 (2000): 65.

Zupko, Jack. "How Are Souls Related to Bodies? A Study of John Buridan." The Review of Metaphysics 46.3 (1993): 575+.