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Author: Shree Jayantibhai Patel  
Title: Astāᅅga Yoga and Integral Yoga  
 A Comparison

Abstract:

The first chapter contains in it the philosophy, psychology and disciplines of Pataᅅjali's Yoga under the title Astāᅅga Yoga. There is in it a description of Yama, Niyama, Āsana, Prāᅅnāyama, Prāᅅtyāhāra, Dhyāna, Dhāraᅅna, Samāᅅdhi. The section of Samadhi deals with seven types of Samāᅅdhis mentioned in Patanjali's text.

The second chapter contains in it the philosophy, psychology and disciplines of Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga. There is in it a description of Sāstra, Utᅅsaha, Guru, Kāla, Aspiration, Rejection and Surrender. The section on Surrender deals with Surrender of Soul, Surrender of Nature and Surrender of both Soul and Nature in the light of Sri Aurobindo's teaching.

The third chapter is devoted to the comparison of Pataᅅjali's Yoga with Sri Aurobindo's Yoga where similarities and dissimilarities between the two Yogas are considered in aim, scope and development. The points covered appear in the summarised form at the end of each chapter. The Thesis contains in it a comprehensive bibliography of both Yogas and simplifies for the reader the complexity involved in understanding( )the essential principles of the teachings of Pataᅅjali and Aurobindo.

ASTĀNGA YOGA AND INTEGRAL YOGA  
A COMPARISON

By: SHREE JAYANTIBHAI PATEL

This thesis prepared and submitted for M. A. Degree of University of Durham. Study and research for the thesis done in the School of Oriental Studies from October 1979 to August 1983

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CHAPTER 1

ASTĀṄGA YOGA

## ASTĀNGA YOGA

### Introduction

Patañjali's yoga-sūtra discusses the ways and means by which the individual can know the reality by direct experiences. A sūtra is a short sentence or aphorism. It is precise in meaning which is conveyed through <sup>a</sup> minimum use of words. Any original work woven around rules or maxims in a string can be called sūtra. As in science, the ideas are conveyed clearly and precisely through the minimum use of words. Patañjali's yoga <sup>can</sup> therefore <sup>be called</sup> a science even though it can equally be an art. Sūtras formulated an important method by which the different philosophies were conveyed in ancient time in India. Originally, the essence of the sūtras was passed on through an oral tradition. In the olden days, those who studied sūtras had access to teachers or gurus who elaborated the knowledge embodied in the condensed form of sūtras. These teachers also gave practical guidance and help. In our time we have access to commentaries written by different authors in book form.

As for Patañjali, the author of yoga-sūtra, nothing definite is known. Any historical information given on Patañjali's background would be considered to be speculative and uncertain. The practices expounded by Patañjali are certainly very ancient and have stood the test of time. <sup>(1)</sup> Yoga confined itself traditionally to <sup>the</sup> individual right from the start in <sup>the</sup> vedic age. It was in Patañjali's time it became orderly and systematic for the purposes of group teaching. In the sphere of yoga Patañjali's role is well known. He undoubtedly succeeded in presenting a practical handbook of yoga of very ancient techniques. In the very first sūtra Patañjali says that what is being described is not original or new but is based on authoritative work before him. In defining yoga sage Patañjali in his yoga-sūtras says that controlling, disciplining and sublimating all the contents of mind is yoga. <sup>(2)</sup> The sage Vyāsa defines yoga as samādhi the state of super consciousness and perfect bliss. <sup>(3)</sup>





Yoga-sūtras of Patañjali are in a book form divided in four chapters or Pāda containing in all 195 aphorisms.

The first chapter contain 51 sūtras and is called Samādhi Pāda. In it we find the introduction, definition of yoga and the means of sustaining clarity of mind including different levels of concentrations.

The second chapter containing 55 sūtras is called Sādhana Pāda. It deals mainly with the means by which mental clarity may be attained. It describes Kriyā yoga, the action of Karma and Yama, Niyama, Asana, Prāṇāyāma and Pratyāhāra of the eight-fold Aṣṭāṅga yoga.

The third chapter contains 55 sūtras. It is called Vibhūti Pāda. It deals with the refinement of mental perception and concentrations. This refinement leads to the mastery of nature (prakṛiti) which in turn results in the acquisition of supernatural powers (vibhūti). The chapter also includes <sup>the</sup> description of Dhyāna, Dhāraṇa and Samādhi, the last three limbs of Aṣṭāṅga yoga. These are considered as the fruits of the disciplined actions stated in the second chapter. The last part of the chapter deals with the perfection or siddhis. The highest siddhi being complete purity of mind leading to Kaivalya or Liberation.

The fourth chapter has 34 sūtras in it and is called Kaivalya Pāda. This chapter deals with the evolution of mind and body leading to freedom Kaivalya of the soul (purusha) from matter (prakṛiti).

There are many commentaries on Patañjali's yoga. For the purpose of writing this thesis the sūtras outlined are adapted from those given by the following authors in their books.

Rohit Mehta: Yoga: The Art of Integration. Adyar, 1975.

I.K. Taimini: The Science of Yoga, 1965.

Rama Prasāda: Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, with the commentary of Vyasa and Gloss of Vichaspati Misra. Published by Sudhindranatha Vasu, 1912.

## Philosophy of Astānga Yoga

Wise men of the world have identified the path of worldly pleasure as the path of bhoga (pleasure seeking) and the path of spiritual attainment and elevation as the path of yoga (union with God). The former path is meant for the worldly person in which his material well-being is paramount. The later one is meant for the renunciate who aspire and endeavour for his spiritual well-being only. The path of spiritual well-being is no doubt an open path and a universal one but requires fitness for progress. Human effort falls in four categories according to four ends or objectives of life, viz., artha (wealth), kāma (desire), dharma (religion) and moksa (liberation). The first two pulls him towards worldly things whereas the last two lead one towards God which culminate in one's upliftment, knowledge, and liberation (Kaivalya).

The Philosophy of Patañjali is embodied in the last section of the yoga sūtras entitled Kaivalya Pāda. <sup>The</sup> Sanskrit word Kaivalya is ordinarily translated to mean liberation but the real connotation of the word is Absoluteness or Aloneness. Absoluteness or Aloneness which is a reality is indeed incomparable. Reality, Truth, God which cannot be compared with anything else, that which has no second is surely the Alone or the Absolute. It is the relative that can be compared and contrasted. Absolute as a matter of fact is not the opposite of relative. That which can be compared is not the Absolute.

By Astānga Yoga we mean the yoga of eight-fold limbs. This appears in Yoga darsana also known as Patañjali's Yoga sūtras. Yoga darsana follows the Sāṃkhya system of philosophy. The eight limbs of yoga are mentioned in sūtra 29 of the chapter called The Instruments of Yoga or Sādhana Pāda. The eight instruments of yoga are abstinences (Yama), observances (Niyama), posture (Āsana), breath control (Prāṇāyāma), abstraction (Prātyāhara), awareness (Dhāraṇa), attention (Dhyāna) and communion or absorption (Samādhi).<sup>(4)</sup>

## Psychology of Astānga Yoga

Patañjali uses the word limb (āṅga) to describe the eight-fold discipline. A limb on its own separated from the body has very little meaning because it is lifeless. When the limbs are together they constitute the wholeness of living. Therefore it is important that these disciplines are not separated one from the other because to do so would render them meaningless and purposeless. They together form the core of the whole yoga and constitute the wholeness of yoga practice.

In reading commentaries on Yoga sūtras sometimes we find <sup>the</sup> eight-fold discipline split up into four outer and four inner. Yama, Niyama, Āsana, Prānāyama constitute the four outer disciplines and Pratyāhara, Dhāraṇa, Dhyāna and Samādhi constitute the four inner disciplines. In order to assess the value of this split up, it would be true to say that the first four are outer disciplines and the last three are inner disciplines and pratyāhāra or abstraction is the bridge between the two. In fact Patañjali discusses the last three disciplines dhāraṇa, dhyāna and samādhi not in the same section but in Vibhūti Pāda or the third section of the Yoga sūtras. When we go in depth we find that there is not only a bridge between the outer and inner but there are sub-bridges in between. These bridges are described in the following paragraph.

Yama in fact settles things with people through remaining non-violent, truthful, non-stealing, abstinence and non-possession. Thus yama creates harmony between the self and the others. Yama is therefore a bridge between the others and self. Niyama is concerned with regularity of self. <sup>The</sup> discipline of āsana is concerned with the preparation of self through correct posture. Once the body is prepared through regularity and correct posture, it has to be linked with the mind. Prānāyama which is breath control is the bridge between mind and body. Pratyāhara is withdrawal of senses. Dhāraṇa is concentration and training of senses and the mind. Once this is done the bridge between mind and soul is

built by dhyāna through which the goal of samādhi is reached. Thus the three sub-bridges are (1) between self and others; (2) between body and mind and (3) between mind and soul.<sup>(5)</sup>

### Practice or Disciplines of Astānga Yoga

Yoga must have its philosophy, psychology and practice. Without it, it cannot stand nor can it become a living reality. We have covered briefly the philosophical and psychological ground of Patañjali's yoga. We shall in the following pages consider the ground of discipline required in practicing the Astānga yoga.

#### Yama

The path of yoga demands the health of the body and mind. Unhealthy body and ill mind cannot adequately serve the purpose of progress. Patañjali mentions Yama and Niyama. Yama means abstinences. Niyama means observances. Abstinences and observances are necessary for the maintenance of health of the body and mind. Although the emphasis is on abstaining which is negative, there are positive gains in discarding certain unhealthy habits and tendencies of the body and the mind. The content of abstinences or yama are five in number, which are:

1. Ahimsā 2. Satya 3. Asteya 4. Brahmacarya and 5. Aparigraha.

#### (1) Ahimsa (non-violence)

This means abstaining from harming any living being by speech, thought or action. It also means abstaining from killing and hurting other beings.

#### (2) Satya

Satya is truthfulness. It is the quality which considers the inherent good of all beings and in which there is no tinge of falsehood. In practice it is implied that one must abstain from telling lies and refrain from falseness of any kind.

#### (3) Asteya

Asteya is non-stealing. In practice Asteya means never desiring

to possess by mind or speech either outwardly or secretly the wealth of another.

(4) Brahmacarya

Brahmacarya is usually translated as celibacy in the sense that it is one of the abstinences. But this is a very narrow interpretation of the word. Brahmacarya truly means non-indulgence of all kinds including sexual union because sexual union has been regarded as the most powerful diverting influence from which a fully committed yogi should refrain. Brahmacarya means abstinence from all display whether of crude or subtle nature.

(5) Aparigraha

Aparigraha means non-possessiveness which has to be understood in its deeper context. It is an attitude of the mind in which the austerity of non-possessiveness is paramount. Aparigraha is so absolute that it would not consider anything to be one's own even if it is essential for living. There is as much possession in denial as there is in indulgence.

Ahimsā, Satya, Asteya, Brahmacarya and Aparigraha are the disciplines of Yama. They are in fact the very base, the foundation of yoga. Abstinences of yama are necessary for harmonious living in society and cannot be by-passed because without them the building can fall any day. <sup>if by-passed</sup> It may kill neighbours and it may kill oneself. Yama settles things with people by giving them the calm they want. Yama also creates harmony between the self and the others. Yama is a bridge between self and others.

Five-fold abstinence mentioned in yama seems like a gospel of perfection. What else is needed in yoga? Why does Patañjali need eight limbs of yoga? One has to understand that yoga discipline is a continuing process which has no end or a culminating point. As there is no end to living, so there can be no end to discipline. Discipline has to be as

dynamic as living is. Patañjali's eight-fold limbs of yoga are tremendously dynamic. They become static only when we regard them as instruments of reaching some end or goal. On discipline, Patañjali says that "neither the biological nor the physical nor the social factors must stand in the observance of the discipline of yoga".<sup>(6)</sup> When discipline is born out of a sense of total responsibility then there are no excuses whatsoever in their observance. It is in imposing external or internal disciplines that excuses and pretext come into existence. We have seen that yama is a bridge between self and others. There are other bridges to be crossed. For each crossing a discipline is necessary.

### Niyama

Niyama means rule or law. This has nothing to do with others. Yama deals with the others. Niyama deals with the problem of regularity of living. The five Niyamas specified by Patañjali are sauch (purity), santoṣa (contentment), tapas (austerity), svādhyāya (self development) and iśvar prañidhāna (surrender to God).

#### (1) Sauca

Sauca means purity. It includes in it the purity of air, water, food we consume and also purity of body and mind. <sup>The</sup> Body collects dust everyday which has to be cleaned. Inner core of mind is covered with other things like impure desires, motives and urges. The action has to emanate from pure desires, motives and urges.

#### (2) Santoṣa

Santoṣa is contentment. Contentment is not consolation even though they seem similar in meaning. Contentment is a positive state of being whole. Consolation is a suppression. Contentment is seeing of life as it is and not through desires or through elation or depression. In contentment the aspirant bears equally

the pain and pleasure, loss and gain, contempt and fame, failure and success, fortune and misfortune, hostility and sympathy. In santoṣa there is real self-containment through which one experiences the secret of happiness. This happiness remains uncorrupt even in time process. Contentment becomes possible in innocence of mind, in purity of life and plasticity and weightlessness of body.

(3) Tapas

Tapas means traditionally austerity and it is arrived at through the removal of impurities as Patañjali puts it in the verse 43 of sādhana pāda. "Through the removal of impurities one comes to austerity or tapas where the body and senses acquire great sensitivity."<sup>(7)</sup>

Tapas does not mean torturing of body or rendering of senses unresponsive. Tapas is to be regarded as simplicity in which comforts of body and satisfaction of mind are put aside, making the functioning of body and mind in great sensitivity. In such sensitivity one is able to respond to the beauty of trees, animals and man. In tapas all crudities are burnt and put aside making the sense organs unresponsive to vulgar and crude evocation. Cultivated goodness of asteya or non-stealing become natural practice in tapas. To be austere is to be free from the impurities of body and mind which may include fasting and other ascetic practices like begging, rising from bed before sunrise, etc. Through such austere practices<sup>the</sup> aspirant increases his self-control and will-power. In all imitation the ugly factor of stealing is present. Austerity is not imitation because all the superfluous and the imitation wants of body and mind get dropped through discarding of impurities and crudities of body and mind. When one is content then austerity is not a means to some goal.

Austerity is possible after contentment because it is a simple way of living.

(4) Svādhyāya

Svādhyāya is self-study. An aspirant can do this because he has purity (śauca), contentment (santoṣa) and austerity (tapas) established in him. He can now study self because he has thrown away all the rubbish. With rubbish piled, it will not be the study of self but study of rubbish. When one has become very simple after austerity, no rubbish accumulates, desires do not bother because of contentment. The domination of habits of stealing are no longer there because of purity or śauca. One then gets ready for self-development or self-education.

We know that when mind is pushed away from one point it settles down in its opposite, in the hope that it would be safe and secure there. The mind in its working after rejecting crude and superfluous tends to indulge in that which has not been rejected. It is in tapas or austerity the aspirant explores and investigates the areas of rejection. What is left when rejection is accomplished? There remains the area of acceptance. Investigation of the area of acceptance is the work of svādhyāya or self-study. It is in tapas (austerity) and svādhyāya (self-study) Patañjali refers to the nature and content of opposites of mind. Tapas by itself is not enough; there has to be a non-indulgence in the other opposite also. It is in self-study or svādhyāya student of yoga becomes aware of this indulgence in the other. The negative rejection of one indulgence of tapas or austerity become positive non-indulgence in svādhyāya or self-study. When Brahmacarya which is celibacy, is practised as Niyama, it results in strain and tension. In svādhyāya, Brahmacarya is completely effortless. In ceaseless svādhyāya



rejection of one and non-indulgence in the other co-exist.

In svyādhyāya, Brahmacarya becomes not only as conservation of energy but it also performs the act of the renewal of energy. (8)

(5) Iśvarpranidhāna

Iśvarpranidhāna is surrender to the Divine or in other words resignation. For surrender the aspirant has to find himself through svyādhyāya or self-study which prepares him for disappearance in the transcendent reality. Iśvarpranidhāna indicates a state of consciousness where the interest of the mind have dropped and desires of life have withered away. When this happens one lives in open spaces. This is a state of openness. This openness is indeed the life content of Aparigraha or non-possessiveness. As long as the mind holds on to conformity, conclusions, cunningness and images there is no Aparigraha. In such a mind there is no display of non-possession. Mind remains content in non-possessiveness and is completely unconcerned about its belonging or lack of them. Thus Aparigraha of yama and Iśvarpranidhāna of Niyama are related. Aparigraha of yama is in the negative soil of non-possession while in Niyama of Iśvarpranidhāna mind and life function freely in the positive ground of openness of spaces where non-possession is effortless. Iśvarpranidhāna is thus right orientation. In its highest form the Niyama of Iśvarpranidhāna is a communion which when used with yama, āsana and prānāyama can become a bridge between self and others through which communication can take place.

Āsana

Āsana means posture or position. Yoga science lays great emphasis on physical postures. Patañjali mentions this as third limb in the

Aṣṭāṅga yoga. Attainment of proficiency in the āsanas is regarded as important criterion for the perfection and strengthening of yoga discipline through which both mind and body gain great benefit. It is true that body and mind affect each other. If the body is diseased, the mind naturally will be full of diseases. The aspirant should study and practise various āsanas (postures) in order to make his body and mind healthy. On āsanas Patañjali says that "posture should be steady and comfortable".<sup>(9)</sup>

"By relaxation of effort and meditation on the 'Endless'." (Posture is mastered)<sup>(10)</sup>

"From that (mastery of posture) no assaults from the pair of opposites."<sup>(11)</sup>

Patañjali gives only three sūtras which describe the technique of āsanas, <sup>(Sūtra 4.47, 48, 49. Samādhi Pāda)</sup> In these three sūtras Patañjali has condensed beautifully the essentials. In the first sūtra he says that āsana should be steady and comfortable. On mastering the posture Patañjali suggests the gradual slackening of effort which transfers the control of the body from the conscious to subconscious mind, so that the latter can remain in the prescribed position without the attention and effort from the former. The other means for acquiring this stability in āsana is meditation on anant the endless. The third sūtra refers to perfecting the āsanas. Patañjali refers here to dualities of heat and cold, joy and sorrow which primarily affect the consciousness and act as a hindrance to mind in going within. They produce distraction from which the aspirant has to rise for gaining perfection of āsana. It is to be remembered that āsana which achieves steadiness without accompanying grace is rigid and hard, while āsana performed in grace but without steadiness is weak and fragile. It is in perfectly relaxed state both steadiness and grace combine as a natural expression of one who is truly established in yoga āsana.

Patañjali has given to āsana their rightful place, neither exaggerating their importance nor under-estimating their value. We must take into account the warning of true yoga which proclaims that by physical postures alone one cannot regain one's health because mind also plays a very important role. While āsanas may help in revitalising the brain, the operations of the mind are completely outside their purview. It is the mind which makes or mars the physical health largely in our living. When this warning of true yoga is pushed aside, yoga becomes merely physical culture or keep-fit. The core of true yoga is embedded in Dhāraṇa-dhyāna-samādhi in Aṣṭāṅga yoga of Patañjali. Raja yoga of Patañjali regards these three constituents Dhāraṇa-dhyāna-samādhi as central and all else as subsidiary.

On the question of choosing the āsana Patañjali is neutral. In fact he has dealt with the subject in just three sūtras without naming any āsana. He does not mention even padmāsan, the crosslegged or lotus traditionally regarded as very important for meditation in India.

### Prāṇāyama

Health of the body does not mean merely the elimination of disease. This is a negative view. In its positive view, health signifies vitality. A body must not only be reasonably strong but it must at the same time possess great vitality. Vitality is concerned with breathing. Patañjali, therefore, proceeds from āsanas to prāṇāyama or breath control. He deals with the subject matter in five sūtras (49-53 Sādhanā Pāda). Prāṇāyama means control (vama) of the vital energy (Prāṇa).

One can make one's breathing more normal with the help of deep breaths, especially in <sup>the</sup> open air and alternate breathing, but something more is needed for the vitalization of the brain. Patañjali

in sūtra 49 says that "this having been accomplished, there has to be prāṇāyamā or breath control which is the creation of an interval between inhaling and exhaling".<sup>(12)</sup> In terms of this sūtra prāṇāyama means an interval between inhaling and exhaling. In practical terms after inhaling the breath is retained before exhaling or after exhaling the breath is held before inhaling. In the yogic terms inhalation is called pūraka, exhalation recaka and retention kumbhaka. It is kumbhaka which forms the interval between pūraka and recaka and therefore kumbhaka alone constitutes prāṇāyama. The vitalization of body and brain are accomplished in kumbhaka or retention. In other categories of breathing there is no retention because in them inhalation is followed immediately by exhalation. It is the kumbhaka or retention which is the essential ingredient for ~~the~~ process of vitalization. It is essential that due care is exercised in doing kumbhaka because if kumbhaka is over-done then surely one's respiratory organism may get damaged.

On the technique of Prāṇāyama Patañjali has mentioned that "the interval is regulated by place, time and number and is deep and quiet".<sup>(13)</sup> Here by place, Patañjali denotes as to where the kumbhaka or retention is done. Kumbhaka can be done outside or inside. One may retain the breath. This is called ābhyantara or internal kumbhaka. One may exhale and before inhaling the breath may be retained. This is called bāhya or external kumbhaka. Patañjali then speaks of Time or Kāla. Time here denotes duration. It does not mean that Prāṇāyama has to be done at an appointed hour. It is advised that Prāṇāyama should not be done on a heavy stomach for health reasons. The duration of kumbhaka will vary from individual to individual. Therefore each individual must determine duration of kumbhaka for himself bearing in mind the fact that he does not feel uncomfortable in the time he has chosen. The moment any discomfort is felt kumbhaka

must be abandoned. Experts in the field of Prānāyama suggest that kumbhaka should not be more than three minutes. This time can exceed if it is done under the supervision of an expert. By number, Patañjali means the ratio between inhalation, retention and exhalation.

Patañjali does not tell us the ratio because the ratio has to be determined by each student for himself. In arriving at the determination of ratio each student must bear in mind the ease and comfort with which he can do the kumbhaka. Here also experts suggest that the ratio between inhalation, retention and exhalation should be 1 : 4 : 2.<sup>(14)</sup> By this it is meant that if inhalation is spread over two seconds, retention should not be more than eight seconds and exhalation not more than four seconds. It is essential that deep breathing and alternate breathing be done before Prānāyama is undertaken. These breathing help in removing congestion from the brain. He can then employ kumbhaka for the vitalization of body and brain.

Patañjali in sūtra 51 says that "when the interval is unaccompanied by inhaling and exhaling then it is an advanced state of breath control".<sup>(15)</sup> Patañjali speaks here of transcending kumbhaka. We have discussed so far three kinds of breathing, deep, alternate and interrupted breathing (kumbhaka). There are different types of kumbhaka. They are 1. Sūryabhedana; 2. Ujjāyi; 3. Sitkari; 4. Sitali; 5. Bhastrikā; 6. Brāmari, according to Tantric texts.<sup>(16)</sup> The three kinds of breathing mentioned belong to the variety called sahitakumbhaka because in these breathings kumbhaka is accompanied by inhaling and exhaling. The word sahita means accompanied by. The second variety is called Kevala Kumbhaka or pure kumbhaka where there is no accompaniment of inhaling and exhaling. Kevala Kumbhaka may be described as suspended breathing or non-breathing. This is an advanced state of breathing and should not be taken up without the supervision of an expert in Prānāyāma. It would be safe to restrict to sahita kumbhaka or

interrupted breathing for unsupervised beginners.

Patañjali treats Prāṇāyāma as only a landmark on the further journey of yoga. <sup>the</sup> Landmark is a place for a pause. It is not a place to settle down. In his sūtras, Patañjali says that "in the interval there comes a clarity of perception".<sup>(17)</sup> Clear perceptions are formed <sup>the</sup> by brain while clear conceptions are arrived at by the mind. According to the sūtra quoted above, it is quite obvious that Prāṇāyāma helps the brain to perform its perceptive work smoothly and efficiently by liberating prāṇa (life-form) from the nādis or nerve channels. Prāṇāyāma purifies nadis or nerve channels. There are three nadis Pingala (right), Susumana (middle) and Idā (left) according to tantric texts.

In the last sūtra on Prāṇāyāma, Patañjali elucidates the purpose of Prāṇāyāma. He says that "it prepares the mind for the state of Dhāraṇa or awareness."<sup>(18)</sup> Dhāraṇa is concentration usually. We may describe it as elimination of distraction. There are sensorial distractions and there are psychological distractions relating to the activities of the brain and mind respectively. In Hatha yoga it is believed that bodily disciplines of posture and Prāṇāyāma can bring about a control of the mind because the body is connected with the brain and mind. Hence great emphasis is laid on the disciplines of Prāṇāyāma in Hatha yoga. But in Rāja yoga it is contended that it is the mind that controls the body. Mind is the determining factor and not the body. The question that is posed here is which controls the mind or body. Patañjali in the sūtra quoted above says that Prāṇāyāma prepares the mind for dealing with Dhāraṇa. He does not indicate that through Prāṇāyāma the mind is able to achieve Dhāraṇa. Thus Prāṇāyāma has a limited role to play in revitalization of brain or in dealing with sensorial distractions. In fact the brain will have more sensorial material in its hands when it has been revitalized.

Prānāyāma delivers vital energy to the brain. There is a higher principle of Prātyāhāra or abstraction in Patañjali's yoga. Vital energy delivered to the brain by Prānāyāma is utilised by the higher principle of Prātyāhāra or abstraction. Without Prātyāhāra the purpose of Prānāyāma gets defeated.

### Prātyāhāra

We have stated in the earlier part that yama and Niyama are concerned with the dissipation and conservation of energy through abstinences and observances respectively. Āsanas are concerned with the correction of bodily posture and improving its flexibility. Prānāyāma is concerned with the re-vitalization of body through breathing. Similarly Prātyāhāra is concerned with the re-education of the senses through withdrawal. Prātyāhāra is also a bridge between the outer four, Yama, Niyama, Āsana, Prānāyāma and the inner three Dhāraṇa-Dhyāna-Samādhi which deals with the problem of the mind's conditioning.

By Prātyāhāra it is commonly understood that in the midst of sensorial impacts, the sensory organs register no response whatsoever. This implies that the sensorial organism is rendered insensitive to outer impacts. Surely, if consciousness is rendered dull and unresponsive in Prātyāhāra as a logical culmination of the disciplines of Yama, Niyama, Āsana and Prānāyāma, then there is no meaning whatsoever in pursuing yoga further. In sūtra thirty-five of Samādhi Pāda, Patañjali has stated that "Or, higher sense-activity appearing, causes mental steadiness".<sup>(19)</sup> Higher sense-activity implies refinement of sense responses of the eyes, ears, the touch, smell and taste. Higher cognition of eye, ear, the touch, smell and taste are called extrasensory perceptions. Extrasensory perceptions are not common experiences. They are usually experienced through chemical changes brought about within the body by the

administration of drugs. Because of the danger of drug habit this method is socially unacceptable. There is the yogic method for experiencing extrasensory perception.<sup>(20)</sup> This method uses sound vibrations of bija (seed) mantras. This method is considered safe in yoga. This method is socially acceptable. Patañjali mentions Om or Pranava in sūtra 27 of Samādhi Pāda. Bija (seed) mantras are done in specified yoga postures. So by withdrawal it is not meant the shutting off the senses to stimuli of the outer world. On the contrary our senses need to be re-educated so that they grow in extraordinary sensitivity and efficiency.

A clear understanding of Pratyāhāra demands a careful study of the sūtra 54 of the Sādhana Pāda which is stated here. "When the senses imitate the mind in its act of withdrawal then it is called Pratyāhāra or Abstraction."<sup>(21)</sup> In this sūtra there is a clear emphasis on withdrawal of or by the senses. "The mind in its act of withdrawal" implies that the mind must first withdraw and by "when the senses imitate the mind" it is implied that senses must follow the mind in its act of withdrawal. It means that mind must first withdraw and then senses or brain must follow the course of withdrawal in imitation. In withdrawal there are three factors involved, namely the senses, the brain and the mind. The brain perceives through input of sensorial data. In this process the brain through synthesis cognizes the forms and structures of things. It has to be remembered that perceptions by themselves do not constitute knowledge. Just as perceptions are formed from sense data, conceptions are arrived at by co-ordination of perceptions. And this is done by the mind. When this is done, knowledge becomes meaningful. What we call knowledge of the external world is a conceptual knowledge. The whole structure of conceptual knowledge rests on sensory perceptions received by the brain and conceptions derived from the perceptions by the mind.



In Prātyāhāra both conceptions and perceptions have to be transcended by withdrawal. The defectiveness of conceptual knowledge depends on the perceptions received by the brain and the conceptions arrived at by the mind. <sup>The</sup> Seeing of <sup>the</sup> snake in a rope is the defectiveness of the knowledge. This is arrived at by the mind by imposing the subjective or conceptual reality, in this case snake, on the objective reality called rope. Perceptions of sensory data get distorted or are not allowed to be completed many a time by the conceptual intervention of the mind. When this happens both the senses and the brain cannot function at their full potential. In fact, such interventions of mind make the brain extremely dull in its functioning. As a result senses lose their initiative and become dependent upon the mind for their functioning. It is obvious that unless the mind withdraws from the act of intervention senses cannot stand on their feet. This is the education of senses. It is through Prātyāhāra this step is taken by the mind. Re-education of the senses is of the highest importance because without this brain activation cannot take place. Prātyāhāra is fundamentally concerned with re-education of the senses.

We have seen so far what mind withdrawal means. What is sense withdrawal? We take here as an example, seeing of water in the mirage of the desert. Obviously this is an illusion as we know it or the defectiveness of judgement. Mirage which is an objective phenomenon appears as water because sense of thirst is associated with water. It is the thirst that sees absent water in mirage. This is known as sensory indulgence. In this condition the mind forces the senses to linger in the field of objects which have no real objectivity or existence. In this situation it is the senses which possess the mind instead of mind possessing the senses. When the senses possess the mind sensual activity is generated. While the sensual represents sense indulgence

and lingering on the unreal, the sensuous indicate a great receptivity in the sphere of sense activity. Shifting from sensual to sensuous is the withdrawal of senses or Prātyāhāra. There are objects of the mind as there are objects of the life. Objects of the life represent the fact while the objects of the mind represent projections. Sensuous activity deals basically with facts of life while sensual activity deals with the objects of mind's pleasure or projections. When mind withdraws through Prātyāhāra its projections from the perceptive process, then objects of life come to view. The senses at first feel lost when the mind withdraws. This is because senses have not been re-educated or are unable to act without the direction of the mind. The re-education of senses which involves the dealing with the facts is the main concern of Prātyāhāra. Patañjali in the sūtra has stated that when senses imitate the mind in its act of withdrawal then is one firmly based in Prātyāhāra. But the senses are unable to imitate the mind because they have been conditioned to function under the direction of the mind. With the mind withdrawn the senses begin to function in a new manner. To look or feel anew in the flower and the tree, in the cloud and the bird, in the moon and the sky, the river and the mountain, the landscape and sea become the natural function of senses. When the senses function on their own, their range and intensity of response increase tremendously resulting in the activation of the brain. Prātyāhāra is primarily concerned with the freeing of senses and activation of brain. Further, movements of the mind in the context of withdrawal from the objects with less image involvement and heavy image involvement will be considered later in the subsequent pages. Prātyāhāra is concerned with the withdrawal of mind from the objects with less image involvement. While Dhāraṇa, the next limb of yoga, is concerned with the mind's withdrawal from the objects with heavy image involvement. In other

words Prātyāhāra and Dhāraṇa deal with the problems of mind's withdrawal from the outer and inner workings respectively. Therefore Prātyāhāra is the meeting ground for the external and internal disciplines of Aṣṭāṅga yoga of Patañjali. In Prātyāhāra we have covered the ground of sense withdrawal from the outer objects. The difficult ground of psychological problems containing heavy image involvement which is the subject matter of Dhāraṇa remains unattended.

### Dhāraṇa

We have surveyed the ground of Yama and Niyama which are concerned with the stopping of dissipation and the preservation of energy through restraint and regulation of behaviour patterns of living. Āsana are concerned with imparting alertness and relaxation to the nerves, muscles and tissues of the body. Prāṇāyāma is concerned with revitalization of body through breathing. While Prātyāhāra as we have seen, is concerned with the re-education of the senses and the re-vitalization of the brain. As a result of Prātyāhāra the brain imparts to sense organs an extraordinary sensitivity. Yama, Niyama, Āsana, Prāṇāyāma and Prātyāhāra are concerned with the body and brain while Dhāraṇa-Dhyāna-Samādhi are concerned with the re-conditioning of mind. In Dhāraṇa-Dhyāna-Samādhi Patañjali reveals the secrets of the functioning of the mind. It is interesting to know that Patañjali deals with the very deep and profound subject matter by devoting only one sutra each to Dhāraṇa, Dhyāna and Samādhi. In Dhāraṇa, Dhyāna and Samādhi the aspirant takes a plunge in the inner domain of spiritual life. How does the plunge take place? For this we turn to the sūtra one in the Vibhūti Pāda which is in the third section in the book. The sutra tells us that "concentration is the confining of the mind within a limited mental area (object of concentration)".<sup>(22)</sup> The word Dhāraṇa is usually

translated as concentration. Intense concentration on a single object can cause tension through strain on <sup>the</sup> perceiving senses. In concentration we also experience the problem of distractions in which the marginal factors overwhelm the focal area by invasion with the result that one is unable to look at the object or the image chosen for concentration. If attempts to concentrate under these conditions are made then there rages inevitably a fierce battle between the focal and the marginal areas. Such fierce battles seem unending in Dhāranā. In order to stop the fierce battle between the focal and marginal factors one adopts the technique of resistance which result in erecting blinkers on the eyes of the mind. Therefore one can see that in concentration there is not only strain and tension but also resistance. And resistance whether conscious or sub-conscious or unconscious defeats all attempts at concentration because the more one resists the marginal thoughts and images the more they cause disturbance. In this game of defence which is resistance one never gets time to turn to the subject matter of meditation one has chosen for quiet reflection. Apart from conflict and resistance there is the third factor which affects the Dhāranā or concentration. This is will power. An exercise of will power is equivalent to the use of force in attaining to some spiritual height. Such a use of violent force for snatching spiritual gain by means of will power is the negation of the very basis of spiritual life. Concentration which demands resistance has no place in <sup>the</sup> spiritual domain. One must therefore dissociate oneself from all methods of concentration involving resistance. Also all forms of exclusive concentration create conflict and tension. This practice also defeats the purpose of meditation chosen for quiet reflection. How <sup>to resolve the problem?</sup>

We know that the focal and marginal areas are not opposed to each other in the sensory domain. The eyes in seeing an object

adjusts to its marginal and the focal areas without conflict or resistance. The eyes in fact establish a right relationship between the focal and the marginal areas for a relaxed and effective perception. In fact the eyes function normally without tension and diffusion by arriving at its own limit between the focal and marginal area. It is the eye which defines its own focal and marginal areas for seeing clearly the object without tension and diffusion. Such defining is indeed deśa-bandha meaning confinement within a sphere or area which allows a limited freedom of movement. What the eyes do at the physical or sensory level is also done by the mind in the psychological field for arriving at the right perception of things. The elimination of all conflict between the focal and marginal is a fundamental principle of perception applicable at all levels. One gets involved in resistance in order to avoid conflicts and therefore one must move away from all methods of Dhāraṇa involving resistance. Also, all forms of exclusive awareness create conflicts and tension. Therefore through exclusive concentration we cannot resolve conflicts of the mind. The mind in such a state cannot observe rightly. All spiritual discipline including that of meditation demands right perception. It is in the background of right perceptions right actions take place. Right actions lay the basis of Karma yoga. In Dhāraṇā, we must explore the possibility of extensive awareness. The defining of extensive awareness is done by mind and mind alone. <sup>The</sup> external agency whether of higher mind or soul, like that of pāpā authority, brings in compulsion and will <sup>and</sup> therefore involve resistance and conflict. So deśa-bandha or defining has to be done by mind itself as it is done at physical level by senses. By deśa-bandha in the sūtra, Patañjali clearly points to the way of extensive awareness and not to the path of exclusive awareness. In this, mind selects its subject of focal interest which can be an intimate image or mental object. In this selection clarity and vividness must prevail as

far as possible. In this undertaking marginal stimulation and association do arise. If this is allowed to function without compulsion or resistance then the Dhāranā or defining of <sup>the</sup> marginal area will take place without any conflict and difficulty. In this area mind moves freely without losing sight of the focal interest. In this oscillation between the focal and marginal mind will arrive at a right relationship between the focal and marginal in which strain and tension will have no place or will vanish. What is done by Yama, Niyama, Āsana and Prāṇāyāma for the body externally in the subject matter of removing strain and tension is done by the Prātyāhāra and Dhāranā internally in the mind. In Dhāranā both the focal and marginal will be held very lightly. The true state of Dhāranā or holding in the psychological sense is made possible because of the defining of the central and peripheral areas in a natural manner by the mind itself.

### Dhyāna

We know that yoga demands not merely an acquaintance of a superficial movement of the mind to and fro in the central and peripheral areas of living a life but an experience in depth of Reality. We have to bear in mind that Dhāranā is only a part of the continuing process represented by Dhāranā-Dhyāna-Samādhi. It is in Dhyāna one is led to total attention in the background of relaxation established by Dhāranā in the extensive awareness. But what is meant by attention? This is the subject-matter of Dhyāna. For this we turn to Patañjali's text which describes the secret mysteries of Dhyāna. Patañjali in the second sūtra of the section Vibhūti Pāda has said that "In that state to watch the flow of thought without any interruption is Dhyāna or attention."<sup>(23)</sup> We have seen that Dhāranā deals with the question of resistance by eliminating the marginal distraction interfering with the focal interest. This is done in a relaxed mind in the extensive awareness established by Dhāranā. There are problems not only of

interference in the extensive awareness of Dhāraṇa but also of interruptions in the extensive awareness established between the focal and marginal interest of the mind. Interruptions are distractions. Such distractions are caused by inattention, indulgences, provocations, stimulations, absorptions, etc. Patañjali says that Dhyāna is concerned with these interruptions. The meaning of the word Dhyāna is usually contemplation but here it is taken to mean attention in the sūtra which is quoted here.

Distractions may arise from the inability to see or the unwillingness to see. Among these distractions the former are sensorial distractions and latter are psychological distractions of the mind. We have seen that Prātyāhāra deals with the sensorial distractions by withdrawal. The problem of unwillingness to see is related to distractions of the mind. It has to be realized that <sup>the</sup> opposite of attention is inattention. It is not attention but inattention that is a problem. It is in negating inattention <sup>that</sup> one arrives at attention. How can this be done? We know that inattention becomes a problem when one does not listen to the story of the mind without interruption. When the story of the mind is listened to without any break, the mind empties itself of all its content. We have to remember that mind cannot be emptied, it empties itself. The emptying of the mind in which the story is listened to is listened to without any judgement or evaluations. In Dhāraṇā in which mind is relaxed it becomes easy to listen to the story of the mind and in Dhyāna the actual listening occurs. In this listening mind empties itself of its content. Patañjali says that to watch or observe the flow of the mind's content or thought without any interruption is Dhyāna or attention. It is in total emptying of the mind of its thoughts total attention or undisturbed attention is arrived at. Undisturbed attention arrived at in Dhyāna flourishes only in the fertile ground of extensive awareness established previously in Dhāraṇa. Thus Dhāraṇa is a pre-condition for Dhyāna.

It is in <sup>the</sup> emptying of the mind <sup>that</sup> the thought process automatically ends. /  
 In the ground of no thought mind comes to a state of silence. In this  
 silence distractions which receive nourishment through judgement,  
 beliefs and conclusions dissolve. Distractions of focal and marginal  
 are essentially problems of duality which arise from the likes and  
 dislikes of the mind. In emptying the content of mind, mind arrives  
 at deeper silence. In the deep silence, duality ~~gets~~ negated. In the  
 negation of inattention, the attention to <sup>the</sup> focal point comes in an effort-  
 less manner. What is attained in Dhāraṇa with effort is attained in  
Dhyāna without effort. Dhyāna in fact is a state of effortless attention.

We have dealt with distractions caused by inattention, judgements,  
 beliefs and conclusions which are the conditioning of the mind. The  
 distractions of mind caused by indulgences, provocations, stimulations  
 and absorption are essentially problems of <sup>the</sup> overactive and underactive  
 will of the mind. Distractions caused by reactions and responses of  
 mind are usually represented in the movement of drift of the mind. In  
 such movements of drift of mind one may be conscious of many things  
 happening around oneself but there is no awareness in it. In the drift  
 caused by habit, indulgences predominate. In the lack of will where  
 there is no energy even to resist the obstacle lying in the way of drift,  
 it is the indulgence that become the cause of drift. In this movement,  
 mind drifts towards tamasic or habitual nature and remains in indolence.  
 In the overactive will where there is the presence of energy the mind  
 drifts towards provocations, stimulations and absorption. In this  
 movement mind's drift gets aligned with the rajasic or active nature.  
 In both tamasic and rajasic movement of mind, consciousness is present  
 but there is no awareness in it. There is a third movement of mind  
 which is called sattvic or balanced. In this movement the mind moves  
 to and fro between focal and marginal in awareness. In the usual  
 drifting condition of the mind the focal and the marginal get mixed up



which results in diffusion and lack of clarity. But in Dhāraṇa where there is extensive awareness they get loosened up which restores certain clarity in seeing them. It is in Dhāraṇa the two poles of the mind, the focal and marginal, are viewed clearly. To see two points together, not one by one but simultaneously is the condition of extensive awareness. The duality of niceness and nastiness of behaviour, of goodness and evil, the undesirable and noble and that of higher and lower when watched without any interruption is indeed Dhyāna which is total attention. What is the next <sup>stage?</sup> In order to answer this one must turn to Samadhi, the last limb of the Aṣṭāṅga yoga.

### Samādhi

Patañjali has described the subject matter of Samādhi in the third sūtra of Vibhūti Pāda. He has said that "That truly is Samādhi or Communion where the object alone is seen, the presence of the observer having been completely negated."<sup>(24)</sup> Clear understanding of Samādhi demands a careful study of Dhāraṇa and Dhyāna. Judgement or evaluation of any expression of thought is a superimposition on the natural movement of thought. A consciously cultivated movement is also a superimposition on the natural flow of thought. Obviously, in the midst of watching the flow of thoughts between the focal and the marginal established by Dhāraṇa any judgement or evaluation will cause disturbance in the flow in which what appeared as natural before interruption would look superimposed. In this, the state of extensive awareness of Dhāraṇa breaks. With the breaking up of Dhāraṇa the simultaneous perception of the two opposites also disappears. To watch this movement without naming, judging or evaluating it is to know what Dhyāna is. Obviously in Dhyāna one arrives effortlessly at a perception of one without second. In Dhyāna even though there is the consciousness of non-duality, there is no awareness of it. In the description of Dhāraṇa and Dhyāna we have seen that Dhyāna is concerned with

dissolving of objective duality of <sup>the</sup> focal and marginal. There is also subjective duality or fragmentation of consciousness of observer and observed or knower and known. Samādhi is concerned more with the dissolution of <sup>the</sup> fragmentation of consciousness.

We have seen that in Dhyāna, the continuity of thought ends. When this process of continuity of thought is forcibly ended through the exercise of will, one's mind becomes blank. This blankness is not Samādhi. This blankness is throbbing with tension, in fact, because of terrible oppression. This happens because the thinker is present. The thinker present fumes and fumbles in this blankness. When this thinker is eliminated by emptying the content of the mind, the silence prevails. This silence has a quietness and is unlike the blankness brought about by the forceful oppressive will. We should bear in mind the fact that mind can be made blank but it cannot be made silent. Silence comes in the moment of watching the thought process without any interruption as described in Dhyāna by Patañjali. Dhāraṇa supplies the field for movement of thought called extended awareness. Dhyāna deals with the knower of the field. In this watching when the distraction and inattention are negated total attention takes birth through the death of knower. When we speak of death or elimination of the knower or observer it does not mean the elimination or death of the physical form of observer or knower. What is implied is the elimination of the psychological entity called knower, observer, interpreter. In Samādhi the psychological entity of the observer is eliminated. In Samādhi right perceptions take place. Samādhi in this sense is communion. Patañjali in describing Samādhi puts emphasis on seeing the object alone. When the observer is present what is seen is not the object but the observed which is the projection of the observer. Observed is the shadow of the observer. When the observer vanishes the shadow automatically disappears. In Samādhi what is seen is the

object alone in its intrinsic significance. In Dhyāna the stream of continuity of both the thinker and the thought terminates without awareness. In Samādhi on the other hand there is the awareness of the interval of discontinuity. It is in Samādhi awareness reaches its highest peak.

In the eight limbs of yoga starting from Yama and ending with Samādhi, Patañjali has progressively developed the layers of deepening awareness. Firstly we note that he moves from outer to inner layers of consciousness. Secondly he introduces the aspirant to a new dimension of awareness through each limb. In Yama there is an awareness of the pattern of one's habits. In Niyama Patañjali specifies purity, contentment, austerity, self-development and surrender to God. There is in Niyama an awareness of the mode's of one's habits. In Āsana, he introduces us to the need of deeper awareness of the body and its functioning. In Prānāyāma there is the awareness of the patterns of breathing. In Prātyāhāra there is the awareness of the sensorial distortion and digressions. In Dhāranā there is the awareness of the drift of thought and need for extended interval between the focal and marginal. In Dhyāna there is the awareness of the mind's distractions and inattention. In Samādhi there is the awareness of the discontinuity where there is no observer or observed.

Samādhi is essentially a non-dual experience and in it there is the pure perception which is the starting point of right action or right communication. In Samādhi, there is the complete negation of the psychological entity called the thinker, the observer or the experimenter. There is in it the vision of a moment which contains in it the richness of Eternity. Time in fact becomes an expression of time-less in the vision established by Samādhi. Samādhi is also an experience of the formless which comes only in <sup>the</sup> flash in the Timeless Moment.

Having taken the spiritual aspirant into regions beyond time, Patañjali

enables him to enter in the field of time to enjoy meditation. In the next sūtra of Vibhūti Pāda, Patañjali says that "The three together constitute Samyama or Meditation."<sup>(25)</sup> Patanjali defines here Samyama which is taken as meaning meditation. Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna and Samādhi taken together constitute Samyama or meditation. The practical mastery of the techniques relating to Samyama opens the supraphysical and psychic experiences known as Siddhis in Patañjali's yoga. Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, Samādhi are three stages of meditation which culminate in Samādhi. The subject matter of Samādhi in Patañjali's yoga-sutra is scattered here and there. This manner of treating a difficult subject-matter may appear confusing for the purpose of studying.<sup>(26)</sup> ~~The~~ <sup>the</sup> main thoughts on Samādhi are briefly summarised here. The term Samādhi used by Patañjali is used in two different senses of being psychic or mystic. Samādhi in the psychic sense is concerned with the attainment of superphysical powers and has in it graduations and stages which can be described. Graduations and stages exist necessarily in the manifest field. Samādhi in which the seed thought of attainment to Truth is present is called Sabija Samādhi. Truths realized in Sabija Samadhi are of psychic nature and are subject to influences of manifest reality. So long as the partial truth of any seed gross or subtle is present in the mind, the Whole Truth of One Reality is unattainable because the partial truth of the seed thought acts as a hindrance and prevents the mind from shining with the Whole Truth. The realization of <sup>the</sup> Whole Truth occurs in the consciousness of Puruṣa or Soul. Therefore it is necessary to remove even the seed from the mind for the realization of <sup>the</sup> Whole Truth. This is done by the practice of Nirbija Samādhi. Pure Knowledge or Truths of Nirbija Samādhi are from the consciousness of Puruṣa itself.<sup>(27)</sup> They are mystic in their nature and belong to unmanifest reality.

## Samprajñāta and Asamprajñāta Samādhi

Patañjali has given descriptions of Sabiya Samādhi in Samādhi Pāda (sutras 17, 18, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50). Samādhi concerned with the attainment of superphysical powers is called Sabiya Samādhi. Even though the attainments of psychic powers have no limit they are essentially and potentially operational in manifest reality. Manifest reality is subject to Prakṛiti. Realizations of Sabiya Samadhi with graduations and stages come under the operative principles tamas (stability), rajas (activity) and sattva (balance) of Prakṛiti. Among the Samādhis described in yoga sūtras Asamprajñāta, Nirvitaraka and Nirbija are related to the transformation of tamas, rajas and sattva respectively. (28) Patañjali describes Samprajñāta and Asamprajñāta in sūtras 17 and 18 respectively in the Samādhi Pāda. They are quoted here:

"Dialectical thinking, active mentation, abundance of interests and distinctive individuality are the factors constituting Samprajñāta Samādhi or an experience with thought-habit functioning as a centre." (29)

"When consciousness retains only impressions of facts without psychological associations then is attained Asamprajñāta Samādhi or an experience without any centre of thought habit." (30)

In the normal functioning of the three gunas - tamas, rajas and sattva one finds a fine display of stability, mobility and harmony respectively in one's living. These characteristics are indeed very helpful in furthering the cause of living. But through the interference of the mind stability becomes stagnation, mobility becomes restless activity and harmony is changed into self-satisfaction. These are the distortions of gunas. They affect the consciousness by introducing various conditioning factors through which reactive tendencies take birth in the form of centres in the physical, vital and mental sheaths of psychological make-up of human personality. Patañjali has mentioned

five reactive tendencies or vrittis which function as centres at the conscious level. Reactive tendencies are formed of: 1. Reason 2. Unreason 3. Fancy 4. Sleep and 5. Memory. To break up these centres formed in the region of physical, vital and mental consciousness is the very purpose of Samādhi or the nature of spiritual experience.

It is true that yoga is a movement away from mind. Obviously one has to develop the mind to its utmost possibilities before surpassing the frontiers and limitations established by the mind. Samprajñāta Samādhi explores the possibilities of mind within the confines of the thought-habit where Tamas predominates. The mind in Tamas functions through vortex of thought habit which causes stability to degenerate into stagnation and indolence. The body and the mind get dull and sluggish in stagnation. Samprajñāta Samādhi is concerned with awakening of mind from the condition of stupor and dullness. This is done initially by first arousing the mind's interest in something. In the second stage dialectical thinking around the object takes place. In the third stage the mind is led to the development of asmita or distinct individuality of the personality. To lead the dull mind to a dialectically active mind is the path shown here by Patañjali in Samprajñāta Samādhi.

There are two types of memory, namely retentive and associative. Retentive memory creates stability in life while associative memory distorts the stabilizing factor of life. Tamas must no longer, says Patañjali, stagnate life. It has to move further by becoming stable. It is the associative memory which distorts stability. Stagnation which tightens its grip around Life has to be got rid of for further progress by breaking the centre of the thought habit. Patañjali says that when one retains only impressions of facts without their psychological associations then is attained Asamprajñāta Samādhi or an experience without any centre of thought habit. One has to remember that the

associative memory moves under the compulsion of thought habit. In Asamprajñāta Samādhi one attains jagrat or waking state in which there is the dropping of compulsion of associative processes by habit. This is the breaking of Tamas. In breaking the centre of thought-habit the associative memory subsides. As a result, factual memory starts functioning clearly. Factual memory is the necessary factor of stability in one's own living. In summing up it may be noted that in Samprajñāta Samādhi there is an effort to stimulate the associative process while in Asamprajñāta Samādhi there is the recession of associative memory. The activation of the mind is the prior preparation of Samprajñāta Samādhi. In an active mind when associative memory subsides there is alertness without activity. In Asamprajñāta Samādhi mind comes to a state of pure alertness because the conditioning factors of stagnant nature, namely disease, dullness, doubt, carelessness and laziness arising from the thought habit of tamas are not distorting the stability of consciousness. We have to make a note here that the associations induced by thought habit cannot be negated by suppressing expressions of thought-habit. They can be removed only by purifying the memory in which the motivational factors of tamasic association lie. When the thought habit is destroyed then the right memory releases the energy which is otherwise locked up in the tangle of associations. Right memory is a clear memory of facts. It is not a memory overload<sup>ed</sup> with psychological associations. The centre formed around the psychological association is in fact a craving in functional terms. The memory centred around psychological craving is sustained by the unfulfilled desire seeking fulfillment. The effort spent in fulfilling the unfulfilled desire drains away much of the energy of man. In fact a man caught in the network of psychological memory of this nature is a tired and an exhausted man. In Asamprajñāta Samādhi the aspirant come to the experience of energy, faith and intelligence. It is in <sup>the</sup> deeply

silent mind where there is an awakening to sensitivity the whisper of the unknown is heard. To respond to the whisper of the unknown is indeed an experience of spiritual nature in throbbing heart and pulsating life. Whisper of the known is not relevant because it is the modification of known. Whisper of the unknown is tremendously relevant because it is a spiritual experience of Samadhi. Faith is not a blind belief. Belief is of the mind. Faith is that of the heart. The man of Faith is rightly described by Patañjali in the sūtra 20 Samādhi Pāda as a man of illumined intelligence. "Spiritual experience of a true nature arises when the consciousness is impregnated by Faith, Energy, Recollection and Intelligence."<sup>(31)</sup> Birth of Faith expressing itself in love, energy, recollection and intelligence takes place in the ground of Samprajñāta and Asamprajñāta Samādhi. It is to be noted that faith, devotion, love or energy, recollection and intelligence lay the basis for the foundation of Bhakti yoga. Patañjali has also mentioned that <sup>the</sup> spiritual journey can be undertaken only in the moment of sudden awakening arising from right perception. He refers to this in the following sūtra (23), Samādhi Pāda

"True spirituality is characterised by a sudden turning in the direction of God or the Ultimate Reality."<sup>(32)</sup>

The idea of sudden awakening as we know it is found in all mystical teaching. Zen Buddhism uses the idea. In <sup>the</sup> Bhagavad Gita Krishna also speaks of <sup>the</sup> sudden spiritual transformation of man in the thirty-first verse of the ninth chapter. In sūtras of the text Patañjali has stated that sudden transformation occurs in the background of intensity which may utilise mild, medium and strong or still more intense than the earlier instruments thus representing a means faster than the fastest and stronger than the strongest. This is Isvara-pranidhana or turning towards God. This happens with a remarkable suddenness. Two sūtras in which this is mentioned are as follows:



"Such spiritual experience comes to one who is afire with intensity."

"It is the nature of intensity which determines the pattern for the means employed whether mild, medium or strong." (33)

The word Īśvara or God used in the earlier sūtra is not used in any anthropomorphic sense or in the sense of <sup>the</sup> personal deity. Having touched on Īśvara or God or Ultimate Reality or Ultimate Principle of Life, Patañjali describes the Transcendental Principle of Life. "God is that distinctive Principle which remains untouched by afflictions of life or by fruits of action or by any motivation." (34)

Intensity or earnestness in spiritual endeavour represent an extension of consciousness on the same plane of dimension. In this there is a gradual turning towards God in modified continuity. It is in sudden turning to God <sup>that</sup> there is the expansion of consciousness which is brought about by sudden jumps. It is in walking there is a gradual progression in the same plane but it is in running where the jumps are employed there is the turning in a new vertical direction. That which is gradual is in the field of Time but that which is sudden is in the Timeless field.

Patañjali describes Īśvara as "the ancient of ancients for, it verily is Timeless". (35) Thus Īśvara is the Transcendental Being. Further, Patañjali says that "in the field of Time, it is symbolized by Om or Pranava". (36) By this it is meant that <sup>the</sup> Transcendent can be recognised in the world of manifestation through its symbol Om because the word is the very first stirring caused in the space. This Om or Pranava represents the transcendent in the imminent or the unmanifest in manifest. Om which is a word described as Pranava is the intimation of the unmanifest in manifest. This sūtra lays down firmly the foundation of Mantra yoga.

#### Savitarka and Nirvitarka Samādhi

In the chapter on Samadhi Pāda Patañjali's sūtras refer to obstacles which cause distraction to the mind. They are disease, dullness, doubt, carelessness, laziness, craving, delusion, non-attainment of desired

objective and unsteadiness.<sup>(37)</sup> The first five obstacles, namely disease, dullness, doubt, carelessness and laziness arise out of the conditions of mind immersed in Tamas. The next four, namely, craving, delusion, non-attainment of desired objective and unsteadiness arise out of the conditions of mind immersed in Rajas. We have seen that conditioning factors of consciousness caught in Tamas are dealt with by Samprajñāta and Asamprajñāta Samādhi.

Craving, non-attainment of desired objective and unsteadiness are distortions of Rajas. Rajas is activity and by itself it is a restful movement. When the normal functioning of Rajas is intercepted by mind then there comes into existence a restless activity in the sphere of becoming. This results in the creation of a centre of thought modification in the functioning field of mind. Patañjali has described the centre of thought modification in the sūtras in Samādhi Pāda "In the Savitarka Samadhi, which is an experience having thought-modification as the centre, there is seen a mental confusion due to the mind alternating between verbal and conceptual thinking".<sup>(38)</sup> The verbal centre described in the sūtra is the centre of Tamas because the word verbal is an expression of habit. The centre of thought modification referred to in the sūtra is the projected centre of Rajas. The whole process of becoming which is the aspect of Karma yoga tends to move around these two poles. It is obvious that in this movement of thought the real is never cognised. This is the experience of Savitarka Samādhi in which the movement of thought oscillates between the centres of continuity and modified continuity. It is Rajas which introduces the conditioning factors of craving, delusion, non-attainment of desired objective and unsteadiness in consciousness. Regarding freedom from the conditioning factors of Rajas, Patañjali has said that "The Nirvitarka Samadhi - that experience in which the centre of thought modification is non-existent - is attained when due to the purification of memory mind's

subjective projections are dropped." (39) Subjective factors exist in tamasic, rajasic and sattvic layers of consciousness. They exist as centres of habit, anticipation and identity in consciousness as representations of Tamas, Rajas and Sattwa respectively. Subjective projections referred in the sūtra suggests the dropping of craving, delusion, non-attainment of desired objective and unsteadiness which are associative and anticipatory in their nature. There is also repetitive and retentive memory. The former belongs to Rajas while the later belongs to Tamas. Retention provides stability but when it is utilised with repetition then stability becomes stagnation.

Asamprajñāta Samādhi is concerned with the clarification of memory in which sorting of retentive from repetitive aspects of psychological becoming take place. While Nirvitarka Samādhi is concerned with the purification of memory by freeing the mind from the repetitive and anticipatory pulls of psychological becoming. In Asamprajñāta Samādhi there is the activation of the mind from the stagnating influence of Tamas while in the Nirvitarka there is a relaxation of the effort caused by restlessness of Rajas. Here, we make a note of the fact that when the mind's effort towards becoming ceases then a movement towards natural becoming comes in existence. This is called the purification of Rajas. Purification of Rajas is central in Karma yoga. The process of purification is not easy at all because it involves the breaking up of the centre of thought - modification in the field of psychological living. Patañjali says that "the problem of Savitarka and Nirvitarka Samādhi - an experience with or without the centre of thought-modification indicates a probe into subtler and deeper layers of mind". (40) Purification of Rajas involves purification of motives and not of the pattern of memory. The motives are repetitive or anticipatory while patterns of memory are retentive and associative. Urges of psychological becoming are deeply rooted in the motives. The

motives are rooted deeply in the conscious, subconscious and unconscious layers of memory. Without the deep probe in the consciousness work of purification of Rajas cannot be done effectively.

### Nirbija and Dharma Megha Samadhi

We have stated that Tamas and Rajas operate through thought-habit and thought-anticipation in the field of psychological living. When two centres of Tamas and Rajas are eliminated, there still remains a centre of Sattva called a centre of thought-identity. Thought-seeds reside in the centre of thought-identity. In thought-seeds motives remain hidden. Thought-seeds hidden in the centre of thought-identity can give birth to whole tree of the thoughts, belief, hopes, motivations and judgements; conclusions and habits. Sattva is harmony but this harmony gets distorted by the centre of identity established in the functioning sphere of psychological make up. The centre of identity is no doubt the centre of I-ness or asmita. I-ness or asmita is pervasive in our entire self. Sattva is harmony, rhythm or balance. This harmony gets distorted through self-satisfaction and self-righteousness. Self-satisfaction operating as sattva is a stagnation which is the renewal of tamas in sattva. Self-righteousness which is the operative principle of self-satisfaction is the renewal of rajas in Sattva. The essential meaning of sattva is goodness which is by itself a great virtue. Virtue gets corrupted in the presence of identity or I-ness because Identity is a consciousness of separation. When I-ness or asmita becomes operational in the sphere of goodness or virtue, then there enters a distortion of sattva of a very subtle and therefore a dangerous nature. The ego or I which presides over living is the interpreter of all impacts of life. The mind cannot arrive at the right conception of things until it has freed itself from the interpretative influence of the centres of habit, anticipation and identity. The factors of memory rooted in Tamas are retentive and repetitive. The factors

of memory rooted in Rajas contain modification and anticipation. The factors of memory rooted in sattwa contain thought-seeds of identity, self-rightousness and self-satisfaction. We have seen that in Asamprajñāta Samādhi there is purification of the distortion of Tamas by the clarification of memory whereby there is retention without repetition. In Nirvitarka Samādhi there is the purification of Rajas whereby there is modification without psychological anticipation. There is Nirbīja Samādhi according to Patañjali. In Nirbīja Samādhi there is the purification of the distortion of sattwa whereby there is existence without identity. Patañjali describes Nirbīja Samādhi in the forty-seventh sūtra of Samādhi Pāda, which is quoted as follows:

"In the complete cessation of thought comes the precious gift of spiritual illumination."<sup>(41)</sup>

In Nirbīja Samādhi there is a state of Nirvicāra and Nirvikalpa. In Nirvicāra state there is the cessation of the very seed of thought which is not to be confused with Nirvitarka which means the cessation of the movement of thought. In the death of seed thought there is the birth of wisdom which is the heart of Jnāna yoga. In the death of seed thought there is no existence of choice whatsoever. An awareness with choice is a condition of Savikalpa. The opposite of Savikalpa is Nirvikalpa meaning choicelessness. We have referred to six Samadhis so far. They are briefly summarised in the following table. on page 46

We have seen that six Samadhis mentioned in the table of summary seek to repair the distortions in the functioning field of Prakṛiti. To purify the functioning of guna is one thing but to transcend them is another. The act of purification is essentially negative because it has to be done by removing obstacles of the mind in the functioning sphere of activities of gunas. Transcending of the three gunas is done by Dharma-Megha Samādhi. In sūtra twenty-nine in Kaivalya Pāda Dharma-Megha Samādhi is described. This Samādhi is not concerned with the

negative role of removing the obstacles of mind but it is concerned with intensely positive role of transcending the mind. What is negative is in the ground of manifest in the form of an ascent while what is positive is from the unmanifest in the form of Grace descending from above. The sūtra quoted below describes Dharma-Megha Samādhi. "When the state of meditation is an end in itself and not a means for the fulfilment of some other end then there comes that pure and total awareness in which is born Dharma-Megha Samādhi meaning a spiritual experience comparable to the cloud of Benediction."<sup>(42)</sup>

Prakṛiti	English	Distortion	Psychological Representation	Memory Factors	Transformation	Samādhi	Complementary Samadhi
<u>Tamas</u>	Stability	Stagnation	Thought-habit	Retention and Repetition	Retention without Repetition	<u>Asamprajñāta</u>	<u>Samprajñā</u>
<u>Rajas</u>	Mobility	Restlessness	Thought-anticipation	Modification and Anticipation	Modification without Anticipation	<u>Nirvitarka</u>	<u>Savitarka</u>
<u>Sattva</u>	Harmony	Self-satisfaction	Thought-seed	Identification and Self-righteousness	Existence without Identity	<u>Nirbija</u>	<u>Sabija</u>

SUMMARY OF SAMĀDHIS

CHAPTER 2  
INTEGRAL YOGA



## INTEGRAL YOGA

### Introduction

To understand Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga some understanding of his philosophy is necessary. We shall examine those aspects of it which are immediately relevant to the Integral Yoga. There is a saying that yoga without philosophy cannot grow and philosophy without yoga cannot bear fruit. After dealing with Aurobindo's Integral Philosophy we shall proceed to outline his Psychology of Integral Yoga and shall follow it up by examining in some detail the practice or disciplines of Integral Yoga. As far as possible it is intended that references are made to the original work of Sri Aurobindo published in thirty volumes in his birth centenary year 1972 by Sri Aurobindo Books Distribution Agency, Pondicherry, South India.

In Sri Aurobindo's yoga philosophy there is synthesis not only of Eastern and Western thoughts but there is also in it higher, illumined intuitive and suprarational synthesis. In the field of yoga Tantra was the boldest and largest system ever undertaken after Vedanta. The transformation as envisaged in Tantra is meant to liberate the soul from the bonds of lower nature and bestow upon it the status of a featureless infinity present in Transcendent Reality. It is also supposed to bestow on the aspirant mastery over himself but it cannot bring about the inauguration of the reign of the supermind in matter as envisaged by Aurobindo. Sri Aurobindo aimed at bringing a higher synthesis between Tantra and Vedanta. The idea of the doctrine of Avatara mentioned in the Gita and the theory of evolution point to the higher evolutionary possibility for mankind. In Sri Aurobindo's thoughts both aspects get illuminated. His work on the intuitive synthesis of <sup>the</sup> Upanishads includes in it the synthesis of Monism, Modified-monism and Dualism. In philosophical terms this is known as Integral Non-dualism. The Vedic

thought proceeded along the line of Soul, <sup>of</sup> psychic and spiritual discoveries, while the old European system proceeded along the line taken by <sup>the</sup> materialistic discoveries of sciences. Synthesis of these two lines is found in Sri Aurobindo's work.

### INTEGRAL YOGA PHILOSOPHY

#### The Absolute

The Absolute Reality according to Aurobindo is Sachchidanand : Existence, Consciousness-power, Bliss. Consciousness is not simply responding to challenges in a cognitive sense but it has a dynamism of its own. Cit is Cit-sakti always in Aurobindo's view.—It is not simply powerless, impotent consciousness cabined and confined within its solid singleness as it was thought in the classical texts like the Gita and the Upanishads. It is active and creative and transcends opposites like Being and Becoming, Stability and Movement, One and Many, Temporal and Non-temporal, the Determinate (Saguna) and Indeterminate (Nirguna) .

There is a prevailing view in East and West that the Absolute is simply Being. Becoming is only mithya, a false show. In Greece Parmenides held this view and in India Saṅkara adhered to this view. There are thinkers again both in East and West who believe that Becoming is the only Reality. Bergson and Heraclitus in the West maintain this view and Buddhist thinkers in the East adhere to this view. Sri Aurobindo maintains in his book Life Divine that both these views misrepresent Reality. He says: "Stability and Movement we must remember are only psychological representations of the Absolute even as are oneness and multitude. The Absolute is beyond ... stability and movement as it is beyond unity and multiplicity. But it takes its eternal poise in the one and stable and whirls round itself infinitely and inconceivably, securely in the moving and the multitudinous."(1)

Saṅkara holds the view that there is an opposition between self and not-self, stability and movement, being and becoming, one and many which cannot be reconciled. Sri Aurobindo does not deny the distinction between the essential and the phenomenal, but he holds that the phenomenal is an expression of Reality, not an Illusion or Māyā as described by Saṅkara and others.

To Saṅkara being and becoming, the Eternal and Temporal, the Infinite and Finite appeared in the mind as contradictory and as contradictories both cannot be true. He argued that if one is true, the other must be false. Being, Eternal, Infinite cannot be described to be false in respect of the Absolute or Brahman so he concluded that Becoming, the Temporal and Finite must be false or mithya. At the intellectual level it is difficult to resolve satisfactorily these antinomies. So Saṅkara rules out one of the opposite terms and retains only the other. He solves the problem by getting rid of one and retaining the other, implying that true Reality is above and not here. But Reality cannot be measured by the yardstick of the mind. What is contradictory to the human mind is not necessarily contradictory for Reality itself. The Infinite is not bound by the logic of the finite mind. For Sri Aurobindo there is such a thing as the logic of the Infinite. The following passage from Life Divine gives Aurobindo's view of this problem.

"The Self-existent is the Infinite and its way of being and of action must be the way of the Infinite, but our consciousness is limited. Our reason built upon things finite: it is irrational to suppose that a finite consciousness and reason can be a measure of the Infinite ... It has organised on that basis certain misconceptions which it seeks to make general and Universal and whatever contradicts or departs from that conception it regards as irrational, false, inexplicable."<sup>(2)</sup>

The problem of the one and the many has drawn much attention from all great thinkers of the world. It is undoubtedly associated with the Absolute. Is the Absolute one? If so, how does one become many? Sāṅkara frankly denies the many as an inevitable illusion brought about by nescience or avidya. How can the one be reduced to many unless we admit some change in the singleness of the one. To admit change in the one is to degrade its Unity, its incorruptible purity, its permanence. So Sāṅkara digs an impassable gulf between the One and Many, between Being and Becoming. He cuts the Gordian Knot by dismissing the many and regarding it as mere fiction conjured up by avidyā or māyā.

With regard to the problem of <sup>the</sup> one and <sup>the</sup> many Sri Aurobindo states that the problem is due to our misconception of the term "one". It is generally taken in a numerical sense. In that sense one can become many either by addition or division. "One" means an integral whole which is inclusive of the many, not exclusive of it. Sri Aurobindo has expressed this view in the Isha Upanishads. (3)

What is the answer to the problem of being and becoming, stability and movement? Sri Aurobindo's view is that the Absolute is not bound down to any one of these antinomies. It includes both and transcends both.

Sri Aurobindo's view of the Absolute can be summarised as an integral non-dualistic Whole which includes both one and many, the finite and the infinite, being and becoming, the eternal and the temporal.

### Matter and Spirit

What is the stand of Sri Aurobindo on matter and spirit? In his work entitled The Life Divine Sri Aurobindo affirms that his philosophy stands for the negation of two negations. He negates the approach of the materialist as well as of the ascetic way of life.

In his philosophy both spirituality and materiality occupy an equal place. In his integral philosophy one discovers a coexistence of the spiritual and the material. He has mentioned this fact in 'Savitri': "The Spirit shall look out through matter's gaze. And matter shall reveal Spirit's face."<sup>(4)</sup> Sri Aurobindo resolves the conflict between Spirit and Matter by laying at rest both so that they form a polarity without opposing each other. Spirit and Matter to him are the two poles of the magnet of Life. That which remained a paradox in thought for many centuries, became a synthesis through the brilliant glue of his alchemy. It is to be noted that this is not a compromise because in a compromise the problem remains unresolved in a meaningless game of exchanging positions. In Sri Aurobindo's philosophy there is synthesis not only of Matter and Spirit but also of Timelessness and Time, Personal and Impersonal, of Saguna Brahman (with attributes) and Nirguna Brahman (without attributes) and feminine and masculine states of consciousness. Sri Aurobindo's synthesis cannot be called a synthetic product because he does not use a clever intellectual device to explain the conflict of opposites. In his approach to living he takes integration and synthesis constituting a joint phenomena. To him expression, experience and experiencer are one. If the expression does not emanate from experience then it is mere verbiage without living vitality attached to it. In a similar way if experience is not a bursting of vital life into expression then it is not an experience but is mere intellectualism.

### Integralism

We shall dwell on the philosophical views of Sri Aurobindo, especially on the quality of his synthesis. Sri Aurobindo has left behind a vast literature covering a wide selection of subjects like Science and Philosophy, Art and Literature, Religion and Mythology,

Yoga and Mysticism, Politics and Social Science. There is hardly a subject which he would have left untouched. What is his approach? There is a unity and integrality in his writing which has brought a new light and clarity to the subject matter. According to him, it is not the subject that matters but it is the approach that matters. Sri Aurobindo in discussing a subject clearly defines the approach and so if this approach is missed, his expositions are bound to miss the message they intend to communicate. There is something intensely fundamental about his approach to life which flows as an undercurrent in all his writing. This approach is undoubtedly the approach of synthesis which is not that of a scientist. The synthesis of science has its roots in analysis of the object under observation and study. The scientist in his analysis breaks up the object under scrutiny into its constituent parts. His scrutiny will sort similarities from dissimilarities. Having done this he will bring the similarities together. He will eliminate the dissimilarities. Dissimilarities are considered as a margin of error by <sup>the</sup> scientist and must be put aside. This is the synthesis of a scientist which is the intellectual construction in which the touch with the livingness get lost. In Sri Aurobindo's synthesis livingness is predominant. His synthesis does not arise from analysis but from integration. In his approach what we call integration is the experience <sup>itself</sup> and synthesis is an expression <sup>of the experiences.</sup> When we use the word Integration, it implies the presence of something higher that descends into the normal consciousness of man bringing order and beauty to Life. This is like a magnet which creates its own field of magnetism. When a magnet is brought near the iron filings, they all come together in forming a new design and pattern. Similarly in the presence of an integrating factor descending from above, the scattered and broken up parts of Life form themselves naturally and spontaneously into a pattern of

order and design. Here the parts come together. They are not brought or compelled to come together. This is the higher synthesis which is the approach of Sri Aurobindo and therefore Integral.

### Ultimate Reality

Ultimate Reality is one of formless, indeterminate Being. From the point of view of the Ultimate Reality, the world of forms and names is unreal because it is ever-changing and evanescent. The non-temporal, the eternal alone is real. The temporal, the historical is only a passing show. On the other hand, others belonging to the absolutist world view of the West, have emphasized the historical.

Sri Aurobindo maintains that both these views are only half-truths. His view on the integral non-dualism provides a correction to both views expressed in the above paragraph. Against the ancient

view, Sri Aurobindo maintains that Ultimate Reality is not only formless and indeterminate, it is also the source of all forms and determinations. The forms and determinations are not lie, not a mere chimera but the glory of the self-expression of the Absolute.<sup>(5)</sup> The temporal, the historical is the vast cosmic drama of the Eternal Playwright not a mere Will-o'-the-Wisp; the evolutionary is as much an aspect of the Absolute as the static non-temporal.<sup>(6)</sup> Against the purely historical view of the Absolute Sri Aurobindo presents the view of the Undivided Unity of the formless and multiple forms.<sup>(7)</sup> The multiple forms are not an extraneous imposition on the Absolute but an exfoliation of the Absolute itself.

Non-dualism which flourished in India is a world view. Non-dualism is different from Pantheism or Panentheism. The word 'theos' in Pantheism or Panentheism signifies God. God is Being not the ground of all being. The five schools of non-dualistic

philosophies of India refer to Being as such not a Being. Sankara refers to formless, indeterminate Being - Nirguna Brahman as the essence of Reality. Buddhism refers to it as formless and indefinable - Sunyata or Tathata. Both believe that it is formless and indeterminate and cannot be described by such intellectual categories as substance, unity, etc.

In order to avoid the suggestion of God implicit in Pantheism or Panentheism Western philosophers, namely Hegel, Green, Bradley, Bosanquet and others, use the word Absolute for Ultimate Reality. These thinkers believe that Ultimate Reality is beyond intellectual categories like substance, quality and many, etc.

Even Absolutism does not do full justice to the supracosmic transcendent aspect of Being because it confines its realm to a rationally self-coherent system.

According to non-dualism, however, Reality is beyond an intellectually constructed system. It is formless, indefinable, non-verbal.

The ancient non-dualism aims at a quietistic Union with the eternal whereas Integral non-dualism of Sri Aurobindo aims at a dynamic creative Union with the eternal. In the cosmic drama man has to play not a static but an active and dynamic role.

#### Psychology of Integral Yoga

In the yoga philosophy of Sri Aurobindo there is great stress laid on conscious evolution. Man can accelerate the movement of Nature by conscious participation. Nature has taken steps of evolution in the past without the consent of conscious will in plant and animal life but in Man, Nature becomes able to evolve by a conscious will in the instrument. It is not by the mental in Man that evolution can be wholly achieved because mind having reached a peak can only move in a circle. Man has to exceed the mind for which a



conversion has to be made - a turning of consciousness. The consciousness has to be transformed. Sri Aurobindo in using the word transformation says that "I do not mean, for instance, saint-hood, or ethical perfection or yogic siddhis like Tantrics or a transcendental (Cinmaya) body. I use transformation in a special sense, a change of consciousness radical and complete and of a certain specific kind which is so conceived as to bring about a strong and assured step forward in the spiritual evolution of the being of a greater and higher kind and of a larger sweep and completeness than what took place when a mentalised being first appeared in a vital and material animal world." (8)

Conversion means a break from the past so as to come to a new orientation. Mind is the great repository of the past which stands in the way of conversion. Holding on to the past is essentially psychological. The external imposition of discipline by mind is of little help in coming to the experience of a real conversion. For this inner or psychological discipline is necessary. Integral yoga aims at conversion. For this mind has to be rendered both pure and empty. This is the discipline of the Ascent. In traditional practices of yoga, it is the Descent that is lost sight of. Ascent in traditional yogas without Descent becomes a gospel of personal salvation. In Descent without Ascent one remains in a passive existence. The two together constitute a rhythm of Spiritual life. One is incomplete without the other.

The psychological discipline of conversion demands a complete break from the past. Total negation is a condition for this demand. Conversion is not just negation but it is a positive orientation towards a new living. In the state of conversion both positive and negative co-exist. It is a point where an unending aspiration calls from below and a supreme grace from above answers, where communion translates

itself into communication and where experience merges into expression.

Sri Aurobindo says that a real transformation can come only in the conjunction of these two factors - the negative and positive. In fact Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga has carried the yoga discipline from ascent where traditional yoga systems have stopped to its culminating point in descent.

### Aim of Integral Yoga

"This yoga aims at the conscious union with the Divine in the supermind and the transformation of the nature. The ordinary yogas go straight from Mind into some featureless condition of cosmic silence and through it try to disappear upward into the Highest. The object of this yoga is to transcend Mind and enter into the Divine Truth of Sachchidanand which is not only static but dynamic and raise the whole being into that Truth." (9)

The purpose of Integral Yoga as we see it here is two-fold, namely to exceed the boundaries of the mind and to establish a link with the faculty beyond the mind which is supermind. The first involves Ascent while the second indicates Descent which is the supreme grace from above because supermind cannot be reached by the effort of the mind. In the first, the negative work of ascent puts away the limitations of the mind. In the second, the positive touch of the supermind descends like Grace from above.

### Disciplines of Integral Yoga

How can a start be made along this path of Integral Yoga? There are preparatory disciplines for treading the Path of Integral Yoga similar to disciplines mentioned in most traditional yoga systems. Patañjali in his yoga sūtras speaks of austerities, self-study and aspiration or right orientation as preparatory disciplines for the eight-fold Raja yoga. Sri Aurobindo mentions four aids constituting

the preparatory disciplines of Integral Yoga. These four aids are Sāstra, Utsāha, Guru and Kāla which may be translated as Knowledge, Energy, Teacher and Time respectively. Sri Aurobindo has devoted one full chapter on these four aids in his book Synthesis of Yoga.<sup>(10)</sup> There are also three inner aids in Integral Yoga which are Aspiration, Rejection and Surrender mentioned in the book The Mother.<sup>(11)</sup> and elaborated in details in the three volumes of his Letters on Yoga.<sup>(12)</sup> Without knowing the full meaning of these aids one cannot proceed further in understanding the whole secret of Integral Yoga. For this understanding we must examine these aids in depth.

### Sāstra

What is meant by Sāstra? Sāstra is scripture. Why does Sri Aurobindo ask us to follow the scriptures as an aid? Obedience to scripture is not the pre-requisite of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy. Writing about Sāstra Sri Aurobindo says:

"For the Sadhaka of the Integral Yoga it is necessary to remember that no written Sāstra however great its authority or however large its spirit, can be more than a partial expression of the eternal knowledge. He will use, but never bind himself even by the greatest scripture, where the scripture is profound, wide, Catholic. It may exercise upon him an influence for the highest good and of incalculable importance. . . . For he is not the Sadhaka of a book or of many books; he is a Sadhaka of the Infinite."<sup>(13)</sup>

"Sāstra", says Sri Aurobindo "is first, the knowledge of the truths, principles, powers and processes that govern the realisation."<sup>(14)</sup>

It has to be used as one of the great instruments in Sadhana (spiritual or yogic discipline) by Sadhaka (follower of the spiritual path). The Sadhaka of the Integral Yoga uses the knowledge of the Sāstra but he is also the Sadhaka of the Infinite which is beyond all expression and articulation. The Sadhaka of true knowledge gathers

knowledge from one book or from many books and yet he knows the limitation of that knowledge. A Sadhaka who does not gather knowledge possesses a dull, passive and lazy mind, while a Sadhaka who gathers knowledge and regards this knowledge as full and complete possesses a dogmatic or closed mind. Knowledge is not an end but a means through which further knowledge is acquired. Sāstra as an aid in Integral Yoga fulfils this role. Knowledge gathered in fact is an obstacle to acquiring new knowledge. The Sadhaka who knows that he does not know has no foot stool on which he can rest his feet. He is on homeless ground because one normally regards knowledge as power and uses the base of knowledge to meet the challenges of Life. Man guards tenaciously the shelter of knowledge. When he has nowhere to stand he faces a state of intense urgency because he is thrown back on his own where he has to take full responsibility for his shelterless condition. In this state of urgency there is a release of energy from within onself - the energy used in building and guarding the shelters of knowledge. Sri Aurobindo describes this Energy as Utsāha.

### Utsāha

This is not to be taken as enthusiasm or a condition of emotional excitement but it is a state of intensity of entire energy converging upon the task of dealing with one's own problems with one's own inner strength. This energy is expressed as the power of aspiration of the heart, the force of will, the concentration of mind and the perseverance and determination required in accomplishing the task set. Sri Aurobindo says that "The ideal Sadhaka should be able to say in the Biblical phrase, "My zeal for the Lord has eaten me up." It is this zeal for the Lord, Utsāha, the zeal of the whole nature for its divine results, Vyākulata, the heart's eagerness for the attainment of the Divine - that devours the ego and breaks up the limitations

of its petty and narrow mould for the full and wide reception of that which it seeks, that which, being universal, exceeds and being transcendent, surpasses even the largest and highest individual self and nature." (15)

In Integral Yoga there are three successive stages of self-transcendence. First there is the effort towards self-transcendence for Divine Union. Secondly, there is the reception of that which transcends or that which is given to us in the form of communion within ourselves for transformation of our whole conscious being. Thirdly, there is the utilisation of our transformed humanity as a divine centre in the world. It is in the second and third stage the Sadhaka realises that there is a power beyond himself which actually works in him and around him in the world. In this state a patient and persistent action on the lines laid down by knowledge, the force of our personal Utsāha is used. Our common experience tells us that in a psychological crisis or emergency we somehow find a new storehouse of energy.

#### Guru

It is when we know that we do not know then we are ready to learn. It is only when we are truly ready to learn we find the need of a Guru. Sri Aurobindo describes the Guru as the third of his four aids of Integral Yoga. How to find a Guru? Sri Aurobindo says: "As the supreme Sāstra of the Integral Yoga is the eternal Veda in the heart of every man, so its supreme Guide and Teacher is the inner Guide, the World-Teacher, jagad-guru, secret within us. . . . The full recognition of this inner Guide, Master of the Yoga, lord, light, enjoyer and goal of all sacrifice and effort is of utmost importance in the path of integral perfection. It is immaterial whether he is first seen as an impersonal Wisdom, Love and Power behind all things, as an Absolute manifesting in the relative and attracting it,

as one's highest Self and the highest Self of all, as a Divine Person within us and in the world, in one of his or her numerous forms and names or as the ideal which the mind conceives. In the end we perceive that he is all and more than all these things together. The mind's door of entry to the conception of him must necessarily vary according to the past evolution and the present nature."<sup>(16)</sup>

It is the Guru who uplifts our knowledge and effort and provides through suggestion, example and influence the direction needed on the path. The search for the Guru as we have seen arises in the background of Sāstra and Utsāha to establish steadiness, something that becomes a more reliable shelter than the house of knowledge, built on the shifting sands of life. The normal tendency for man is to look for an external Guru. In choosing the Guru how can he be sure of fulfilling his spiritual and psychological requirement? Here Sri Aurobindo says that the search must be first within before going out in search for an external Guru. The inner search gives to the aspirant a maturity and depth through which he may avoid falling at the feet of a wrong Guru. This inward movement is possible, in moments of crisis due to the breakdown of all the external props of knowledge.

Man in his spiritual quest needs someone in human form for guidance and advice because he cannot feel satisfied with an impersonal concept however sublime it may be. The inner movement towards an ideal or an image has to be translated into the external search for a Guru. This matching imparts seriousness to his search. Without such inward movement the search for a human Guru will have glamour and outer show. But man demands to be dazzled in order that he may see. This impatience and ignorance in search of a Guru may turn into a great danger and disaster says Sri Aurobindo.

What is the role of a Guru? Sri Aurobindo says that "The teacher

of the Integral Yoga will follow as far as he may the method of the Teacher within Us. He will lead the disciple through the nature of the discipline. Teaching, example, influence - these are the three instruments of the Guru."<sup>(17)</sup> Here we find that a Guru is more a friend than a Guru. On the teaching of a Guru Sri Aurobindo says that "but the wise Teacher will not seek to impose himself or his opinions on the passive acceptance of the receptive mind; he will throw in only what is productive and sure as a seed which will grow under the divine fostering within. He will seek to awaken much more than to instruct, he will aim at the growth of the faculties and the experiences by a natural process and free expansion".<sup>(18)</sup> On the method of teaching of a Guru Sri Aurobindo says that "He will give a method as an aid, as a utilisable device, not as an imperative formula or a fixed routine. And he will be on his guard against any turning of the means into a limitation, against the mechanising of process."<sup>(19)</sup>

Teaching is turned many a time by disciples into a dogma and occasionally the example sought to be established by the teacher results in pride and arrogance and the verbiage of the teacher. Therefore Sri Aurobindo says that "influence is more important than example. Influence is not the outward authority of the Teacher over his discipline, but the power of his contact of his presence, of the nearness of his soul to the soul of another, infusing into it, even though in silence, that which he himself is and possesses. This is the supreme sign of the Master. For the greatest Master is much less a Teacher than a presence pouring the Divine consciousness and its constituting light and power and purity and bliss into all who are receptive around him".<sup>(20)</sup>

This sense of influence may create in the teacher a feeling of spiritual superiority by which the teacher gets separated from the

discipline. Writing on this aspect of Guruhood Sri Aurobindo says that "And it shall also be a sign of the teacher of the Integral Yoga that he does not arrogate to himself Guruhood in a humanly vain and self-exalting spirit. His work, if he has one, is a trust from above, he himself a channel, a vessel or a representative. He is a man helping his brothers, a child leading children, a light kindling other lights, an awakened Soul awakening souls, at himself a power or Presence of the Divine calling to him other powers of the Divine."<sup>(21)</sup>

There are three types of movements mentioned in Hinduism. There is the first, the movement of the ant, second the movement of the monkey and third, the movement of the bird. The Guru's function is not that of carrying the disciple on his back and putting him on the other shore as monkeys do but his is the movement of the bird whose flight is free and has no limit nor is it bound by the gravitational pull of the earth. The aspirant has to find out such a Guru who allows the disciple to go about freely on his own path. Such a Guru lives in the open and limitless space and invites his disciples to do likewise. Such a Guru helps the disciple to discover his own Swadharma which will match the Swabhava discovered by the disciple. It is obvious that the disciple who has some intimation of his own true nature will be able to find such a real Guru.

In order to resume the upward journey on the new way of life, there has to be first turning away from the old ways. This is what Sri Aurobindo describes as conversion. The three aids Sāstra, Utasāha and Guru meaning the knowledge of the truths, the force of personal effort and upliftment of knowledge and effort into the spiritual experience by turning away from the old ways are not complete without the fourth aid called Kāla or Time.

#### Kāla

What is the function of Time? Time in the spiritual journey appears



as a great hurdle for man. Man has no control over time, time moves at its own pace. In order that the journey may resume on the spiritual path Sri Aurobindo says that time has to be made an ally of man. Sri Aurobindo says:

"Time is the remaining aid needed for the effectivity of the process. Time presents itself to human effort as an enemy or a friend, as a resistance, a medium or an instrument. But it is really the instrument of the soul."<sup>(22)</sup>

For time to become a friend as an aid on the onward journey of Integral Yoga the aspirant must understand the nature of time itself. Time has no independent existence. It is in the midst of the effort of the mind that time appears as a resistance. When the mind is caught in unpleasant experiences, the movement of time appears slow but when mind is in the midst of pleasant experiences, the movement of time appears fast. In both cases the factor of resistance is present. In the first case, in the unpleasant situation, the mind wants time to move fast but it appears slow, and in the second case of the pleasant situation, the mind wants time to move slowly but it appears fast. There is a chronological time, determined mathematically by dividing time into equal intervals between one sunrise and another sunrise. This is called objective time. There is also subjective or psychological time which adds colour, joy and unpleasantness to the events of life.

There is also the natural flow and flux of life. This is called biological time which is based on the rhythm of life, its sleep, hunger, thirst, sex, etc., which functions in its own time. But the mind does not want to accept the natural rhythm of life. Mind imposes its own personal rate on life's movement which makes time into an enemy. For time to become a friend and ally mind's superimposition must stop. Time which becomes an enemy is the creation of the mind. Seeing

time as an enemy is the ending of it because if the mind can untangle the knot of the resistance of time, it can also transcend the limitations of mind in making time a friend and ally. A clear comprehension of the nature of time is all that is suggested in this preparatory stage. Thus we have four aids, Sāstra, Utsāha, Guru and Kāla. In Patañjali's yoga, Yama, Niyama, Āsana and Prānāyama are four external aids while Pratyāhāra, Dhyāna, Dhāraṇa and Samādhi are internal aids. Aspiration, Rejection and Surrender are three internal aids in the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo. We shall examine them in the next section one at a time.

We must now consider the most practical steps indicated in Integral Yoga. Sri Aurobindo gives us three very simple steps called aspiration, rejection and surrender for treading the path. The three steps suggested by him can be adopted by anyone for doing the Sadhana.

#### Aspiration

Aspiration suggests that the student of yoga wants to break away from the established way of life to a new way of living. Aspiration is not identical with ambition. In both there is seeking and in both there is an element of fulfilment. In ambition there is the motivating factor of achieving social success in which competition, envy and jealousy find their nourishment. But aspiration functions from an entirely different base. The source of ambition lies outside in the objective condition, while the source of aspiration lies within the subjective realms. Ambition arises out of dissatisfaction because of environmental situations, where as aspiration has its roots embedded in discontent at one's own living. In aspiration the mind of man makes an effort to reach to the highest it can imagine. This becomes the psychological goal. To embark on a psychological goal is the starting point of the spiritual journey. Aspiration is indeed an inquiry aimed at finding a new way of living. This inquiry is not a

static inquiry conducted comfortably from an easy chair but a dynamic one leading the Sadhaka on the path. Writing on Aspiration Sri Aurobindo says:

"The personal effort required is a triple labour of aspiration, rejection and surrender - an aspiration vigilant, constant, unceasing - the mind's will, the heart's seeking, the ascent of the vital being, the will to open and make plastic the physical consciousness and nature. "(23)

The aspiration has to be dynamic, constant, vigilant and total in which mind, heart, will and physical body get fully involved. When aspiration becomes intense with surcharged energy it brings about the ascent of all parts of the being. This is an inner spiritual discipline in which a mere pious wish, a vague desire and a causal effort have no place.

Aspiration is a process of becoming. That which is beyond all becoming is assuredly Being. Being is in the timeless while becoming is in time. The revealing of Being in a perfect becoming is the function of Evolution. It is the mind that imposes its flow of Time on the natural flow of Life. This is the cause of the conflict of two wills - the Human will and the Divine will. Becoming is likely to face frustrations if it becomes only a process of mind seeking its own satisfaction either because Being is absent or there is a time gap between Being and Becoming. Frustrations breed in the time gap. The movement of becoming has to approximate to being for the fulfilment of living. For this rejection, which is the second discipline, is indispensable.

### Rejection

Writing on rejection Sri Aurobindo says:

"rejection of the movements of the lower nature - rejection of the mind's ideas, opinions, preferences, habits, constructions, so that

the true knowledge may find free room in a silent mind - rejection of the vital nature's desires, demands, cravings, sensations, passions, pride, arrogance, lust, greed, jealousy, envy, hostility to the Truth, so that the true power and joy may pour from above into a calm, large, strong and consecrated vital being - rejection of the physical nature's stupidity, doubt, disbelief, obscurity, obstinacy, pettiness, laziness, unwillingness to change, Tamas, so that the true stability of Light, Power, Anand may establish itself in a body growing always more divine."(24)

In Sri Aurobindo's yoga there is need for the width as well as the depth of consciousness, width is a horizontal movement while depth is a vertical movement. Aspiration which initiates the mind into pursuing the highest images imparts to the consciousness a quality of width. It is through  $\gamma$ ejection that the consciousness of man experiences depth. It is  $\gamma$ ejection that empties the mind and through emptiness it approximates Being against the intense background of the first discipline of  $\alpha$ spiration. Thus  $\alpha$ spiration- $\gamma$ ejection which is the co-existence of the two opposites results in the void. This void is not to be mistaken for blankness for it is throbbing with life and is intensely dynamic in its state of total stillness. Aspiration- $\gamma$ ejection together leads the Sadhaka to the elimination of the mental ego. Mental ego is the maker of the effort. The disciple strikes at the root of the matter namely the maker of the effort who is eliminated. This brings in what Sri Aurobindo call a  $\gamma$ eceptive silence. Both width and depth of consciousness are represented in this  $\gamma$ eceptive-silence. The alertness of  $\alpha$ spiration adds width to consciousness and the watchful observation of  $\gamma$ ejection brings depth into existence.

### Surrender

The dynamic state of  $\gamma$ eceptive-silence is the cause of  $\gamma$ urrender. It is to be noted that  $\gamma$ urrender is not only of the mind's effort but

also of the maker of the mind or mental ego. This surrender is not brought but it comes because what is brought about is effort.

Writing on surrender Sri Aurobindo says:

"Surrender of oneself and all one is and has and every plane of the consciousness and every movement to the Divine and the Shakti.

In proportion as the surrender and self-consecration progress the Sadhaka becomes conscious of the Divine Shakti doing the Sadhana pouring into him more and more of herself, founding in him the freedom and perfection of the Divine Nature. The more this conscious process replaces his own effort, the more rapid and true becomes his progress. But it cannot completely replace the necessity of personal effort until the surrender and consecration are pure and complete from top to bottom."<sup>(25)</sup>

Further, Sri Aurobindo says:

"Note that a tamasic surrender refusing to fulfil the condition and calling on God to do everything and save one all the trouble and struggle is a deception and does not lead to freedom and perfection."<sup>(26)</sup>

The surrender demanded in Integral Yoga has to be total. This surrender is not only of what one has but of what one is. Surrender of what one has is relatively easy. Surrender of what one is demands tremendous strength. This surrender is not of the weak but of the strong. The weak know only submission. Submission and surrender are poles apart.

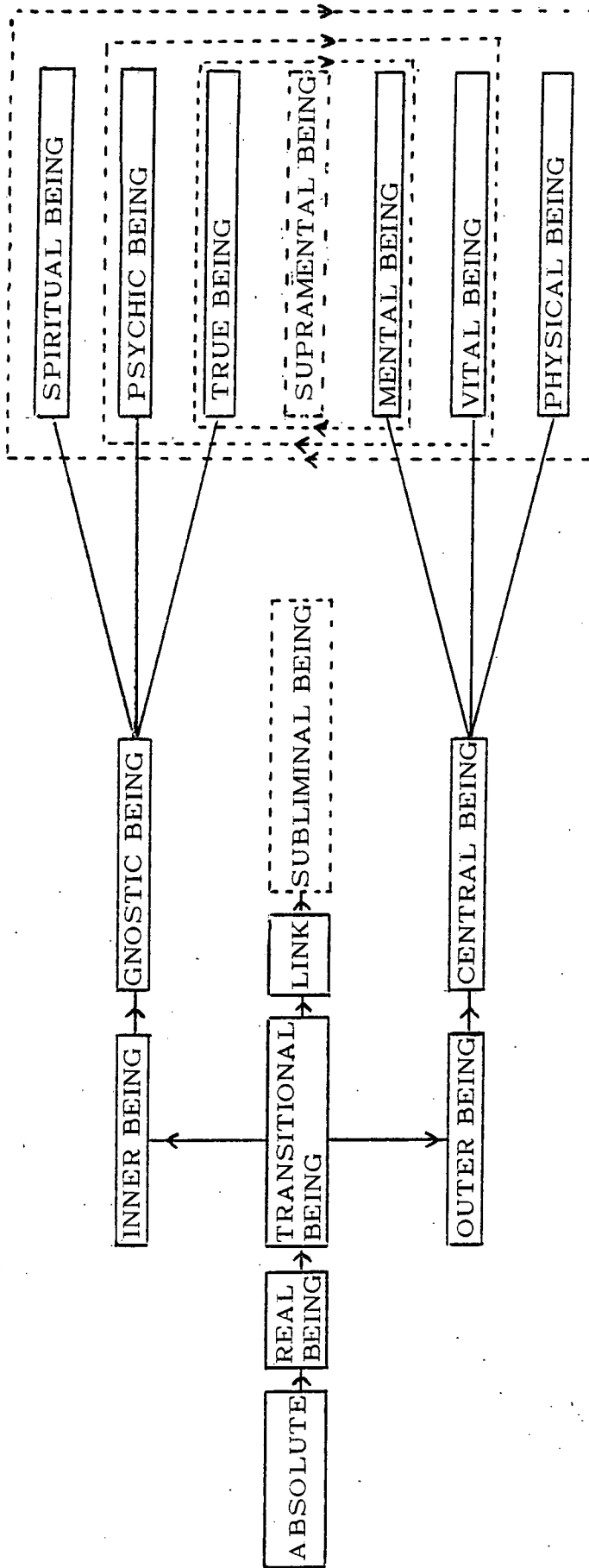
The surrender which we have been discussing comes naturally, spontaneously and effortlessly. We have seen that in the co-existence of aspiration and rejection, the positive and negative, the dynamic void comes into existence. Surrender and the void are related. They are the two sides of the same coin. Void is the experience while surrender is the expression. The mind of man cannot understand the co-existence of Aspiration and Rejection because for mind

the framework of time and space is essential. Aspiration-Rejection which constitutes the psychological discipline of Integral Yoga negates this framework of time and space, because of the presence of two things in the same spot and at the same time. This co-existence of the positive and negative creates a void or creative void. This negates the framework of space and time in which mind cannot work. The void forms the ground for spiritual experience in the timeless state where surrender is spontaneous. Time and space is the prelogical state in which mind can safely function but the co-existence of aspiration-rejection is in the para-logical state beyond mind. Time functions in sequence but the timeless which knows co-existence functions simultaneously<sup>(27)</sup> where opposite of the truth is not falsehood but another truth and in which many are innumerable one. This is the realm of the supramental which is attained by the discipline of surrender.

In Sri Aurobindo's view Puruṣa is conscious-being and Prakṛiti is conscious-power. Sāṅkhya philosophy holds the view that Puruṣa (Soul) is one and Prakṛiti (Nature) is many. Sri Aurobindo rejects this view. He holds that as Prakṛiti is many so also Puruṣa is many.<sup>(28)</sup> Puruṣa or Soul according to Sri Aurobindo can be individual, universal or cosmic and transcendent. Prakṛiti or Mother has also three poises, individual, universal and transcendent according to Sri Aurobindo.

Sri Aurobindo uses a variety of names for the conscious being. The main ones are outlined here in a structured and hierarchical table which is self-explanatory.

OUTLINE OF REAL BEING



In view of this fact surrender has to be done by Sadhaka to (i) Soul or

True being, psychic being, spiritual being, supramental being, gnostic

being; (ii) Nature (Prakriti or Mother) and (iii) both Soul and Nature

integrally.

## SURRENDER TO PURUSHA OR SOUL.

### TRANSFORMATION OF PURUSHA

Surrender to Soul or true being, psychic being, spiritual being  
and gnostic being

True being: The three Gunas or attributes of consciousness conceived in Hindu philosophy throws immense light on the subject of human psychology especially on the conditioning and unconditioning of human mind. The three Gunas of consciousness are called Tamas, Rajas and Sattwa or Inertia, Activity and Harmony respectively. Hindu philosophers uphold that without the play and interplay of the three Gunas no manifestation is possible. In manifestation the three Gunas exist in varying combinations of quantity or quality. In the three variations of Gunas it is to be noted that when one is dominant the other two are in a subordinate or recessive role. There are numerous permutations and combinations of these three Gunas which contribute towards the richness and variety present in manifestation. When the three Gunas are absolutely balanced the manifestation as we know it comes to an end. While the three Gunas constitute the conditioning factors of the human mind, its attitude and its behaviour, they also indicate the way to the unconditioning of human mind. The operational field of the three Gunas called the Kshetra is limitless because it covers both the physical as well as the psychological range. It is in the psychological range of the field that one becomes aware of the conditioning attributes of phenomena and the factors associated with them.

Life which expresses itself in form has to uphold the form through stability. In manifestation Tamas or stability provides the steadiness to the forms of Life. The stability generated in the patterns of Life lays down the basis for the social or individual tradition in the psychological field of mankind. It is in stability degenerating into



stagnation that Tamas which is an attribute of consciousness becomes a factor of demoralisation in both the individual and collective life of human society. Through this the living tradition becomes lifeless causing not only harm but retardation in the momentum gathered by life.

Similarly, the manifestation of Rajas or mobility is essential for the physical as well as psychological life. Life maintains its flux and flow and renews itself through constant rejuvenation. It recreates itself through the assured mobility of Rajas woven into nature. Natural becoming or growth is due to mobility. It is in mobility distorting into restlessness and frustration that we see the precipitation of violence and monstrosity in the physical and psychological living of the individual and society. Natural living has a charm and grace of its own. In the natural becoming frustration has no role to play. Natural movement when it ceases to remain natural becomes a forced becoming which may appear as frustration in the form of resentment giving rise to many types of complexities.

Sattva or Harmony is necessary for the progress, welfare and well-being of life. Many a time Sattva which supports harmony assumes self-complacency which is a state of psychological self-satisfaction. This happens when Sattva gets overshadowed by Tamas or stability. Self-righteousness arises from the domination of Rajas or mobility over Sattva. Self-satisfaction and self-righteousness are distortions of Sattva.

Interaction of the Gunas produces dualities. Sattva acting with Tamas and Rajas, gives rise to Sattvic distortions or modifications, namely Sattvic-Rajas and Sattvic-Tamas which result in self-righteousness and self-satisfaction respectively. Rajas acting with Sattva and Tamas gives rise to Rajasic distortions or modifications namely Rajasic-Sattva and Rajasic-Tamas which result in restlessness and unsteadiness respectively. Tamas acting with Sattva and Rajas

gives rise to Tamasic distortions or modification, namely Tamasic-Sattva and Tamasic-Rajas which result in stagnation (lack of effort) and unwillingness (lack of desire) respectively.

According to Sri Aurobindo modifications of Gunas as stated here in the previous paragraphs are the conditioning factors of man's living. Pure psychic nature in the process of living puts on the garb of the modification of Gunas which are distortions of our ego and they are acquired subconsciously. Putting on one of the modifications of Gunas and growing and living according to it is the constitution of man's nature. Once it is seen that this nature is acquired in the process of evolution, it has to be dismantled from its conditioning.

To move from the acquired nature to the original nature is the function of Integral Yoga. Acquired nature for the purpose of defending and guarding itself anchors around three centres. It centres in the physical being as physical ego by forming modifications of Tamas in habits of sleep, sex, death, etc., for preserving stability against the background of dualities like heat and cold, hunger and satiation, etc. It centres in vital being as vital ego by forming modifications of Rajas in sensations, feelings, desires and impulses against the background of the dualities of love and hatred, joy and grief, fortune and misfortune, victory and defeat, success and failure for the purpose of psychological becoming. It centres in the mental being as mental ego by forming modifications of Sattva in thoughts and perceptions against the background of dualities of virtue and sin, reason and unreason, justice and injustice, truth and error, honour and disgrace for the purpose of psychological identification.

According to Sri Aurobindo ego or personality is not composed of one ego or personality but many egos and personalities fused in one. Nine personalities or egos which affect the individual are three--threes of mind, vital and physical. They are shown in the following table.

	MENTAL	VITAL	PHYSICAL
MIND	Mental-mind Mind (proper)	Vital-mind	Physical-mind
VITAL	Mental-vital	Vital-vital Vital (proper)	Physical-vital
PHYSICAL	Mental-physical	Vital-physical	Physical-physical Physical (proper)

This is the horizontal division of ego or personality. According to Sri Aurobindo, there is a further vertical division of ego or personality. This is called inner and outer mind, inner and outer vital and inner and outer physical which support the being. Behind inner and outer ego there is the soul or True being.

We have now a clear view of what Sri Aurobindo means by ego and soul or True being. Sri Aurobindo mentions three key elements in Integral Yoga for unveiling the soul or True being. They are (i) call and response (ii) calm and equality and (iii) surrender.

(i) Call and Response. By call Sri Aurobindo means vigilant, constant aspiration of mind, life and body, intense hunger of the soul for the Divine for acceptance and transformation. Sri Aurobindo says that a sincere call always evokes response from the Divine.

(ii) Calm and Equality. Calmness comes by renunciation of surface desires and passions present in the egoistic nature of the Sattvic-Rajasic type. Quietness comes about by renouncing the deeper desires and passions present in the egoistic nature of the Rajasic - Tamasic type.

A mind that is tossed by passion in seeking pleasure and in avoiding pain is unable to catch the vibrations of the higher plane because it has not attained the equality. By equality Sri Aurobindo means steering clear of the pairs of opposites like victory and defeat, love and hatred, etc. Equality is the term used by Sri Aurobindo to explain the concept of Samatva recommended in the Gita. (29)

(iii) Surrender. By surrender Sri Aurobindo means a complete self-dedication to the Divine. We have seen that it is the strong who surrender

while the weak submit. Here, self-dedication or devotion is used. The more one can surrender to the Divine, the greater is the response from above that transforms the aspirant. Surrender involves complete abolition of one's ego. Sri Aurobindo highly recommends the Gita's method of Karma Yoga: Kartritvābhimāna tyāga - abandonment of all sense of doership, anasakti - detachment from the fruit of work and Īśvarārpana buddhi - doing every work as an offering to God. Transformation effected in this Advaita or Non-dual surrender results in the recovery of True being or soul.

We have seen that individual salvation is not the ideal of Sri Aurobindo. His ideal aims at a radical and integral transformation of the earth nature, the spiritualisation of matter. Sri Aurobindo says that the human complex of mind, life and body has to be so transformed that its resistance to the work of spirit is totally abolished by replacing the inertia by the plasticity, obstinacy by the adaptability and the rigidity by the flexibility of thought, desires and habits of mind, life and body respectively, which is the new nature. Spirit can work more effectively through the new nature. The automatic response of the body-mind complex to the influence of the spirit will gradually spread among other individuals. According to Aurobindo, this will result in <sup>a</sup> new type of humanity as a consequence of the transformation of human nature.

Transformations are briefly summarised in the following table.

Gunās	Modifications	Disciplines	Transformation
Tamas	T-S. T-R	Tyāga	Inertia by plasticity
Rajas	R-S. R-T	Anasakti	Obstinacy by adaptability
Sattwa	S-R. S-T	Īśvarārpana	Rigidity by flexibility
True being or soul	Ego old nature	New disciplines	New nature

Psychic being: We have seen that Tamas, Rajas and Sattwa are associated with inertia, activity and self-satisfaction or a new form of

inertia respectively. Sri Aurobindo has described Tamas as Passivity, Rajas as Passion and Sattwa as Poise. Behind Poise, Passion and Passivity there is the psychic force of Psychic being.

The three Gunas Tamas, Rajas and Sattwa of Hindu philosophy resemble ~~with~~ thesis, antithesis and synthesis in striking similarities. It is to be noted here that ~~the~~ concept of thesis, antithesis and synthesis has a width, while the concept of the three Gunas has depth. ~~The width~~ concept has social appeal while the concept of the three Gunas has psychological appeal. In terms of Hegel Tamas is Thesis, Rajas is Antithesis and Sattwa is Synthesis.

The psychic being is a spark of the Divine flame which resides in the core of our being, the inner-most heart says Sri Aurobindo. This psychic being is surrounded by the mental, vital and physical ego. The more one cancels out the ego, the more does psychic being come to the front and give a lead as a guide in evolution. Unconditional surrender of Mental, Vital and Physical to the Divine brings about the transformation of ~~poise~~, ~~passion~~ and ~~passivity~~ into pure light, pure force and pure silence respectively. Psychic being uses the body, life and mind as instruments. Even though these instruments are weak, psychic being is never affected by their weaknesses. Psychic being is full of Love for the Divine and is a flame for the manifestation of Grace of Divine on the Earth. The psychic being is our deeper and real self. It is hidden behind the thick veil of ego as a witness of the operations of our mental, vital and physical being. On psychic transformation Sri Aurobindo says that "as for the psychic being not being in front, that cannot be brought about all at once - the other parts of the being must be prepared for the change and the veil between must become thinner and thinner. It is for that experiences come and there is the working on the inner mind and vital and physical as well as on the outer nature". (30)

In the above quotation Sri Aurobindo refers to other parts of the being which must be prepared for the change. By this it is obvious that he refers to subliminal being, central being, spiritual being, etc., as outlined before in a diagram. We touch on the subliminal being, central being and spiritual being because of their relevance.

Sri Aurobindo says that the "subliminal self stands behind and supports the whole superficial man; it has in it a larger and more efficient mind behind the surface mind, a larger and more powerful vital, a subtle and freer physical consciousness behind the surface bodily existence and above them it opens to higher super-conscient as well as below them to the lower sub-conscient ranges. If one wishes to purify and transform the nature it is the power of these higher ranges to which one must open and raise to them and change by them both ~~the~~ subliminal and the surface being."<sup>(31)</sup>

Most people are not aware of their central being. Central being in the psychology of Sri Aurobindo is usually applied to the part of the Divinity held in us. Central being supports the physical, vital, mental and soul (true being) and survives through death and birth. The central being combines in it Jivatman which is our soul (true being), attained through the awareness of higher self-knowledge, and psychic being which stands behind life supported by body and mind. Most people are aware only of the ego. Sri Aurobindo says that "If there is the will to surrender in the central being, then psychic can come forward".<sup>(32)</sup> There is here the condition of "if" which has to be made unconditional. Surrender implied here is unconditional. If this central being makes its surrender to the Divine by giving up its separative fulfilment in order to become an instrument of the Divine, then it becomes easier for the mind to give up its obstinate persistency in argument and constant confusion of ideas, for the vital its fury of bad will receiving support from the obliging mind of reason and for the physical its obstinate inertia

and hold on old habits.

But this is not enough for the psychic growth of the being because ultimately psychic mind, psychic vital and psychic physical have to emerge from below to take charge of the instruments used by the spirit. For this growth awareness of spiritual being is necessary.

Transformations are briefly summarised in the following table.

Gunās in Aurobindo's Terms	Gunās in Hegel's Terms	Disciplines Unconditional Surrender of	Result	Transformation
Passivity	Thesis	Physical	Psychic Physical	Pure silence
Passion	Antithesis	Vital	Psychic Vital	Pure force
Poise	Synthesis	Mental	Psychic Mental	Pure light
Depth	Width	Psychic Discipline	Psychic Being	Psychic Nature

#### Spiritual Being :

In the process of our surrender the various factors of obstinacy of mind, bad will of the vital and inertia of the physical come in the way of demanding a return for the surrender done and making surrender conditional now and again. How is one to cross over these hurdles if one is to come to the supreme spiritual experience of surrender about which mystics of all ages have spoken and which is regarded as the very summit of Integral Yoga? For this we must examine the concept of surrender in depth. To whom do I surrender? Is it to the unknown or to the known, to the unmanifest or to the manifest, to the timeless or to time? For this we must find out the nature of time and timeless. Surely, timeless is not separate from time. If timeless is separate from time then it belongs to another category, and therefore is not timeless. Timeless is not of time but it is mysteriously present in time. Similarly, the unmanifest is not of the manifest, but it is mysteriously present in the manifest and even though the unknown is not of the known, yet it is present mysteriously in the known all the

time. Surrender is usually to the known or the manifest. If this is so, then it is not surrender but it is a subtle form of submission. Surrender to the known is in space and time continuity and has always a motive behind it which can be material or psychological. This form of surrender is not different from loyalty. In loyalty exploitation is bound to enter between Guru and disciple. How can one surrender to the unknown? The unknown is present in the known. Therefore, surrender to the unknown has to be done in the known. It cannot be done outside the known or away from the known. The question which we are examining is: Does one surrender to the known in the known or to the unknown in the known. Sri Aurobindo writing on surrender says: "No, surrender to the Divine and surrender to the Guru are not the same thing. In surrendering to the Guru, it is to the Divine in him that one surrenders - if it were only to a human entity it would be ineffective."<sup>(33)</sup>

Sri Aurobindo indicates very clearly that surrender has to be made to the Divine in the Guru and not to the human embodiment of the Guru. Surrender to the Form, whether of the human entity, mental ideation or an image in stone or wood is not enough because the Transcendent, the Formless is excluded from it. The Formless is present in the Form yet it is not identical with Form. Form, however noble and sublime cannot embody the Formless. In the Form one can have genuine intimations of the Formless. Intimations are intuitions. Intuitions come effortlessly. These are automatic and occupy a place in the gradations of the mind given by Sri Aurobindo. They are physical, vital, mental, higher, illumined, intuitive and overmind. Physical mind, vital mind and mind have the attributive consciousness of Tamas or Stability, Rajas or Mobility and Sattva or Balance respectively. The Higher Mind is a higher thought which comes to acquire knowledge not by the mediate principle of reasoning but



immediately or spontaneously. This is a luminous thought mind. The Illumined Mind is not a thought or an idea but a spiritual light. This Mind acquires knowledge by a flash. Intuitive Mind uses intuition. Intuition is knowledge by identity. The subject knows the object by feeling his identification with it. Overmind is in direct contact with the supramental Truth-consciousness. It is a link between Mind and Supermind. Overmind is the highest stage in the spiritual consciousness but it is still within the sphere of Ignorance. One needs a great sensitivity of consciousness in yoga to respond to the intimations of the Formless in Form. Any effort to hold or to possess these intimations of the Formless would bring the Form to a dead end by rendering the Form incapable of receiving further intimations. The vessel has got to be made empty and pure for receiving such intimations through the negative discipline of Rejection. These intimations which are effortless are received in the higher mind spontaneously or immediately, in the Illumined mind by spiritual light and not by thought or idea, in Intuitive mind by identity and in overmind directly from the truth consciousness. These perceptions of the unknown in the known of the formless in form are undoubtedly the experience of love. Surrender is effortless in love and this alone is true surrender. The being which makes this surrender to the truth is psychic being. Sri Aurobindo says:

"It is only the psychic that knows how to surrender and the psychic is usually very much veiled in the beginning. When the psychic awakes it can bring a sudden and true surrender of the whole being for the difficulty of the rest is rapidly dealt with and disappears."<sup>(34)</sup>

The surrender to which we have referred is done neither by the physical nor the vital nor the mental, it is only by the psychic. This surrender is sudden and therefore it is effortless. In the gradual surrender because of the time gap there is always an element of

calculation and so there is a motive in it. A sudden surrender is an act of love. This love is not of the mind, vital or physical because if love is to the known in the known then it will degenerate into possessiveness. Possession in love breeds jealousy through which fear enters into the relationship. True love is addressed to the unknown in the known to the unmanifest in the manifest and to the Formless in the form because the unknown or unmanifest or formless cannot be possessed. To possess the form is to miss the formless. Love gets debased into lust and jealousy in form. In the Formless it is pure and what it is in its dynamic potency is not known to physical vital and mental consciousness. It is known only to the psychic. The psychic is veiled and has to be awakened by removing veil after veil which the consciousness has cast over itself. The psychic stands unveiled in the void in the moment of meditation between one thought and another thought in mind, between one emotion and another emotion in heart, between one action and another action in the navel region and between one habit and another habit in the physical mode of existence. The awakening of the psychic brings spiritual awakening in which true love manifests.

We have to consider now the second aspect of surrender, namely who surrenders. Is it the "I" that surrenders? The entity that is called "I" and which is indeed the surrendering entity is none other than the image of I-ness built by the mind. What is needed here is not the elimination of the "I" but of the I-ness. The "I" without the I-ness is the vehicle pure and empty. This is indeed existence without identity. We have seen in the previous paragraph that it is the Intuitive mind that uses the consciousness of identity. Consciousness above Intuitive mind is the consciousness of overmind. This consciousness without identity is larger than the intuitive consciousness. Thought process including the thought of "I" comes to an end in this

consciousness of overmind. It is the I-ness which is the product of thought and the creature of Time which comes in the way of the emergence of the spiritual being present in the overmind consciousness. Once again, it is this existence which is veiled by the opaque screens cast by I-ness. The opaque screen has to be made transparent for the Real Self and gnostic being to emerge from behind. For this supramental transformation is necessary. The psychic state is the window through which one can have access to the glimpse of the Real Self. The spiritual state is indeed the window through which one gets a glimpse of the Gnostic being. All this is done by surrendering "I" to the Divine.

Most of the ground for spiritual transformation using the discipline of surrender has been covered in the previous paragraphs. The spiritual transformation is distinguished from the psychic as the upward from the inward. The psychic transformation is an inward transformation; the spiritual transformation is an upward transformation. The spiritual transformation is completed in three movements. Opening, ascent and descent. The lower levels of the mind are to open to the higher; they have to be made receptive to the vibrations of the higher levels of consciousness. Opaque consciousness of mental, vital and physical has to be made transparent by the descent of Truth consciousness. Ascent elevates the aspirant, descent of the supramental transforms the mental vital and physical conditions. Ascent has to be from mind to Higher mind, Illumined mind, Intuitive mind and overmind. Transformations effected are briefly summarised in the following table.

Psychic Nature	Psychic being	Discipline Effortless Surrender of	Result	Transformation
Pure Silence	Psychic Physical	Psychic Physical	Spiritual body	Spiritual Silence
Pure Force	Psychic Vital	Psychic Vital	Spiritual Vital	Spiritual Force
Pure Light	Psychic Mind	Psychic Mind	Spiritual Mind	Spiritual Light
			Spiritual being	Spiritual Nature

### Gnostic being :

In order to comprehend the process of transforming consciousness from opaque to transparent, it is necessary for us to understand the nature of certain categories of mind. The categories of mind as we have seen are physical, vital, higher, illumined, intuitive and over-mind. We do not include supermind here because it is not a category of mind and because it is beyond the scope and range of the mind. According to Sri Aurobindo supermind is the grade of existence beyond mind, life and matter. Supermind is beyond the manifest. In other words it is the intimation of the unmanifest in the manifest. Subtle and abstract mind cannot by its own effort reach the supermind. There is a fundamental difference between mind and supermind. This difference is not that of kind or degree but of dimension. There are fundamentally two types of knowledge - one, knowledge by ideation which makes use of abstractions and the other, knowledge by being. It is by a process of ideation that mind arrives at knowledge but supermind is a state of consciousness which knows by identity or by being. In supermind knowledge is not derived from identification but it is arrived at by identity or by oneness. Mind acting as an instrument of spirit uses reason which is its highest power. But for the knowledge by identity or by oneness a greater power than reason is needed. In order to move into that state one has to pass through various layers of mind.

Supermind is not an achievement as such but it is the descent of the Divine grace. Man has to come to utter transparency and innocence of consciousness to receive the intimations of supermind. Divine Nature has in it the capability to divinise the human receptacle. Descent of Divine Nature can bring about the transformation and for that sensitivity of consciousness is required. What is the path of increasing sensitivity? For answering this we shall have to explore the avenues of Physical, Higher, Illumined, Intuitive, over and supermind.

### Physical Mind

The physical mind is obviously the lowest expression of the mind. Physical mind is concerned with the physical objects only. For its operation it depends on the senses and draws its ideas and inferences from the data fed to it by external objects. It is a mind which has its attention turned completely outward. It is almost an animal mind because animals respond to outer stimuli only. In this mind there is a reflex action stimulated by the sense impacts. This mind remains in a drifting state because it admits turns and tosses of waves moving in the current of life. Sri Aurobindo says that this awareness is normal in humanity. The awareness in the physical mind is at its lowest. The aspirant on the path of yoga has to come out from the state of drifting somehow.

### Higher Mind

As the physical mind is left behind, the aspirant emerges into the state of higher mind. This mind is above the normal physical mind. Sri Aurobindo describes that "our first decisive step out of our human intelligence, of our normal mentality is an ascent into a Higher mind."<sup>(35)</sup> The higher mind is a state of ascent from the drifting condition of the physical mind. One has to remember here the purpose of Integral Yoga. It is to create a vessel which has to be both empty

and large for the grace to descend from above. The higher mind has tremendous urge towards breadth and wideness. This urge helps the mind to contact life at an ever-increasing point for its fulfilment. One steps out of the drift in the higher mind in order to choose and decide. The higher mind is a state of awakened consciousness where one is wide awake to choose, to accept and to reject. In this state one is no longer in a state of indecision. Choice is the main characteristic of Higher mind and decision a central pivot. As long as the mind is engaged in choice, there is the noise and chatter of the mind of the various alternatives abandoned previously. When choice ends there is an experience for the first time of silence. Therefore, the movement from Higher mind to the Illumined mind is in fact a movement from the wideness of consciousness to the Silence of consciousness.

#### Illumined mind

On Illumined mind Sri Aurobindo says that "As the Higher Mind brings a greater consciousness into the being through the spiritual idea and its power of truth, so the Illumined Mind brings in a still greater consciousness through a Truth-sight and Truth-light and its seeing and seizing power. It can effect a more powerful and dynamic integration; it illumines the thought-mind with a direct inner vision and inspiration, brings a spiritual sight into the heart and a spiritual light and energy into its feeling and emotion, imparts to the life-force a spiritual urge, a truth inspiration that dynamises the action and exalts the life movements,"<sup>(36)</sup>

According to the above passage, it is clear that Illumined mind primarily works by Vision which is Truth-sight and Truth-light and not by thought image. There is in it the movement by perception and not by thought image. In it there is an awareness which is free from the conflicting elements of choice which involves thought into opposites of acceptance of indulgence and rejection of denial. In Higher mind

one examines all alternatives by the process of choice and therefore the question of choice does not arise in Illumined mind. In Illumined mind the aspirant comes to a state of choice-less awareness<sup>"</sup> as described very often by J. Krishnamurti.<sup>(78)</sup> An Illumined mind has also clear perceptions and being free from the burden of choice has lightness to penetrate into subtler areas of the extended regions. There is a silence in the Illumined mind but it is a silence born from the elimination of the noise created by the alternatives paused by choice. Silence here is of a superficial nature.

#### Intuitive mind

The next stage is that of Intuitive mind. Sri Aurobindo says that "Intuition has a four-fold power. A revelatory truth seeing, a power of inspiration or truth hearing, a power of truth-touch or immediate seizing of significance, which is akin to the ordinary nature of its intervention in our mental intelligence, a power of true and automatic discrimination of the orderly and exact relation of truth to truth - these are the four-fold potencies of intuition. Intuition therefore perform all the action of reason - including the function of logical intelligence, which is to work out the right relation of things and the right relation of idea with idea - but by its own superior process and with steps that do not fail or falter".<sup>(37)</sup> In the Intuitive mind the integration or higher synthesis of infra and para logical faculties of mind take place. Intuition is a vehicle of truth conveyance. It reveals itself in a flash through a veil of nescience. Intuition is subject to influences, prejudices, inferences and diversions which distort the purity and fullness of its action. Sri Aurobindo says that "there are seeming intuitions on levels of the being which are communications rather than intuitions".<sup>(38)</sup> In the lower vital which is predominated by desires and habits intuition works through suggestion and discrimination which is automatic. In the middle vital the intuition

works through the rational forces of synthesis and analysis. While in the upper vital which is predominated by emotions and thought, intuition works through the truth-hearing and truth-vision or inspiration and revelations. Intuition in the lower vital are subject to infra-rational and rational forces of logic. While rational and para or supra rational forces influence the intuition working in the upper-vital. In Sri Aurobindo's yoga there is a higher synthesis or integration of infra and supra-logical state of Intuitive mind.

We have seen that physical mind is a drifting mind. Higher mind is free from drift of physical mind and has its own status where there is no longer a state of indecision. Choice is the main characteristic of Higher mind. Illumined mind is a mind of vision and there is no conflict in it of the opposites. In Illumined mind there is a state of choiceless awareness. In Illumined mind there is the silence born from the elimination of distractions paused by the choice made in the Higher mind.

Even though Illumined mind is endowed with sensitivity which seems more than the sensitivity of Higher mind, there are some elements of dullness which are due to the existence of duality present in it. The duality present in it is "that of the Pilgrim and Path, of the subject and object, of the thinker and thought, the perceiver and perceived. Now in duality all knowledge is in terms of ideation and not in terms of identity. . . . And so its knowledge does not have that immediacy which is discernible at the level of Intuitive mind. Where there is duality there the perception is always veiled, through the glass, darkly. The Illumined mind is free from the conflicts of thought but it is not free from the limitations of thought".<sup>(39)</sup> Illumined mind moves forward through effort of the inner mind or inner being in terms of artificial constructions to arrive at a synthesis by the acceptance of similarities and rejection of dissimilarities. This is a



reconciliation of opposites which break down again and again under the impact of unpredictable events of outer or objective conditions of Life. Therefore there has to be a higher synthesis where the opposites are not merely sought to be reconciled but are allowed to be transcended. Transcendence of opposites is fundamentally different from the reconciliation of opposites. Intuitive mind knows transcendence of opposites.

In Intuitive mind, the consciousness receives the Light from above, Intuitive mind alone arrives at the Higher synthesis of wholeness of inner being and outer being which is more than sum or totality. Here there is nothing artificial. On the contrary in intuitive mind there is the revelation of the wholeness of outer and inner Life which comes from the frontiers beyond the mind.

We have seen that Illumined mind is free from the confusions of alternatives. It still maintains an effort to reach where it can never reach. After having reached a particular point the mind moves in a circle. The effort when abandoned, dissolves the duality. In this state mind receives silence. This silence is deeper than the silence experienced in Illumined mind because it is free from the noise of the alternatives of choice. The mind which eliminates its effort becomes an extraordinary sensitive instrument ready to respond to all subtle demands made upon it. This is indeed Intuitive mind. In it as we have seen before there is the consciousness of identity.

We have seen that in the Physical mind there is no awareness of the opposites. In the Higher mind there is an awakened consciousness where one is wide awake to choose, accept and reject. There is in this the conflict of opposites. In the Illumined mind there is a reconciliation of opposites which results from the elimination of the noise created by the alternatives paused by choice in the Higher mind. In the Intuitive mind there are flashes of light. In the momentary vision

of the Intuitive mind there is the momentary vision of the transcendence of the opposites. The flashes which are received by intuitive mind are the flashes of supramental Truth. Flashes in intuitive mind reveal the Gnostic being. Intuition in fact is a discontinuous jump of consciousness because it represents a break in the continuity of thought. Even though it is not governed by logic, it does not mean that it is illogical. Sri Aurobindo says that Intuition is para-logical or supra-logical. In Intuitive mind the consciousness becomes intensely transparent because of the casting away of the opaqueness present in the duality of ideal state of thought.

### Overmind

What is the limitation of Intuitive mind? We have seen that duality of the maker and made in the Intuitive mind comes to an end because the effort of the mind has ceased. When the effort ceases, it does not mean that the maker of the effort has ceased. The maker of the effort called the "I" is functioning still. The Intuitive intimations descending from the supramental get distorted by the overt and covert movements of "I" functioning in various garbs. When one becomes aware of the activities of the maker of effort, one is enabled to move from the state of Intuitive mind to overmind. Sri Aurobindo says that "The next step of the ascent brings us to the overmind; the intuitional change can only be an introduction to this higher spiritual overture. But we have seen that the overmind even when it is selective and not total in its action is still a power of cosmic consciousness; a principle of global knowledge which carries in it a deligated light from supramental Gnosis."<sup>(40)</sup> On overmind consciousness Sri Aurobindo further says that "It is therefore only by opening into the cosmic consciousness that the overmind ascent and descent can be wholly made possible; a high and intense individual opening upwards is not sufficient - to that vertical ascent towards summit Light there must be added a vast

horizontal expansion of the consciousness into some totality of the spirit. At least the inner being must already have replaced by its deeper and wider awareness the surface mind and its limited outlook and learned to live in a large Universality; for otherwise the overmind view of things and the overmind dynamism will have no room to move in and effectuate its dynamic operations."<sup>(41)</sup>

We have seen that the sense of "I" disappears in intuitive mind. The dissolved ego merges in universality by keeping the individuality as a centre. In the overmind consciousness, the predominance of the centralising ego sense wares out entirely. The ego-sense gets replaced by a wide cosmic perception and feeling of a boundless universal self. When the sense of individuality disappears the soul takes charge of the individual reality in which the glimpse of the cosmic consciousness, the cosmic delight and the cosmic action become concrete in overmind.

Sri Aurobindo says that "the overmind has a great plasticity and is a field of multiple possibilities".<sup>(42)</sup> In the overmind there is no presence of instrumental individuality. The presence of ego make the instrument rigid. When rigidity is replaced by plasticity, the instrument become fit for the purpose it is to serve.

We have seen that ascent from physical mind to overmind is negative in its nature and content. For the overmind to become a field of multiple possibilities it has to be not only utterly empty but completely negative. Overmind consciousness in which duality no longer exist is no doubt empty but it is not blank. It is extraordinarily sensitive in nature by which it is able to respond to the subtle touch of Supermind. Overmind is a culmination of ascent and also a ground for descent. In fact overmind is a bridge between the Higher Sachchianand on the one hand and Lower (Mind, Life, Matter) on the other hand.

According to Sri Aurobindo, there is an overmind soul.<sup>(43)</sup>

This soul is in contact with the other souls in the overmind world. The field of multiple possibilities opens up for the aspirant in this world. It is difficult to put the demarkation line between the mind and soul. Spiritual transformation begins in Illumined mind and reaches a new peak in overmind region which is a world of Gods (Devas). The evolution of Soul takes place in overmind world.

### Spiritual Mind

Sri Aurobindo says that "Spiritual evolution obeys the logic of a successive unfolding".<sup>(44)</sup> It has taken aeons to evolve matter, millenniums to evolve life and centuries to evolve mind. The increased rapidity is possible for the progress because the inner-being can consciously participate in evolution. This possibility was not there in the animal life. Transformation which are brought about by Nature appear as a miracle but it is a miracle with a method. Nature's largest strides are taken over an assured ground where security and certainty is guaranteed. Over topping our normal mind there are successive states and graded powers of being which are hidden in our own super-conscious parts. From these higher sources, the secret spiritual power acts upon the being and by its pressure brings about the psychic transformation and spiritual change. What is the limitation of overmind consciousness? Sri Aurobindo says that "In the terrestrial evolution itself the overmind descent would not be able to transform wholly the Inconscience. All that it could do would be to transform in each man it touched, the whole conscious being, inner and outer, personal and universally impersonal, into its own stuff and impose that upon the Ignorance illuminating it into cosmic truth and knowledge. But a basis of Nescience would remain."<sup>(45)</sup> Psychic transformation and spiritual change brought about in overmind consciousness has to be perfected. The perfection envisaged by

Sri Aurobindo has been described in the twenty five chapters in the concluding part of The Synthesis of Yoga under the title "Yoga of Self-Perfection."<sup>(46)</sup>

### Supermind

We have examined the overmind consciousness. What comes next? The next stage is that of supramental consciousness. Sri Aurobindo says that "the supramental stage does not admit of any premature descent of the highest Light; for it can only commence when the supramental force begins to act directly and this it does not do if the nature is not ready".<sup>(47)</sup> In giving the reason for this Sri Aurobindo says that "For there is too great a disparity between the power of the Supreme Force and the capacity of ordinary nature; the inferior nature would either be unable to bear or bearing unable to respond and receive or receiving, unable to assimilate."<sup>(48)</sup> How can a power of supramental work on Earth? Sri Aurobindo in answering this question says that "Till Nature is ready, the supramental Force has to act indirectly; it puts the intermediary powers of overmind or Intuition in front, or it works through a modification of itself to which the already half transformed being can be wholly or partially responsive."<sup>(49)</sup>

We have completed now the ground of increasing sensitivity under the heading 'Surrender to Gnostic being'. The surrender in this renders consciousness to intense transparency by casting away the opaqueness present in the duality of the ideal state of thought. In this casting there are graded powers of being which are revealed in an ascent from lower most physical to highest supermind. In this there is not only the recovery of Gnostic being, but there is also a transformation of spiritual silence, spiritual force and spiritual light into Sat, Cit and Anand respectively. Surrender in this is to the Divine. Sachchidanand which is the Absolute Reality

reveals the Real being.

Transformations effected are briefly summarised in the following table.

Spiritual being	Gnostic being	Real being
Spiritual Silence	Existence	Sat
Spiritual Force	Conscious force	Cit
Spiritual Light	Bliss	Anand

In Sri Aurobindo's yoga transformation of Nature (Prakriti) is as vast as the spiritual transformation. We shall turn our attention to this topic in the following pages.

### SURRENDER TO NATURE

#### Transformation of Nature (Prakṛiti)

In the opening paragraph of the book called The Mother Sri Aurobindo says that "These are the conditions of the Light and Truth, the sole conditions under which the highest Force will descend; and it is only the very highest supramental Force descending from above and opening from below that can victoriously handle the physical Nature and annihilate its difficulties."<sup>(50)</sup> Sri Aurobindo at the same time says that this demands "surrender of oneself and all one is and has and every plane of the consciousness and every movement to the Divine and the Shakti".<sup>(51)</sup>

Sri Aurobindo refers in the above paragraph to the Mother which is the executive power of the Divine called the Shakti. The Mother has been worshipped from time <sup>immemorial</sup> in the world. "She was worshipped by the Vedic seers as Aditi, by Tantrics as Adyashakti and Mahashakti and traces of her worship are found in the fading memories of the Babylonian, Egyptian, Assyrian and Chinese tradition of the Mother cult, or the creative feminine principle."<sup>(52)</sup> In this yoga one is called upon to surrender to the Mother for the transformation of the physical nature or Prakṛiti. The transformation as

envisaged by Tantra can liberate the soul from the bonds of the lower nature and bestow upon it the status of a featureless infinity present in the Transcendent reality and a mastership of Universality but it cannot bring about the inauguration of the reign of the supermind in Matter. There are three poises of the Mother—transcendent, universal and individual.

#### Transcendent Poise:

In the transcendent poise she is above time and space and bears the fiat of the Absolute. Here she stands in the timeless silence of unitary existence as the luminous link between the unmanifest and manifest. She is there as the original infinite Cit-Sakti (consciousness-Force) and bears in Her the power of the Supreme Divine. She brings out of the eternal Sachchidanand in an impeccable harmony and descending hierarchies, the powers and principles which govern in varying rhythms the manifest universe. She is the matrix and everything in the Universe belongs to Her.

#### Universal Poise:

In the universal poise as Mahāshakti she ploughs and prepares the ground for the growth and flowering of the fiat. In the universal poise, the Universal Mother, Mahāshakti, presides over the world which she projects out of Herself and dominates and directs all their complex play of the multitudinous movements of the world by the rigour and rectitude of Her laws. Tamas, Rajas and Sattva which are the attributes of the Prakṛiti are only the lower executive form of cosmic Mahāshakti. She moves in the freedom of Her spiritual infinitudes as Para-Prakṛiti in the steps of unfaltering knowledge. Her unlimited vision sees in a glance both the near and far in the working of every force and energy, every role or rhythm. Her un-sleeping Power guards the cosmos and its movements and prevents it from tumbling into disintegrating chaos. Mother stands as the unveiled

eternal power in Sachchidanand as omnipotent knowledge, omniscient will and intense and absolute Anand in the summit. All beings live in her ineffable completeness and unalterable oneness and she keeps them safely in her arms for ever. Nearer to us says Sri Aurobindo are the worlds of supramental Mahāshakti. In this world all movements are steps of Truth and all beings are souls and powers and bodies of the Divine Light.

The supramental Mahāshakti has manifested four of Her great powers for the governance and guidance of our terrestrial existences called Maheswari, Mahākali, Mahālakshmi and Mahāsaraswati. The first one is wisdom which conceives the order and principle of things, the second one is the strength or the power that sanctions, upholds and enforces the order conceived in the first, the third one is the Harmony that creates the arrangement of parts and the fourth one is p'erfection which carries out in vigour and precision the work initiated in logical culmination. Maheswari, Mahākali, Mahālaksmi and Mahāsaraswati represent respectively Wisdom, Strength, Harmony and Perfection. All the four powers are interwoven. When one power shines out, the others remain in the background and support the one in manifestation from behind. Integration of the four powers of the Mother is a higher synthesis in Sri Aurobindo's yoga. We know that Prakriti has three Gunas, namely Tamas (Stability), Rajas (Mobility) and Sattva (Harmony). In Prakriti also when one Guna is in abundance the other two remain in recessive mode and support the one in prominent position from behind. The four powers of Mahāshakti "correspond to more or less approximately to the four aspects of Nārāyana as described in the Vaishnava Pancharātra-Vāsudeva, Shankarshana, Praduman and Aniruddha - and can be said to be the primal differentiating terms of four Varnas or four basic types of human temperament Brāhmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra".<sup>(53)</sup> Thus we have four orders -



the Divine in Knowledge called Brāhmins, the Divine as power in man called Kshatriya, the Divine as production enjoyment and mutuality in man called Vaishya and the Divine as service, obedience and work in man called Sudra. The four powers of Mahāshakti, Wisdom, Strength, Harmony and Perfection act on Head, Heart, Navel and Base of the spine respectively. They are the four mutations which are essential for the Divine Life in the material world. Collectively, Maheshwari acts with her all-illuminating and all commanding splendour of knowledge. Mahākali acts with her thunders and lightning of her force. Mahālakshmi with her overpowering grace and harmony, and Mahāsaraswati with her perfection of organisation and execution in the affairs of man's living latent in the Divine Nature of man's world. Sri Aurobindo says that there are other powers in Mahāshakti which have remained unmanifest since time immemorial.

Integral yoga aims at the total integration of man. In man's consciousness today there is an undue emphasis on the masculine aspect. The feminine consciousness co-exist today with the masculine consciousness as one after the other and not as one perfectly integrated with the other. There is a psychological warfare between the sexes in the world today. How can one be integrated with the other? On Maheshwari Sri Aurobindo says that "she is Maheshwari, goddess of Supreme Knowledge and brings to us her vision for all kinds of widenesses of truth, her rectitude of the spiritual will, the calm and passion of her supramental largeness, her felicity of illumination".<sup>(54)</sup> The supreme knowledge is arrived at by mutation in the mind. This is obviously Wisdom. In wisdom there is a quality of mellowness, a catholicity of outlook, a hesitancy in adopting subjective approach to living, an objectivity and consideration for other man's point of view and attentiveness in one's judgement. The wisdom in this sense is feminine. On the other hand the masculine mind is

aggressive and argumentative. It is through the touch of feminine consciousness it becomes mellowed and assumes a greater flexibility in its approach to living. This touch is that of Maheshwari. In Sri Aurobindo's yoga right-hand side of the brain is feminine and left-hand side of the brain is masculine. Right-hand side of the brain is creative, contemplative, imaginative and synthetic while the left-hand side of the brain is logical, argumentative and analytical.

The order conceived in Wisdom is sanctioned, upheld and enforced by Mahākali, the goddess of strength. Sri Aurobindo says that "she is Mahākali, goddess of the supreme strength and with her are all mights and spiritual force and severest austerity of Tapas and swiftness to the battle and the victory and laughter, the attahasya, that makes light of defeat and death and powers of ignorance".<sup>(55)</sup> Strength is embodied in heart. Mutation in heart brings in the supreme strength. Masculine strength is generally associated with cruelty, oppression and domination. The feminine strength usually upholds righteousness and fights against injustice and oppression and protects. Man's masculine consciousness moves towards a state of greater integration with the feminine consciousness through the pervading influence of the Mother Mahākali, the goddess of strength. Mahākali has her own executive power. "The impulses that are swift and straight and frank, the movements that are unreserved and absolute, the aspiration that mounts in flame are motion of Mahākali. Her spirit is tameless, her vision and will are high and far reaching like the flight of an eagle, her feet are rapid on the upward way and her hands are out-stretched to strike and to succour. For she too is the Mother and her love is as intense as her wrath and she has a deep and passionate kindness."<sup>(56)</sup>

There is a third impulse in the consciousness of man. This is the impulse of Mahālakshmi. On Mahālakshmi Sri Aurobindo says that

"She is Mahālakshmi, the goddess of the supreme love and delight, and her gifts are spirit's grace and the charm and beauty of the Anand and protection and every divine and human blessings."<sup>(57)</sup>

Supreme love is the mutation of ordinary love. Supreme love culminates in supreme Beauty. This is a mutation in the solar plexus. Supreme knowledge, supreme strength and supreme beauty are three blessings of the grace of three Mothers. Sri Aurobindo writing on the movements of Mahālakshmi says that "Harmony and beauty of the mind and soul, harmony and beauty of the thoughts and feelings, harmony and beauty in every outward act and movement, harmony and beauty of the life and surroundings, this is the demand of Mahālakshmi."<sup>(58)</sup> Mahālakshmi plants in human consciousness intense sensitivity to beauty. It also eliminates that which is ugly, mean, sordid or squalid from the consciousness of man. She does not tolerate anything brutal or coarse hidden in the depth of man's nature. Wisdom, strength and beauty bring a wholeness to human mind. The fragmentation ceases in the descent of the force of Maheswari, Mahākali and Mahālakshmi. The three wisdom, strength and beauty exist in an integrated state all at once simultaneously and not in fragmented state of one after the other. There is a simultaneous down pour of the three powers in this mutation. In this consciousness man and woman is not just the man and the woman but they are man-woman together or Ardhanariswar. This is the wholeness in the man's being which cannot be brought about by effort; but this comes as the gift from above from supramental. This is called transformation of man in Sri Aurobindo's yoga.

Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga moves further from the transformation of man into the transformation of society or of the entire human-kind. Ecstasy of personal bliss is not the aim of Integral Yoga. The joy of individual bliss has to be shared and communicated to the

world at large. The descent does not stop at Mahālakshmi. There is a further impulse from Above of Mahāsaraswati. Sri Aurobindo says that "She is Mahāsaraswati the goddess of divine skill and of the works of the spirit and hers is the yoga that is skill in works Yogah Karmasu Kauśalam, and the utilities of divine knowledge and the self-application of the spirit to life and the happiness of its harmonies."<sup>(59)</sup> The down-pour of wisdom, strength and beauty completes the integration of consciousness of the inner being in man through the descending powers from Maheshwari, Mahākali and Mahālakshmi. He is now ready to move towards the integration of the outer being with the inner being. For this he must create a fourth mutation of perfect order and organisation in the base of his body. Writing about the movements of Mahāsaraswati Sri Aurobindo says that "The science and craft and technique of things are Mahāsaraswati'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. This Power is the strong, the tireless, the careful and efficient builder, organiser, administrator, technician, artisan and classifier of the worlds. When she takes up the transformation and new building of the nature, her action is laborious and minute and often seems to our impatience slow and interminable but it is persistent, integral and flawless."<sup>(60)</sup> In describing the role of Mahāsaraswati Sri Aurobindo gives a clear indication of Her power. He says that the constituents of Right action are Right Instrument, Right time. Right conditions and Right process. In this Right Instrument and Right process are subjective factors of Right action, while the other two Right time and Right conditions refer to objective factors of Right action. Inner being is the hard core of subjective existence

while outer being is the hard core of objective existence. Through the descent of Mahāsaraswati's force the inner which is subjective integrates with the outer which is objective through the Right action embodied in Mahāsaraswati. New Temple of Humanity need both the subjective and objective resources. Wisdom, Strength and Beauty which are subjective factors constitute the inner perfection of the builder. Objectively the building materials too must be perfect. Perfection is brought about by the down-pouring force of Mahāsaraswati. Among <sup>the the</sup> four Mahāsaraswati is the youngest. She suffers most but carries out her mandate single-handed through her insistent will. "She is firm, quiet and persevering in the deep and continuous urge that drives us towards the integrality of the higher nature. All the work of the other Powers leans on her for its completeness; for she assures the material foundation, elaborates the stuff of detail and erects and rivets the armour of the structure." (61)

#### Individual Poise

In the individual poise, Mother descends directly in body and puts on a divine individuality and becomes the focal point of the fructifying fiat. In this poise she identifies Herself with the Earth and Her children and brings down higher Light slowly but securely from the Universal and Transcendent for the infusion of the supramental principle in Matter and the eventual conversion of the material life into the supramental life.

The mysteriously figuring poise of the Mother is found in Her incarnate individuality of Avatara. She holds in Her hand the key through which she opens the lines of ascent and descent. Descent brings down Her grace and ascent opens the door to development and progress. The individuality of the Mother is the living medium of the supramental force and light on Earth. Supramental force has been put out in front for the supramental creation and fulfilment

in man-~~kind~~

Each epoch of a crucial turning in the life of a humanity is graced by an Avatara. Avatara is the presence and power of the Divine. They come down from above at critical moments to rescue humanity. They come down to make a specific achievement for humanity. They descend from the transcendent into a mortal tenement to initiate the work in the world. In their universal poise they furrow the virgin field and sow the golden seed, so that a new era may be ushered in the individual poise for the realisation of new possibilities. "They are the Transcendent in individual human forms and conscious of their divine Self - each demands an absolute allegiance and loyalty of his contemporaries for the fulfilment of his particular work. It will not do to be exclusively attained to Rama in the age of Krishna, for though Rama and Krishna are the same in essence, each represents a definite, specific work. Gods own work which can be accomplished only if the mind and heart of his age turn devotedly to him and his ideal."<sup>(62)</sup> By this Sri Aurobindo does not mean a ~~discrediting~~ of the other Avatara or belittling them in any way, but a whole-hearted surrender to the present one, along with a general recognition and adoration of all. Further Sri Aurobindo says that if there were no truth in the particularity of the Avatara's work and mission, the very fact of Avatarhood would lose meaning and significance. But that is not the intention of the Divine Mother, otherwise one Avatara would be enough for all ages to come. The details of the work of the Avatara has been described by Sri Aurobindo in the book Essays on the Gita, Chapters 15, 16, 17. The Supreme Mother in Her individual poise is present in our physical being. The transformation and conversion of the physical being is the most important condition of supramental manifestation. In Integral Yoga spiritual experience counts real only when it is rivetted



and revealed in the outer nature and action.

### Transformation Using Tantric Discipline

Sri Aurobindo welds another synthesis between the disciplines of Tantric and Vedantic tradition. He says that "The Gita follows the Vedantic tradition which leans entirely on the Ishwara aspect of the Divine and speaks little of the Divine Mother because its object is to draw back from world-nature and arrive at the supreme realisation beyond it; the Tantric tradition leans on the Shakti or Ishwari aspect and makes all depend on the Divine Mother because its object is to possess and dominate the world-nature and arrive at the supreme realisation through it. This Yoga insists on both aspects;"<sup>(63)</sup>

Sri Aurobindo here says that it is an error to practise yoga in this way. Both aspects of the Father and the Mother principles are important and should occupy a rightful place in Integral Yoga.

Tantra yoga in the course of time lost its original clarity and intention of spirituality in its machinery and became a thing of formulae and sexual orgy and black occultism. The Father principle corresponds to being while the Mother principle corresponds to becoming. The link between the two is energy or Shakti.

Disciplines used in Tantra include Hatha Yoga's processes of the opening of the nervous centres or Chakras and the passages through them of the awakened Kundalini Shakti on her way to Union with the Brahman. They also include purification, concentration and meditation used in Raja Yoga. There is also Karma Yoga's will force, Bhakti Yoga's power of devotion, Jnana Yoga's Key of Knowledge and Mantras and Japas. Therefore, the Tantric system is synthetic in nature. It includes in its object of yoga not only liberation but cosmic enjoyment of the Spirit. The other yoga systems carefully avoid making cosmic enjoyment a motive or an object of yoga.

The Tantra system is the boldest and largest system ever undertaken. Writing on Tantric disciplines Sri Aurobindo says that "In our yoga, there is no willed opening of the Chakras, they open of themselves by the descent of the Force. In the Tantric discipline they open from down upwards the Muladhar first; in our yoga, they open from up downward. But the ascent of the force from the Muladhara does take place."<sup>(64)</sup>

In Sri Aurobindo's conception of the Tantric system Universal Mahāshakti and Her principal dynamic aspects in their ascent and descent is characterised by definiteness and has no vagueness and confusion about them. Each aspect represent an essential Truth of our being. In our seeking each aspect is a potential Truth. In our Ultimate becoming each aspect is a concrete Truth. The transmutation is the crux of the whole process of Integral Yoga and its aim revolves around this pivot. Absolute surrender to the Mother in Her triple poise is essential for the radical transmutation.

#### Transformation of Heredity

The intuitive mind as we have seen before brings intimations of the Real but these intimations would get absorbed in the ecstatic state of the aspirant. There would be no communication of these intimations to the lower reaches of consciousness within or without. Intimation of the Reality is a Descent. Descent without onward and downward communication is a non-heritable mutation. Humanity at large cannot have the benefit of such intimations. Sri Aurobindo's Science of Yoga stands for heritable mutations. <sup>The</sup> Heredity of man has got to be transformed for the evolution to reach greater and greater heights. For furthering the work of Integral Yoga there are other psychological disciplines of sleep, hypnosis, trance, Samādhi, etc. Sri Aurobindo has covered the entire ground elaborately in his work. We touch on hypnosis which is relevant here.



Sri Aurobindo writing on hypnotism says that what is achieved in sleep state in hypnotism is achieved in awakened state in yoga and what is achieved by an outsider (Operator) in hypnosis is achieved by <sup>the</sup> individual self in yoga. How is this done? Sri Aurobindo says that there is an ordinary experience that sugar is sweet and vinegar is sour but to a hypnotised person sugar is sour and vinegar is sweet. Sweetness and sourness are not in the sugar and vinegar but ~~are~~ in the mind. The lines or bonds of association established by mind with sugar and vinegar get reversed in the passive state of hypnotic trance. Yoga also teaches passivity of mind and body. The associations established by mind are not permanent or binding. They are fluid and mutable. "If my friend blames me, I am grieved; that is an association and not binding. The grief is not the result of the blame but of an association in the mind. I can change the association so far that blame will cause me no grief, praise no elation. I can entirely stop the reactions of joy and grief by the same force that created them. . . . It has been even proved that disease can be permanently cured or character permanently changed by the action of one mind upon another. The rest will be established in time by the development of hypnotism."<sup>(65)</sup>

Sri Aurobindo says that in the passivity established by yoga in the mind, heart, stomach and body, the will may act unhampered by Samskaras or old associations. These Samskaras or old associations are more persistent in the body than in the mind. Body is the harder ground for the initiation of change. Today's most pressing problem concerns the future of our species on Earth. The next species is a profound matter of a changed physiology of cells and genetic code. Sri Aurobindo says that "the conquest of the body and mind by an individual is comparatively easy and can be done in the space of a single life, but the same conquest by the race involves the development

of ages. It is conceivable, however, that the practice of yoga by a great number of men and persistence might bring about profound changes in human psychology and by stamping these changes into body and brain through heredity, evolve a superior race which would endure and by the law of the survival of the fittest eliminate the weaker kinds of humanity."(66)

Sri Aurobindo has described the present man as a transitional being. He is a transitional being because he has not yet established in him the status of supramental being. The jump between the present man and supramental is far greater than the jump between animal and man. He says that the present man has in him the capability to transform himself into supramental being. He warns that if the present humanity does not co-operate with nature in this transition, it is possible that he will be taken over by another superior race, as animals have been taken over by present man.

#### Transformation of Collectivity

We have a broad spectrum of the rays of Integral Yoga. How can a start be made on a broad scale for its practice? Sri Aurobindo's Integral Sociology does not consider individual and society as separate entities opposing each other in order to thrive and succeed by subjecting subordinating and rejecting the other for their fulfilment. On the contrary, he favours the view that both society and individual have a right to exist to grow and seek fulfilment. In this fulfilment each grows through the other. Sri Aurobindo affirms that the great purpose of education is to help the soul to come forward enabling it to gain a mastery over itself and its instruments through which it will grow and gain its experiences and offer them freely to mankind for their enrichment. It is this soul in the child that has to meet the soul in the teacher. The interaction that takes place in learning between teacher and child will give due consideration to age,

tenderness and immaturity of mind in the child and build trust.

This new attitude of the teacher's devotion to the child will help in bringing out the best response in the child. Therefore, the start has to be made in the sphere of Education. Education has to have a supporting philosophy and psychology. Without this support education is not complete nor can it claim to be integral. Sri Aurobindo's philosophy as we have seen is basically a spiritual philosophy and it utilises a top down system in which descent is as important as the ascent.

Three principles of education emerge from this.

- (1) Education of the child must be founded upon spiritual philosophy.

Spirituality regards not mind, life and body in the child as ends in themselves but accepts as a soul using them for the purpose of its individual and cosmic fulfilment. This is its philosophical principle.

- (2) For the individual and cosmic fulfilment the instrument used has to be made perfect. In the book "Synthesis of Yoga", Sri Aurobindo has put forward a new psychology or Integral Psychology in the perfection of the self which accepts that within a being there are five minds - Physical Mind, Vital Mind, Mental Mind, Psychic Mind and Spiritual Mind. This psychology which is mainly yoga psychology and the basic principles of which are included in the section 'The Yoga of Self Perfection' in the book "Synthesis of Yoga" is well suited to serving the need of Educational aims. This is its psychological principle.

- (3) "The third principle of Education is to work from the near to the far from that which is to that which shall be. . . . The past is our foundation, the present our material, the future our aim and summit."<sup>(67)</sup> Here Sri Aurobindo in presenting the third principle of Education says that the subject matter chosen for ~~the~~

curriculum should provide a lead to children to move from what they have to what they want and from present to future.

This is its operational or functional principle.

### Surrender to Soul and Nature

### INTEGRAL TRANSFORMATION

We have already acknowledged that an integral and dynamic union with the Divine is the goal of the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo. In Sri Aurobindo's terms it is "another power of Knowledge, another Kind of Will, another luminous nature of emotion and aesthesis, another constitution of the physical consciousness".<sup>(68)</sup> It is a change of consciousness and being more radical and complete than what took place when man appeared in the animal world long time ago. This has to be done not so much by ascent even though it is necessary and useful, but by descent. It can be radical when it is from inside to outside rather than from outside to inside.

The transformation will be in fact a conversion, a sublimation, transfiguration or transmutation and integration of the whole being of man to be effected simultaneously. According to Sri Aurobindo there are seven basic principles which sustain seven principal worlds which are bhuh, bhuvah, swah, mahas, janah, tapas and satya. In the material world sat of the world of satya has become matter, cit of the world of tapas has become Life. Janah is the World of men, Mahas is the World of mind, swah is the world of being or the sun, bhuvah is the world of becoming, bhuh is the World of all pervading Reality.

Matter which is derived from sat or the luminous substance of the transcendent reality is not intrinsically inert and obscure. It has become so because of its phenomenal evolution from the utter darkness to the Nescient and Inconscient. Life is not intrinsically turbid and impure but has become so on account of the phenomenal turmoil from the unconscious and subconscient. Mind with its deficiencies, ignorance

and limitations is derived from the mahas or the infinite Truth-conscious Supermind and cannot remain trapped in darkness, division and discord for ever. Mind, Life and Body are the instruments of Spirit and they are meant to recover their essential unity and identity with their divine counterparts. Matter or annam converts into the luminous immortal substance of Sat, Life or Prana into the pure force of consciousness and Mind into the boundless glory of the Supermind or Vijnana. For the descent of the supramental Truth Light and the work of the integral transformation the consent of Purusa and co-operation of Prakriti are absolutely necessary. Each part of the composite being must desire the Divine and unreserved surrender to the profound Truth.

According to Sri Aurobindo the physical purusa or annamaya purusa working in our physical organism, the Vital or pranamaya purusa working in our Life, the mental or manomaya purusa working in the Mind and the Psychic or Caitya purusa are projections of the central purusa or jivatman. Central purusa is free to accept or reject transformation. In Integral transformation all have to aspire for the Divine and All have to surrender to His supramental Sakti. Only the integral surrender of all can bring about integral transformation.

As there is a rationale and concept of Integral Transformation, there is also an attitude of integral transformation in Sri Aurobindo's Yoga. "A Divine perfection of the human being is our aim" says Sri Aurobindo. This may be described as the attitude of the integral transformation. Harmonious perfection of the whole being inner and outer is sought in Integral Yoga. This is not a dream of the religious visionary but the deepest, ineradicable urge of the human consciousness. This is also its most irrepressible aspiration. This is also his spiritual endeavour which cannot cease till this integral perfection

is attained and expressed in his life. Complete perfection in expression is the divine consummation in human living. Any spiritual discipline which draws us away from this rightful expression of our evolving Soul defeats the purpose and the goal of the Soul's descent in the world. Man is a complex being. His needs are many. His perfection has to be manifold perfection fully expressive of the infinite potentiality of his nature. This attitude of perfection is best described in the Gita as Sarupya or Sadharmya, Sayujya and Samipya. To be one with the Divine in His divine nature is Sarupya or Sadharmya. Oneness in consciousness with the Divine is Sayujya. Closeness to the Divine presence is Samipya. In the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo, oneness in nature, the assumption of the dynamic nature Para-prakṛiti is emphasized. In traditional yoga, transformation of apara prakṛiti namely Sattva, Rajas and Tamas was aimed at. Obviously the perfection aimed at included mind, heart and vital being. This perfection excluded the body's divine potentialities. The grossness and inertia of the body came in the way of perfection of the whole being. In the Integral Yoga, body is considered as important as any other instrument. In Integral Yoga, the divine perfection of the body is sought with a most thorough and scrupulous care. A divine being in a divine body is the alchemy of perfection in the Integral Yoga.

In Synthesis of Yoga Sri Aurobindo describes four pre-requisites for the work of perfection. They are Sakti, Virya, Daivi-prakṛiti and Sraddha. Sakti includes in it fully developed powers of the members of the instrumental nature. This will include in it the four supreme aspects of the Divine Mother, Adya Sakti: Maheswari (Wisdom), Mahākali (Strength), Mahālaksmi (Harmony) and Mahāsaraswati (Perfection). Virya is the perfected dynamis of the Soul nature; Daivi prakṛiti is the assumption of the Divine powers for perfecting

daily act. Sraddha is a perfect faith in all the parts of our being which invokes, sustains and maintains the action of the Divine power. These four pre-requisites when active remain in the foreground of the supporting play of gnosis or supramental Light-Force. When the active gnosis is in the foreground, the other four pre-requisites go into background. A fundamental active equality supporting the play of the gnosis or the supramental Light-Force in human nature is necessary for the Divine perfection sought in Integral Yoga.

#### Integral Transformation of the Body

In the Integral Yoga Sri Aurobindo describes the four-fold perfection of the body. The four qualities mentioned are mahattwa, bala, laghuta and dhāraṇa-sāmarthya.<sup>(69)</sup> "Mahattwa is the 'presence of a greatness of sustaining force'; bala is 'an abounding strength, energy and puissance of our going and managing force'; laghuta, 'a lightness, swiftness and adaptability of the nervous and physical being'; dhāraṇa-sāmarthya, 'a holding and response power in the whole physical machine and its driving springs'."<sup>(70)</sup>

Such a body will contain in it spiritual force coming down from transcendental and Universal Mahā sakti which will accomplish in the individual frame invulnerability of the gross physical body to all attacks of the forces of disruption and disintegration. The Divine body says Sri Aurobindo, has to be rendered immune to decay and death and it has to be perfectly plastic to the touch of the Spirit. Supramental body will be a conscious vessel of the self-manifesting Truth-Light.

#### Integral Transformation of Volitional (Lower) Vital

Sri Aurobindo says that the four elements of perfection of the lower vital are pūrṇatā, prasannatā, samatā and bhoga-sāmarthya.<sup>(71)</sup> In pūrṇatā there is fullness of strength poured in by Mahākali. In it there is agility and a tireless drive of radiant energies of Mahālakshmi

for the fulfilment of individual, Universal and cosmic will of the Divine. A full prāṇa is essential for divine action and manifestation and without it nothing is worthwhile. In Prasannatā there is a crystal Purity and gladness. The prāṇa must exclude restlessness and refrain from using passionate force and spilling or frittering itself on unworthy pursuits. Prāṇa must not get discouraged or depressed by any ascetic severity. In it joy and buoyancy abounds with a profound inviolable placidity. In Samatā there is equality. Prāṇa achieves this Samatā by remaining serene and unperturbed in the face of fickle likes and dislikes. Through Samatā, prāṇa accepts whatever comes to it from Divine without disturbance and preference. Bhoga-sāmarthya is the power of an illimitable possession and enjoyment. Prāṇa in Sri Aurobindo's view must not be slain or killed, suppressed or maimed, dulled or nulled. Positively it must have a full power of possession and a glad power of enjoyment. Such a prāṇa has passion and rapture in Divine presence. This completes the perfection of lower or volitional Vital.

#### Integral Transformation of Upper or Emotional Vital

The elements for the four-fold perfection of heart are saumyatwa, tejas, kalyan-sraddha and prem-sāmarthya.<sup>(72)</sup> Saumyatwa is sweetness, gentleness, grace and candour which is showered upon the heart by the illimitable love of Mahālakṣmi. Grace of Mahālakṣmi will not tolerate any emotional weakness or any flaccid sentimentality. The supporting and unshrinking, austere and insistent power is needed for guarding the grace of Mahālakṣmi. This is provided by the abounding Rudra-power. Tejas is the flaming power of Mahākali which acts or strikes out of love and compassion. Mahākali through her accommodating suppleness and symmetry bears the rebelousness of nature against the action of Light. Untrembling equality of the Soul balances the work of Saumyatwa and tejas. Kalyan-sraddha is a faith present in heart.



There is also a belief in and will to the universal good. Kalyan-sraddha also opens to the universal anand. There is present here the partnership of faith and will of the Divine. This partnership is founded upon the inner perception that Divine is everywhere not only as a passive but as an active power. Kalyan-sraddha can help a lame person to cross the mountain and a blind person to see. Prem-sāmarthya means limitless capacity for love. This capacity of love has to be stretched beyond limit. This will include in it the love for the Divine and the love for His myriad forms irrespective of their phenomenal differences. Burning love in the heart dissolves the duality of friend and foe, saint and sinner, the high and the low, the ugly and the beautiful. Highest perfection of heart develops in the human being unlimited capacity for widest and closest and most intense love.

#### Integral Transformation of Mind or Buddhi.

The elements for the four-fold perfection of the buddhi or the intelligence and thinking mind are viśuddhi, prakasa, vicitrabodha and sarvajnana-samarthya. Viśuddhi is purity. The purity of intelligence must be not only limited but wide and crystal-clear. It has to remain free from the distorting effect of the prānic distortions mixing with its search for truth. It has also to guard from the onslaught of riot of emotions which falsify the Truth. It has to be liberated from its own tamas or inertia of the thought power. It has to learn to keep the mirror absolutely clean and clear for the reflection of the Truth in it. Prakāsa is clear radiance. Buddhi will be able to reflect the higher light in a calm, clear and vast intelligence established by purity. "This clear and pure intelligence can then become a serene thing of Light, a pure and strong radiance emanating from the sun of Truth."<sup>(73)</sup> Vicitrabodha means variety of understanding. Sri Aurobindo says that "It must become not merely a thing of concentrated dry or white light,

but capable of all variety of understanding, supple, rich, flexible, brilliant with all the flame and various with all the colours of the manifestation of the Truth, open to all forms." (74) Sarvajñāna-sāmarthya is a comprehensive and manifold capacity of intelligence which is utilised by the instrument for doing whatever work is demanded of it. In this unlimited and unbiased intelligence for acquiring and assimilating, all forms of knowledge unfolds. Mental conclusions and rigid framework of mind disappear in the wide Catholicity and coordinating power of the intelligence. Buddhi in this expansion become large, luminous and free.

#### Integral Transformation of Senses

On the supramental perfection of sense Sri Aurobindo says that senses will be a seeing and hearing and touching of the Divine everywhere and in all beings and objects. The senses are the external material means of contacting the objects of the World but our mind can see and hear and touch the objects even without the help of the outer senses. The mind for this reason is called the sixth sense. The mind is an instrument of action and not the supreme and original sense. The real and original sense is beyond the mind. Mind is used only as a medium and instrument by spiritual consciousness. Sri Aurobindo says that "the pure action of sense is a spiritual action and pure sense itself is a power of the spirit". (75) The supramental sense is samjñāna which is pure and original sense. It makes us see, hear, touch, smell and taste the Divine Being concretely and its action is direct, immediate and intimate. It can have both quantitative and qualitative or occult and mystic perceptions. It is in opening to vijnana and anand or what Sri Aurobindo calls gnostic and bliss sheaths the atoms that make the body will become conscious and radiant particles of matter. Truth-force which opens the being will eliminate from the body all causes of decay and wasting away of resources and establish in it the health and

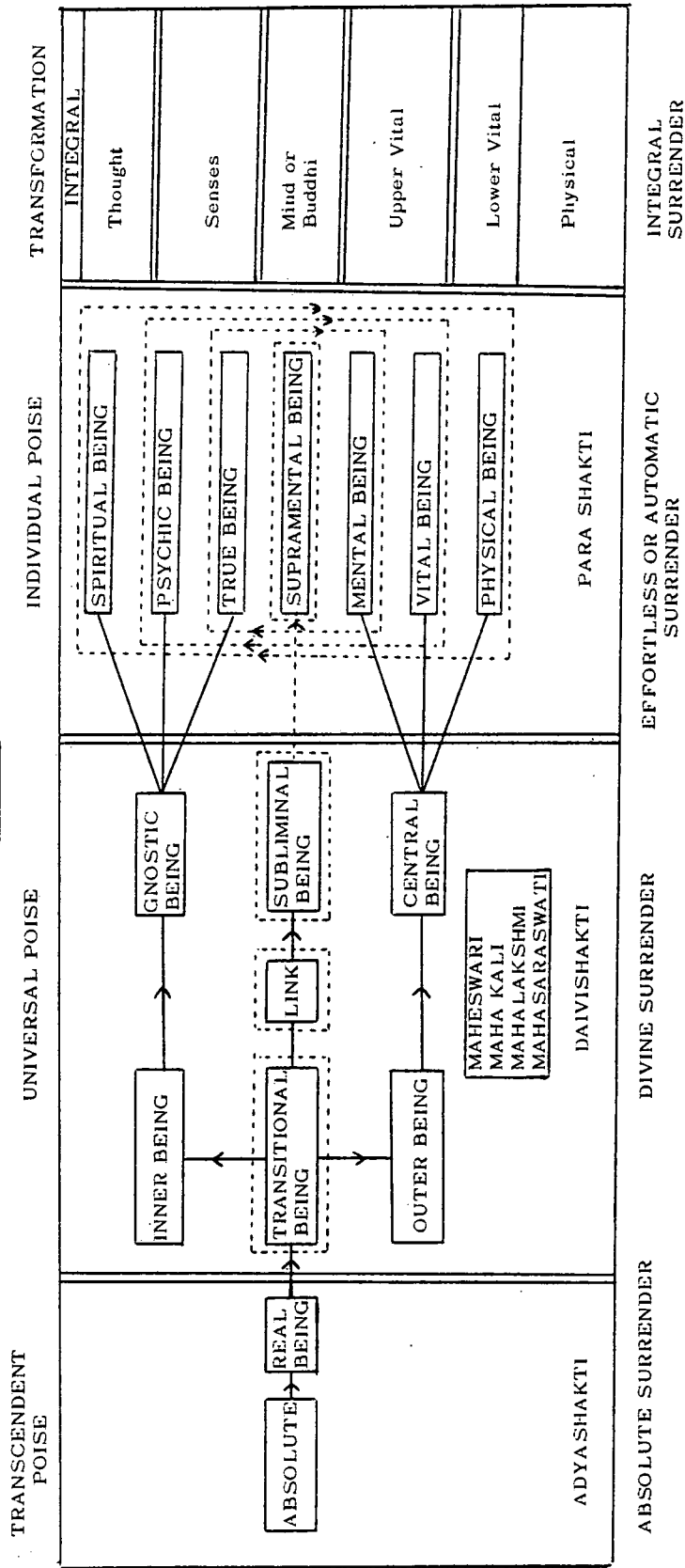
power.

Integral Transformation of Thought

The four-fold perfection of thought is called Sarama, Saraswati, Daksina and Ilā by Vedic Rishis. (76) The four names mentioned are the names of goddesses representing four faculties of Truth consciousness. Sarama represents intuition, Saraswati represents truth-audition, inspiration, the divine word. Dakshina represents the separative intuitional discrimination and Ilā represents truth-vision or revelation. The perfection described so far provides a start for the instruments to open freely in its supramental perfection to gnostic intuition, inspiration, discrimination and revelation. This opening is linked to the manifest power of the Soul which gets lit up and exalted by it. The soul-force pours the power in the instruments which raises the perfection from the normal level of the nature to the spiritual. In this perfection prakṛiti merges with its native dynamis of para-prakṛiti. There occurs a soul-change or soul-evolution through the down pour of powers in all instruments. Development towards universality and impersonality occurs naturally and spontaneously. In this perfection mind, life and body no longer function as mind powers, life powers and body powers but as overt powers of the liberated soul which reveals the Truth, the pure Light and the Bliss.

Sri Aurobindo says that final perfection will come when the Divine and His sakti will have revealed from behind the supramental power for supramental mind, life and body. This occurs in three stages of perfection which can be described as Union, Unity and fusion with the Divine. Supramental perfection envisaged by Sri Aurobindo includes first "transcendence of all human achievements and a secure sovereignty over Nature; the second its harmonious comprehensiveness, its inviolable integrality and the third, its all-accomplishing divinity". (77)

SUMMARY



CHAPTER 3  
ASTĀNGA YOGA AND INTEGRAL YOGA  
A COMPARISON

## ASTĀNGA YOGA AND INTEGRAL YOGA

## A COMPARISON

Similarities

We have briefly surveyed Patanjali's Astānga Yoga and Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga. Patanjali's Yoga is synthetic in nature because it combines in it elaborate disciplines of Hatha Yoga, Prāṇayama, Mantra Yoga, superphysical powers and knowledge which is a part of Jñāna Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Vīrya action which forms the basis of Karma Yoga. <sup>the</sup> synthesis of Patanjali is that of a scientist and an occultist. The synthesis of Sri Aurobindo is fundamentally that of a poet and a mystic. <sup>the</sup> Two approaches of synthesis differ one from the other. How do they differ? We shall investigate this in subsequent pages.

Sri Aurobindo's Yoga has a quality of purity about it. It has a dynamic approach to life and is intensely practical. It takes up the essence and many processes of old Yogas. It's newness is in its scope, aim, standpoint and the totality of its methods. His Integral Yoga has not only a quality of synthesis in it as we have seen in sections of the chapter on Integral Yoga but it is also at the same time an utterly simple, rational and an effective way of Yoga suitable for all. Sri Aurobindo says that All life is Yoga. In it there is no escape from the conditions of life but by living in those conditions one can come to the supreme experiences described in it. We have seen that Sri Aurobindo's Integral Psychology enables one to discover one's true identity and gives the vision of one's true indivisible individuality. The joy and creativity for man is in the wholeness of living. This is offered by Sri Aurobindo today.

In Sri Aurobindo's philosophy one sees a synthesis of diversity of seemingly contradictory factors such as spirit and matter, masculine feminine qualities, static and dynamic, etc. In social philosophies,

Sri Aurobindo has effected a remarkable synthesis of the individual and the society without asking the individual to restrict his freedom for creative living. In life, Sri Aurobindo has brought the synthesis of subjective as well as objective problems of living. In Sri Aurobindo's philosophy there is a fine synthesis of science and spirituality. Religion is concerned with the man's ethical and moral code of living. Sri Aurobindo regards spirituality as something different from moral and ethical patterns. Science is concerned with the study of the manifest while spirituality is concerned with a communion with the Unmanifest. Manifest and Unmanifest meet in the Intangible. We have seen that Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga shows the way towards increasing growth of the sensitivity of consciousness. It is in being aware of the Intangible one sees the fusion of science and spirituality. Increased sensitivity is an aid in gaining spiritual insight. Sri Aurobindo was both an occultist and a mystic or a scientist and a poet at the same time. It is this fact which helped him to bring out easily and effortlessly the synthesis of the whole.

There are similarities in aims and methods in both approaches. The differences between them are in scope and development which may be regarded as evolutionary or historical. <sup>The</sup> similarities are summarised in the following table.

ASTĀṄGA YOGAExternal aidsYama - AbstinencesAhimsa - Non-violenceSatya - TruthfulnessAsteya - Non-stealingBrahmacarya - CelibacyAprigraha - Non-possivenessYama is concerned with the dissipation of energy through abstinences.In Yama there is an awareness of the pattern of one's own habits.Niyama - ObservancesSauca - PuritySantosa - ContentmentTapas - AusteritySvādhyāya - Self-developmentIshvara pranidhāna - Surrender to GodNiyama is concerned with the conservation or preservation of energy through observances. In Niyama there is an awareness of the modes of one's habit.Āsana - PostureĀsana is concerned with the correction of bodily posture and in imparting flexibility, alertness and relaxation to nerves, muscles and tissues of the body. Deeper awareness of the bodyINTEGRAL YOGAExternal aidsSāstra

Knowledge of truths, principles, powers and processes that govern the realisation.

Ut śāha

It is the zeal of the whole nature for its divine results - the heart's eagerness for the attainment of the Divine that devours the ego and breaks up the limitations of its petty and narrow mould.

GuruGuru is the inner Guide, Master of Yoga, Lord, light, enjoyer and goal of all sacrifice and effort. Teaching, example, influence are the three instruments of the Guru. Guru is more a friend than a Guru. Guru provides upliftment of knowledge and effort into spiritual experience by turning away from old ways of living.KālaKāla is time which has to become a friend and an ally. For this mind's superimposition on the natural flow and flux of life must stop.



ASTĀṄGA YOGA

External aids

Āsana (cont.)

and its functioning grows through

āsana.

Prānyāma - Breath control

It is concerned with the revitalization of the body through breathing.

There is in it the awareness of the patterns of breathing.

ASTĀNGA YOGAInternal aidsPratyāhara - Abstraction

Pratyāhara is concerned with the re-education of senses and re-vitalization of the brain through sense-withdrawal so that they grow in extraordinary sensitivity and efficiency. In Pratyāhara there is the awareness of the sensorial distractions and digressions.

Dhāraṇa - Concentration

Dhāraṇa is concerned with the training of senses and mind and in establishing extensive awareness between the focal and marginal areas in the background of relaxed mind.

In dhāraṇa there is the awareness of the drift of thought.

Dhyāna - Contemplation

Dhyāna is in fact a state of effortless attention in which one arrives at a perception of one without a second. There is in it the consciousness of non-duality. It is concerned with dissolving of objective duality of focal and marginal areas.

Samādhi - Communion or Absorption

Samādhi is concerned with dissolving the subjective duality or

INTEGRAL YOGAInternal aidsAspiration

The source of aspiration lies within subjective realms which is unlike the source of ambition which is outside in the objective condition. Aspiration has its roots embedded in discontent at one's own living whereas ambition arises out of dissatisfaction caused by environmental situations. Aspiration which is vigilant, constant and unceasing aims at finding a new way of dynamic living. Prayers are many. Aspiration is one. Aspiration initiates the mind into pursuing the highest images which imparts width to the consciousness.

Rejection

Rejection empties the mind and through emptiness it approximates Being. It is a discipline through which the mental ego, the maker of effort get eliminated. Rejection imparts depth to consciousness.

Surrender

Surrender demanded in Integral Yoga has to be total. This surrender is not only of what one has but

ASTĀṄGA YOGAInternal aidsSamādhi (cont.)

fragmentation of consciousness of observer and observed. In Samādhi there is the elimination of the psychological entity called knower or observer. In Samādhi awareness reaches its highest peak. Time in fact becomes the expression of timeless in the non-dual vision established by Samādhi. There is in it the experience of the formless which comes only in a flash in the timeless moment.

INTEGRAL YOGAInternal aidsSurrender (cont.)

of what one is. Surrender of what one has is relatively easy. Surrender of what one is demands tremendous strength. This surrender is not of the weak but of the strong. The weak know only submission. Surrender comes naturally, spontaneously and effortlessly. In co-existence of aspiration and rejection which are positive and negative, the dynamic void comes into existence in which the framework of space and time is transcended. This void forms the ground for spiritual experience in which the Truth-consciousness or supramental is attained or realised.

## AṢṬĀṄGA YOGA

### Transformation of Puruṣa

#### Recovery of Purusha or Soul from

Tamas: This is done by (1) Yama in which there is the awareness of the pattern of one's own habits;

(2) Niyama in which there is an awareness of the modes of one's habits; (3) Āsana in which there is deeper awareness of the body

(4) Dhāraṇa in which there is the awareness of the drift of thought

(5) Asamprajñāta and Samprajñāta Samādhi which are concerned with transformation of thought habit of Tamas into stability.

#### Recovery of Purusha or Soul from

Rajas: This is done by

(1) Prāṇāyama in which there is an awareness of the patterns of breathing; (2) Pratyāhara where there is an awareness of sensorial distractions and disgressions; (3) Dhāraṇa which is concerned with the training of senses and relaxing of mind;

(4) Nirvitarka and Savitarka Samādhi which are concerned with the transformation of restlessness of Rajas into Mobility.

## INTEGRAL YOGA

### Transformation of Puruṣa

#### Recovery of True being or Soul:

In this tamas, rajas and sattwa are transformed respectively into stability, mobility and balance by the discipline of (i) call and Responses; (ii) Calm and Equality and (iii) Surrender. Old nature of the ego is transformed into New Nature by the discipline of Tyāga, Anasakti and Iśvarārpana through which inertia, obstinacy and rigidity get replaced by plasticity, adaptibility and flexibility respectively. In this surrender there is effort.

Recovery of Psychic being: In this passivity, passion and poise of psychic being are transformed into pure silence, pure force and pure light respectively by the unconditional surrender. Unconditional surrender results in the discovery of subliminal being, central being (Jivatman) and spiritual being.

ASTĀṄGA YOGATransformation of Puruṣa (cont.)Recovery of Puruṣa or Soul fromSattva: This is done by the internal disciplines of (1) Pratyāhara;(2) Dhāraṇa; (3) Dhyāna; (4) Samādhi and (5) Nirbīja and Sabīja Samadhi

which are concerned with the transformation of self-satisfaction

anchored in thought seed of Sattwa into Harmony.

Recovery of Puruṣa or Soul fromGunās: Sabīja Samādhi is concerned with the attainment of Siddhis (supraphysical powers) and has in it gradations and stages. Truths realized in Sabīja Samādhi are of aINTEGRAL YOGATransformation of Puruṣa (cont.)Recovery of Spiritual being:Surrender in this is without I and I-ness to the Unknown. It is effortless and sudden because of opening of lower mind to (1) Higher mind which comes to acquire knowledge not by <sup>the</sup>mediate principle of reasoning but immediately or spontaneously; (2) Illumined mind which comes to acquire knowledge by the flash; (3) Intuitive mind which acquires knowledge by identity; (4) Overmind in which there is the awareness of Truth consciousness.

There is in this surrender of psychic being which results in the conversion of psychic physical, psychic vital and psychic mind into spiritual-silence, spiritual force and spiritual light respectively. Surrender in this is automatic.

Recovery of Gnostic being:Surrender in this leads the Sadhaka to increasing sensitivity of consciousness. This is shown in the following table.

### ASTĀNGA YOGA

#### Recovery of Puruṣa or Soul from Gunas (cont.)

psychic nature. In this seed thoughts reveal the partial Truth.

Nirbija Samādhi is concerned with the attainment of Whole Truth which occur in the consciousness of Puruṣa or Soul. This is attained when seed thought realized in Sabija Samādhi are dropped.

Dharma Megha Samādhi is not concerned with the negative role of removing the obstacles of mind but it is concerned with intensely positive role of transcending the mind in which there is the culmination of spiritual experiences. In this Life recovers the moment of Discontinuity. What exists in time-succession or continuity is only the memory of the moment of time. To indulge in the moment of time without the awareness of eternal Now is to indulge in the renewal of the past. In this there is the display of elements of false existence.

Reality abide in the eternal Now.

This is recovered in the timeless moment of the present. In Dharma-Megha Samadhi there is the positive

### INTEGRAL YOGA

#### Recovery of Gnostic being (cont.)

Mind	Awareness	State
Physical	No awareness of opposite	Drifting
Higher	Awareness to choose, accept and reject	conflict of opposites
Illumined	Reconciliation of opposites. Choicelessness. Some dullness, caused by the presence of subjective duality of thought and thinker.	objective duality absent subjective duality present
Intuitive	Knowledge by flashes. Vision of transcendence of opposites	consciousness of discontinuity replacing the consciousness of identity
Over	Wide perception and feeling of boundless universal self or soul	Multiple possibilities

ASTĀNGA YOGARecovery of Puruṣa or Soul fromGunas (cont.)

spiritual experience in which the falseness imposed by the Gunas get transcended.

INTEGRAL YOGARecovery of Gnostic being (cont.)

Surrender in this is unreserved

to Divine which results in the

discovery of gnostic being and

real being.

ASTĀṄGA YOGATransformation Through SamādhiTransformation of Nature (Prakṛiti)Asamprajñāta and Samprajñāta

Samadhi are concerned with the transformation of stagnation anchored in thought-habit of tamas into stability.

In this transformation there is retention without repetition.

Nirvitarka and Savitarka Samadhi are concerned with the transformation of restlessness anchored in anticipation of rajas into mobility. In this transformation there is modification without anticipation.

Nirbīja and Sabīja Samādhi are concerned with the transformation of self-satisfaction anchored in thought seed of Sattva into harmony. In this transformation there is existence without identity.

Dharma Megha Samādhi is concerned with the transcending of Gunās. In Patanjali's Yoga there is a philosophical concept of absoluteness or Kaiivalya and it is attained in Dharma Megha Samādhi.

Transformation of Soul and Nature

There is no explicit concept of Integral Samādhi in Patanjali's Yoga

INTEGRAL YOGATransformation Through SurrenderTransformation of Nature (Prakṛiti)

Surrender in this is done to the Nature in three poises: transcendent, universal and individual.

In the transcendent poise Mother bears the fiat of the Absolute. In the universal poise as Mahāshakti, Mother prepares the ground for the growth and flowering of the fiat.

She is para-prakṛiti and has manifested four powers called Maheswari - wisdom; Mahākali - strength; Mahālakshmi - harmony and Mahāsaraswati - perfection.

In the individual poise, Mother descends directly in body and becomes the focal point of the fructifying fiat as an Avatara. In this surrender is Absolute.

Transformation of Soul and Nature

or Puruṣa and Prakrit.

Surrender in this is Integral and at



ASTĀṄGA YOGATransformation of Soul and Nature

(cont.)

Implicitly Dharma-Megha Samādhi

may be described as Integral.

Transformation Through Psychological DisciplinesSamādhi, Samyam, Siddhis, etc.INTEGRAL YOGATransformation of Soul and Natureor Purusha and Prakriti (cont.)

six levels.

Thought: Sarama - Intuition,Saraswati - Inspiration, Daksina -  
Discrimination and Ilā - Revelation.Senses: Samjñāna - Supramental  
or Truth sense or Pure and  
Original.Mind or Buddhi: Viśuddhi, Prakāśa  
Vicitrabodha, Sarva-jñāna Sāmarthya.Upper vital: Saumyatwa, Tejas,Kalyān-Sraddha, Prem-Sāmarthya.Lower vital: Pūrnata, Prasannata,Samatā, Bhoga-Sāmarthya.Body: Mahattwa, Bala, Laughuta  
and Dhāraṇa-Sāmarthya.Transformation Through Psychological DisciplinesSleep, trance, hypnosis, Samādhi,  
subliminal phenomena.

## Dissimilarities

Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo is fundamentally spiritual in nature and content while Aṣṭāṅga Yoga of Patañjali is fundamentally occult in its nature and content. In occultism one is concerned with the substance and structure of infra- and supra-physical planes extending downward and upward into non-physical planes. Occultism embraces the field of visible and invisible matter rooted in manifest reality. Spirituality is concerned with consciousness and its deeper content rooted in unmanifest or transcendent reality. Siddhis mentioned in Aṣṭāṅga Yoga are superphysical powers or psychic powers. In Vibhūti Pada, Patañjali describes psychic powers or Siddhis without giving the secret as to how the powers are to be developed.<sup>(1)</sup> Some of the sūtras sound vague. During the passage of time, occult science of psychic powers fell into the hands of such groups of people who used the secrets ruthlessly for their own gains without any spiritual perspectives. They took refuge in certain Hatha Yoga and Tantric practices which include drugs and incantations. Patañjali in his sūtras has consistently emphasized that practice of Siddhis should not proceed without spiritual base of Dhāraṇa-dhyāna-Samādhi. What are these Siddhis? How can they be acquired safely and why does Patañjali mention them?

Siddhis are psychic powers which are not to be looked upon or condemned. They belong to the occult or hidden regions of our existence. Occultism is a science and it can be studied like many other sciences. In mastering this science it is important to bear in mind that one is rooted in spirituality or mysticism. Without the proper base of spirituality or mysticism occultism is incomplete and can prove dangerous. The history of Tantra provides ample testimony to this unfortunate fact. For studying occultism occult vision is required. The sutra which refers to the subject of psychism says that in occult vision there

is an extended power of sense perception. (2) Through this sense perception one can cognize the small, the hidden and the distant. In science <sup>the</sup> small is observed by microscope, the hidden is observed by x-ray devices and the distant by telescope. These devices achieve a change in the scale of observation for the observer. Knowledge obtained by occult vision is still knowledge of images or still knowledge by ideation. In the knowledge of ideation there is the interpretation and evaluation. In this knowledge there is duality of the observer and observed or perceiver and perceived. Occultist sees only the observed by modifying the observed. It is still an image. So the knowledge arrived at through highest occult investigation is only that of a part and not of the whole. In occult investigation the inquiry proceeds by a changed scale of observation in which observer remains untouched. In mysticism the perception takes place by elimination of the observer himself. This is the right perception. Patañjali says that one can explore the field of psychism without any danger whatsoever in the background of Right perception arrived at by spirituality or mysticism. Right perception is derived intuitively from advaita and is indeed founded in virtue.

The following three sūtras are from Vibhūti Pada:

27. By reflecting on the solar forces, one can comprehend the nature of the Solar System.
28. By reflecting on the moon one can comprehend the configuration of the stars.
29. By reflecting on the Pole Star one can comprehend the Great Design underlying the movement of the stars. (3)

In the sūtras quoted above Patañjali speaks of the structure, configuration and the movement of Solar System and Universe. Here there is an indication that there is an occult astronomy which can be perceived by extended perception. Extended perception can penetrate

invisible counterpart of the Universe. There is a version of the occult cosmography which affirms that the structure of <sup>the</sup> Universe has <sup>1</sup> fourteen layers or Lokas. The states of matter below the gross physical are described as Sutala, Vitala, Talātala, Mahātala, Rasātala, Atala and Pātala. These above the gross physical are Būtadi (units of mass which are homogeneous), Prithvi (earth), ap (water), tejas (fire), vāyu (air), â kâśa (ether). The last five are included in Tamatra (infra-atomic particles charged with different kinds of energy) and are called Pancabhūtas.<sup>(4)</sup> Patañjali in the above Sūtras says that one can know the structure, configuration and movement of the universe by concentration. The word concentration used here does not say clearly how one is to do it? Some people have interpreted sun to mean sūrya-nadi, moon as meaning chandra-nadi. Whatever it be, it is clear that Patañjali in three Sūtras refer to the invisible counterpart of the visible universe which can be perceived by psychic faculties. He indicates that there is a much vaster universe than what is seen by science. From the structure and constitution of the universe Patañjali turns to the structure of human body in which he mentions concentration on chakras or centres and directing of one's breath or prāna along various chakras. Through this one can develop psychic powers.

What is the nature of occultism and mysticism? There is a difference between totality and wholeness. Total is the sum of parts. The Whole on the other hand is greater than the sum of parts. The Whole continues to remain Whole. The Whole is indivisible. Even when the Whole is broken into bits, the Whole remains Whole because the Whole is a quality and not quantity. The Gita describes it avibhakta m ca bhūtesu vibhaktam i va ca sthitam (Ch. 13, verse 17). By this it is meant that the Whole even when divided remains indivisible. There is a view of totality while there is the perception of Whole. In a total view all

different parts are brought together for study and observation. On the other hand the Whole is seen at once. These two categories of perception are different. In the perception of totality there are gradations. In the perception of Whole there is the quality. There is a perception through the sense data. Then there is the perception through data collected by scientific instruments. This perception is clearer than the perception arrived at with the naked eye. There is then the occult perception as described by Patañjali in the above Sūtras. This perception may be regarded as clearer than the perceptions arrived at by scientific data. Therefore we can say that perceptions function at quantitative level. Occultism or psychic faculty in fact is supposed to bring more facts and more data so that perception has a greater clarity than what is achieved by other means. But there is a difference between clear perception and right perception. In arriving at clear perception of <sup>the</sup> observed, the observer is untouched while in right perception the observer is no longer there. In clear perception conditioned background of the observer interprets the observed. Not only this, even the selection of means through which the observation is made is the act of the observer. Unless the observer is eliminated, there cannot arise right perception. Patañjali describes clear perception or ~~t~~otal perception as Siddha-darśana which is a psychic achievement. (5) Right perception is Samyak-darśana. Clear perception bases itself on the principle of totality. Right perception is arrived at by the principle of Wholeness. Clear perception based on totality are arrived at quantitatively. Right perception based on Wholeness is a qualitative understanding. Occultism or psychism of any order adopts quantitative approach to living. This approach is similar to the approach <sup>the</sup>sciences adopt in their investigation. The conclusions and assumptions in this approach are governed by quantitatively. In this the duality of the observer

and observed is present. In the right perception the observer-observed phenomenon is absent. Therefore in the right perception things are seen as they are and not as interpreted by the observer in clear perception. Right perception is more dependable than the clear perception because of its Wholeness. In right perception there is clear perception but clear perception is not in right perception. In the presence of both there is a qualitative as well as quantitative understanding of things. Occultism or psychism is safer in the background of mysticism.

We have answered two questions, namely what are these siddhis and how can they be acquired safely in Aṣṭāṅga Yoga. We have seen that these siddhis can become dangerous and also a hindrance if they are pursued before communion and after communion they are not necessary because the goal of Liberation set by Aṣṭāṅga Yoga is established at the communion. Why does Patañjali mention them? This is because Raja Yoga which is embodied in Patañjali's text is a science says Sri Aurobindo and their enumeration and inclusion "is necessary to the completeness of the Science".<sup>(6)</sup> Also, one might ask here why is it that other goals of siddhis mentioned in the later part in Raja Yoga are inconsistent with the earlier goal of liberation in Patanjali's text? Sri Aurobindo has mentioned that "the ancient system of Raja Yoga aimed at not only swarajaya, self-rule or subjective empire, the entire control by the subjective consciousness of all the states and activities proper to its own domain but included samrajya as well, outward empire, the control by the subjective consciousness of its outer activities and environment".<sup>(7)</sup> The other goals of siddhis mentioned in Raja Yoga are consistent if Samrajya is also the goal of Raja Yoga. But Raja Yoga as it is practised today puts complete emphasis on communion which is swarajya without much care for communication which is Samrajya. This is a serious drawback in

Raja Yoga practice which must be recognised as hinted here as inconsistent by Sri Aurobindo.

Regarding siddhis or psychic powers, Sri Aurobindo has expressed his views very clearly in The Synthesis of Yoga. He says: "There are fuller, greater powers belonging to the supramental planes which are the very powers of the Divine in his Spiritual and Supramentally ideative being. These can be acquired at all securely or integrally by personal effort but can only come from above, or else can become natural to the man if and when he ascends beyond mind and lives in the spiritual being, power, consciousness and ideation. They then become not abnormal and laborously acquired siddhis but simply the very nature and method of his acting, if he still continues to be active in the world-existence."<sup>(8)</sup>

There are many siddhis. The siddhis which are laborously acquired are gross siddhis in the physical field in which we can include scientific discoveries. Then there are siddhis in the field of becoming. These are siddhis in the psychological field in which we can include clairvoyance, clairaudience, telepathy, etc. There are then spiritual siddhis which are given to us without effort and labour which become the natural way of one's action. Here we ought to note that it is only the natural siddhis that can become the means of effective communication in the mind. Natural siddhis which are no more psychic powers but are ways of spiritual expression emerge from communion. Without the objective of communication Raja Yoga remains incomplete. Sri Aurobindo is not opposed to traditional system of Raja Yoga but he is concerned with its incompleteness. What has remained incomplete either at the level of theory or in the sphere of practice gets completed by introducing those factors that go to make complete that which has remained incomplete.

We have seen that Aṣṭāṅga Yoga is occult in its nature and

content. It confines itself to the study of <sup>the</sup> manifest and even though it is concerned with establishing samrajya it remains unfulfilled without the objective of communication. In its goals it offers liberation and siddhis. Siddhis offered are laborious which lack spiritual qualities of effortlessness. There is a further limitation. The fact that Aṣṭāṅga Yoga is occult in its nature and content limits its scope by making it a science of Yoga. Its nature can be described as psycho-physical. What are its findings? At first sight we seem to find man's mental activities dependent entirely on his body and his nervous system. Science finds this dependence absolute and therefore science neither finds nor seeks to find the real key of dependence through which the secret of release and mastery be made. Sri Aurobindo says that "The psycho-physical Science of Yoga does not make this mistake. It seeks for the Key, finds it and is able to effect the release; for it takes account of the psychical or mental body behind of which the physical is a sort of reproduction in gross form and is able to discover thereby secrets of the physical body which do not appear to a purely physical enquiry." (9)

The psychic body is reproduced in the physical in the spinal column which acts as a rod. Chakras are part of the energy chain. They are from bottom to top named as Mūladhara at the base of the spinal column, Swadhisthana at the base of the genital organs, Manipura at the base of navel region, Anahata at the base of the heart, Vishuddha at the base of the throat, Ajna at the level of the pituitary gland and Sahasrara situated above the skull of the head. Nādis are channels carrying Prāna (life force) through the subtle body. The three main ones are: Idā which starts at the left nostril and carries lunar energy or a negative current. Pingala which starts at the right nostril and carries solar energy or a positive current. Sushumna the central nadi or nadi of fire which correspond to the spinal column



and is the main channel for the flow of nervous energy.

These chakras are closed or partially opened. The chakras which are opened provide the energy and power in accordance with the need and demand placed on an individual for meeting the challenges of life. The inherent and acquired fear embodied in mental, vital and physical layers of existence prevent the soul from using the whole reservoir of available energy. This supreme energy unutilised remains there dormant, asleep or coiled up and slumbering like a snake. It is called Kundalini shakti in Mūladhara the lowest chakra. When the division between the upper and lower prāna currents in the body is dissolved by Prānāyama, Kundalini uncoils itself and begins to rise on an upward journey. In its upward journey it meets each lotus or chakra which gets opened. This continues until shakti meets the Purusha in the thousand petalled lotus called Sahasrara chakra in a deep Samādhi of Union.

This description which is symbolic unveils the veal energy of our being which is lying asleep in the inconscient depths of our vital which has in it nervous, endocrine, respiratory, circulatory, digestive, reproductive, eliminatory and lymphatic systems. It is through the practice of Prānāyama that the veal energy is awakened. As the awakening takes place, the centres bloom and expand and in turn open the centres of our psychological being. In this resides the powers of consciousness which form the hard core of the subliminal self. This is not the end but a beginning because as each centre of power and consciousness is opened up, one gets access to successive psychological planes enabling one not only to communicate with the world but to realise for oneself universal and cosmic states of beings which correspond to them. In the middle stage of the journey, one gets all the psychic powers, abnormal to physical man but natural to soul development. Finally as one rises to the summit of the peak, the rising

and expanding energy meets the superconscient Self hidden behind and above our physical and mental existence. This culminates in a Samādhi which is a union and losing of waking consciousness in the superconscient. It is through unremitting practice of Prānāyama in Hatha Yoga the psychic and spiritual results are attained. While in Raja Yoga Prānāyama is used for the same psychic development as in Hatha Yoga. As <sup>Raja Yoga is</sup> ~~this system~~ in its whole principle a psychical system it employs <sup>only</sup> as a stage for four large utilities which are as follows:

- (1) Purity of mind making use of Yamas and Niyamas
- (2) Strengthening of mind, nerves and body by using āsanas and prānāyama.
- (3) Establishing the divine energy in the mental, vital and physical sheaths for forming the inner being by using mantras if required and prātyāhara.
- (4) Uniting the inner being with the Divine being through the use of Dhyāna, Dhāraṇa and Samādhi.

Āsana is used in Raja Yoga only in its easiest and most natural position. Patañjali recommends the use of Prātyāhara by which he means thought and sense withdrawal forcing the mind to sink into itself where in its absolute quietude it can only reflect the pure being or pass into its superconscient existence. This is the traditional method which Raja Yoga uses to enter into silent communion of soul and unity with the Divine.

We have completed the description of Aṣṭāṅga Yoga as a psycho-physical science in terms used by Patañjali and Sri Aurobindo.

Aṣṭāṅga Yoga culminates in Samādhi. What is Samādhi in Sri Aurobindo's yoga? Has it a place in Integral Yoga? We shall answer these questions in subsequent pages.

Samādhi has a place in the Integral Yoga but we must be careful to remember that it is not the Raja yogic Samādhi in which the Yogi

passes out of all consciousness of the world into the absorbed peace or bliss <sup>found through the</sup> search. Sri Aurobindo says that "What then is the nature of Samadhi or the utility of its trance in an Integral Yoga? It is evident that where our objective includes the possession of the Divine in life, a state of cessation of life cannot be the last consummating step or the highest desirable condition: Yogic trance cannot be an aim, as in so many Yogic systems, but only a means, and a means not of escape from the waking existence, but to enlarge and raise the whole seeing, living and active consciousness." (10)

There is a place for Samādhi in Integral Yoga but not as an end but as a means. Sri Aurobindo says that it is not a means of escape from waking consciousness but a means for an enlargement and a raising of the range and receptivity of consciousness. In Sri Aurobindo's Yoga there is no place for trance arrived at by making mind's receptivity dull. Samādhi is not the final summit of the journey in communion and bliss, but unlike other systems in Samādhi there is also communication. Samādhi is a point where the ascent terminates but it is also a point where descent begins in the direction of communication. Without communication Yoga is not complete. Integral Yoga helps the aspirant to rise to the summit of communion but does not allow him to settle down there. Integral Yoga asks the aspirant to return to the earth with the joy, bliss and ecstasy of communion experienced in Samādhi. In Integral Yoga, <sup>the</sup> aspirant returns to earth to transform the very structure of matter.

Mandukya Upanishad mentions the four-fold classification of consciousness into jagrat, svapna, susupti and Turiya meaning waking, dream, deep sleep and transcendent respectively. (11) Discussion on the consciousness mentioned in Mandukya Upanishad throw much light on problems of human psychology. Sri Aurobindo has enabled us to derive a clearer understanding of the ancient classification of

consciousness. We have seen in previous pages the four-fold categories of Higher mind, illumined, intuitive and over mind. The ancient classification is not identical with the classification of the mind given by Sri Aurobindo. There is much <sup>in</sup> common between them that warrants our attention. The two classifications can be seen as completing the ladder of the ascent. From jagrat to turiya or waking to the fourth state there is an ascent enabling one to move towards deeper and deeper states of consciousness. Whereas from Higher mind to over mind there is an ascent towards higher and higher states of consciousness. The path shown by the ancient classification of consciousness ended in communion so that he who came to the experience of Samādhi was lost to the world. Sri Aurobindo regards this movement as incomplete because communion is not sufficient without communication. It is in communication one becomes involved in the activities of the suffering humanity.

In the waking state, there is a normal consciousness through which we choose and decide, we accept and reject, indulge and deny. In this there is a duality and conflict of choice. It is a condition of distraction and in it there is a movement of trial and error. This is not a condition of drift as we have described it before in the context of the movement from Mind to Higher mind. There is here a condition of distraction. According to Sri Aurobindo it is the trained aspirant who would be able to translate his experiences of Samādhi or communion into acts of communication. For doing this the aspirant should open the door of communion in a negative state and not in a blank state because in a blank state one is not able to bring down anything. Descent cannot take place without ascent and therefore ascent is necessary.

<sup>The</sup> ancient and Sri Aurobindo's approach to Samādhi are not opposed to each other but they are complimentary.

Dream state or svapna is the second stage of ascent in ancient

classification. Sri Aurobindo has stated that <sup>the</sup> dream state of Yoga is completely different from the physical state of dream. "The latter belongs to the physical mind; in the former the mind proper and subtle is at work liberated from the immixture of the physical mentality. . . . In the Yogic dream state, on the other hand, the mind is in clear possession of itself, though not of the physical world, works coherently and is able to use either its ordinary will and intelligence with a concentrated power or else the higher will and intelligence of the more exalted planes of mind." (12)

In the waking state, there is jignasa, meaning inquiry. In this there is seen the enlarging man, the vaishvanar as described in Mandukya Upanishad. In jignasa there is the awakening of the flame of inquiry. This is lighted when there is a psychological hunger in man. This is the true waking state. Sri Aurobindo describes dream state as mind proper and subtle mind liberated from the physical mentality. Mind proper and subtle mind is the internalised mind. While in physical mentality there is the representation of the physical outward going senses. Therefore according to Sri Aurobindo <sup>the</sup> dream state is internalised mind liberated from the limitation and narrowness of the physical outward going senses. Further, Sri Aurobindo says that in the Yogic dream state there is clarity of perception, use of will and intelligence with a concentrated power. The clarity of dream state is due to tejas or illumination. In the waking state there is choice but in dream state there is no choice. In dream state there is coherence which is not present in physical dreams because in physical dreams there are distractions of the impacts of the outer physical world. Also, <sup>the</sup> dream state is associated with extra-sensory perceptions like clairvoyance, etc. "It is this which explains many of the phenomena of clairvoyance, clair-audience, etc.; for these phenomena are only the exceptional admission of the Waking mentality into a limited sensitiveness to what

might be called the image memory of the subtle ether, by which not only the signs of all things past and present, but even those of things future can be seized; for things future are already accomplished to Knowledge and vision on higher planes of mind and their images can be reflected upon the mind in the present."<sup>(13)</sup> In <sup>the</sup> dream state, the resisting action of waking state is absent. In this freedom subliminal self creates a condition of relaxation enabling the consciousness to move freely. Astral travel also becomes possible in this state.

After <sup>the</sup> dream state, there is an ascent towards Susupti or deep sleep. It is thought that the sleep state is inferior to Waking state. But Sri Aurobindo says that it is not so. He says that "It is not the truth that the Self in the third status called perfect sleep, susupti, is in a state of slumber."<sup>(14)</sup> Susupti is not only a state of slumber but it is in fact a waking of the subtler nature of consciousness which remains dormant in the jagarat or waking state. In the greater waking of sleep state, there is no distraction, nor duality of sleeper and slept. In the intuitive mind described by Sri Aurobindo there is no duality of perceiver and perceived. We have stated this previously. In this condition of deep sleep, the knowledge is not by ideation or image but by identity or oneness. Further Sri Aurobindo says that "The sleep self is on the contrary described as Prajna, the Master of Wisdom and Knowledge, Self of the Gnosis and as Ishwara, the Lord of being."<sup>(15)</sup> Sri Aurobindo uses the word Prajna meaning wisdom. What we call knowledge is gathered from outside while wisdom wells up from within. The tuition which wells up from within is intuition. Therefore, deep sleep state or Susupti is indeed a state of intuition. This is the intuitive mind stated previously in Sri Aurobindo's classification of mind. Further Sri Aurobindo says that "The Sleep state is a consciousness corresponding to the supramental plane proper to the gnosis, which is beyond our experience because our causal body

or envelope of gnosis is not developed in us, its faculties not active, and therefore we are in relation to that plane in a condition of dreamless sleep."<sup>(16)</sup> In the intuition knowledge is by being or by identity and oneness. Thought creates duality. Non-dual State is operational in no thoughts. Distractions based on duality are present in thought activity of Waking and Dream State. In the deep sleep there is no interference of thoughts either of waking or dream state. Because of these there is welling up of Wisdom from within. According to Sri Aurobindo, waking, dream and deep sleep states correspond respectively to gross, subtle and causal reality and "the Turiya beyond is the consciousness of our pure existence or our absolute being with which we have no direct relations at all, whatever mental reflections we may receive in our dream or waking or even, irrecoverably in our sleep consciousness. This four-fold scale corresponds to the degree of the ladder of being by which we climb back towards the absolute Divine".<sup>(17)</sup> It is in deep sleep there comes intimations which are picked up by the intuition.

In the Turiya state, there is the discovery of one's true being. This is a self-discovery of the soul. In this there is ecstasy or Anand or bliss. The journey described by ancient path proceeds from Vaishvanar to Tejas, from Tejas to Prajna and from Prajna to Anand. Samādhī is Anand or Bliss state. <sup>The</sup> ancient path stopped here, Sri Aurobindo's path speaks of the descent where the spiritual man returns to the Earth. <sup>The</sup> ancient path resulted in the passivity of bliss while Sri Aurobindo's path has brought dynamism in the content of the four states of consciousness described by Mandukya Upanishad.

Sri Aurobindo has made a clear distinction between the waking, the dream and sleep states in the following paragraph.

"To the normal mind all that exceeds its normal experience but still comes into its scope, seems a dream; but at the point where it borders

on things quite beyond its scope, it can no longer see truth even as in a dream, but passes into the blank incomprehension and non reception of slumber. This border-line varies with the power of the individual consciousness, with the degree and height of its enlightenment and awakening. The line may be pushed up higher and higher until it may pass even beyond the mind."<sup>(18)</sup>

What is normal in mind becomes a dream when the normality is exceeded. There is an extension in dream of what is conceived in normal mind. The exceeding of the limit of normal consciousness in the waking and dream state is in time and space but that which is outside the scope and range of the normal consciousness is termed the deep sleep. The difference between the deep sleep state on the one hand and between dream and waking state on the other hand is of the kind. The former belongs to mysticism or spirituality while the latter belongs to occultism. Between the waking and the dream states there is a difference of degree and not of kind.

This is the concept of Sri Aurobindo's Samādhi. Further Sri Aurobindo says that "Normally indeed the human mind cannot be awake even with the inner waking of trance, on the supramental levels; but this disability can be overcome. Awake on these levels the Soul becomes Master of the ranges of gnostic thought, gnostic will, gnostic delight and if it can do this in Samādhi, it may carry its memory of experience and its power of experience over into the Waking state. Even on the yet higher level open to us, that of the Anand, the awakened Soul may become similarly possessed of the Bliss-Self both in its concentration and in its cosmic comprehension."<sup>(19)</sup>

By this Sri Aurobindo means that what is achieved in deep sleep state of Samādhi can be manifested in awakened state, even though it is difficult. In this sense, Sri Aurobindo's concept of Samādhi is dynamic. In the description of Samādhi given so far there is no mention



of communication. Aṣṭāṅga Yoga as it is practised today puts emphasis on communion without much care for communication. Communication in Aṣṭāṅga Yoga is incidental. Integral Yoga puts emphasis on both communion and communication. There is a drawback in the Aṣṭāṅga Yogas's concept of Samādhi because it lacks dynamism. Lack of dynamism is the lack of communication. Sri Aurobindo's concept of Samādhi corrects this drawback in Aṣṭāṅga Yoga.

The Yoga Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo does not recognise Jnana, Bhakti and Karma Yoga as three different paths. Sri Aurobindo recognises knowledge, devotion and work as expressions of Whole; the Yoga of knowledge, devotion and works is called triple Yoga in Sri Aurobindo's scheme. Becoming through the instrumentality of knowledge, devotion and works is in time, while true knowledge, devotion and works belong to true-being which is in the timeless. The former which is in time is Swadharna while the latter which is in the timeless is Swabhava. It is the timeless which descends into time and it is the time which ascends to the timeless. Thus in terms of Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga, Swabhava descends into Swadharna and Swadharna ascends to Swabhava. The Yoga of knowledge, devotion and works thus achieve integrality in Sri Aurobindo's hands. As there is no emphasis on descend in Patañjali's Yoga, integrality of Swadharna and Swabhava is not achieved in Aṣṭāṅga Yoga. Thus Aṣṭāṅga Yoga of Patañjali, due to its lack of emphasis on descent limits the scope of its development in practice. The being and becoming which are respectively Swabhava and Swadharna hold the key to unravelling of the mastery of life because they constitute the true rhythm of the Timeless descending into time and time ascending to timelessness. This rhythm which culminates in discovering true knowledge, true devotion and true work demands communion with being and the

communication of the secret of Being in the process of Becoming. This indeed is the triple path of Yoga which contains in it the seeds of a new consciousness which has to be manifested in the field of becoming.

Sri Aurobindo makes a distinction between Vibhūti and Avatara. Avatara is the divinisation of man and in it there is the descent of the Divine into human form. In Vibhūti there is an ascent towards the Divine. In Avatara there is an unbounded expansion of human consciousness but in Vibhūti we see the extension of human consciousness. Avataras are rare but Vibhūtis are many. Vibhūti is an occultist while Avatara is a mystic. Patañjali's Yoga comes nearer to Vibhuti's Yoga mentioned in Chapter Ten of the Gita. According to Sri Aurobindo, Arjuna is Vibhūti and Krishna is Avatara. Transformation of nature (prakṛiti) in Aṣṭāṅga Yoga is three-fold touching on Tamas, Rajas and Sattva. While in Integral Yoga transformation is four-fold which includes in it four powers wisdom, strength, harmony and perfection of the Mahāshakti. This fact introduces a drawback in achieving larger results in Aṣṭāṅga Yoga. Aṣṭāṅga Yoga of Patañjali offers the possibility of becoming a Vibhūti, while Integral Yoga offers the possibility of becoming both a Vibhūti and an Avatara.

### Summary

We have seen that Patañjali's Aṣṭāṅga Yoga is synthetic in nature. <sup>the</sup> synthesis of Patañjali is that of a scientist and an occultist. Occultism as we have seen in <sup>the</sup> previous pages is a science. There is present in it its dual nature. It studies the manifest reality and uses images and ideation as a means for obtaining <sup>the</sup> knowledge in which <sup>the</sup> knower remains untouched. For its interpretation and evaluation it adopts the method of quantitative and comprehensive Totality. It is concerned with communion but uses ascent only to achieve it. This fact limits the scope of its development. We have seen that it does not achieve the

integrality of Swadharna and Swabhava, communion and communication, Swarajya and Samrajya, and matter and spirit. The fact that Aṣṭāṅga Yoga is occult in its nature and content limits its scope by making it a Science of Yoga. Its dual nature makes its siddhis laborous. The Samādhi in it is of occult type in which there is emphasis only on communion. In its method, Aṣṭāṅga Yoga uses three-fold transformation of prakriti which offers the possibility of becoming an occultist or Vibhūti.

Aṣṭāṅga Yoga is a brilliant account of the impersonal truth rendered into the abstract intellectual formulas of the pure reason but without mystic vision of realities the abstract formulation of the truth is not only partial and incomplete but it is insufficiently alive. Patañjali has cast this truth in the technical language of Sūtras suited to an occultist.

We have seen that Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo is also synthetic in nature. The synthesis of Sri Aurobindo is fundamentally that of a poet and a mystic. We have seen that mysticism is spirituality. There is in it its Advaita. It studies the unmanifest reality and uses spirit or consciousness as means to obtain the knowledge of the Whole. In this images or ideals are replaced by the consciousness of identity. In arriving at judgement mysticism adopts the qualitative approach of the Whole in which <sup>the</sup> knower is eliminated. It is concerned with both spirit and matter, communion and communication. Sam-rajya and Swa-rajya, Swabhava and Swadharna uses both ascent and descent to achieve the integrality. Siddhis in it are natural and spontaneous. The Samādhi in it is of <sup>the</sup> mystic type in which there is both communion and communication. Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo uses four-fold transformation which offers the possibility of becoming a mystic or an Avatara. Integral Yoga is a brilliant account of the personal and impersonal truth rendered into the abstract intellectual formulas of

pure reason. In it there is emphasis on concrete experience and fuller and Whole living. Sri Aurobindo has cast the truth in mantric poetry suited to a mystic.

The main points covered in the comparison between occultism and mysticism are listed here as follows, for quick reference:

	OCCULTISM	MYSTICISM
1	Study of Manifest	Study of Unmanifest
2	Science	Spirituality
3	Matter	Spirit or consciousness
4	Communication	Communion
5	Duality or Dvaita	Advaita or Non-dual
6	Observer remains untouched	Observer is eliminated
7	Uses images or ideation for interpretation and evaluation	Uses consciousness of identity for interpretation and evaluation
8	Obtains Knowledge of Part	Obtains Whole Knowledge
9	Analysis is used for comprehensive understanding of Whole	Synthesis is used for the understanding of Whole
10	Sum of all or Total	Whole is more than Total
11	Quantitative Reality	Qualitative Reality
12	Occult <u>Samādhī</u>	Mystic <u>Samādhī</u>
13	Ascent	Descent
14	<u>Swarajya</u>	<u>Samrajya</u>
15	<u>Swadharma</u>	<u>Swabhava</u>
16	Laborious <u>Siddhis</u>	Natural <u>Siddhis</u> or spontaneous
17	<u>Vibhūti</u> or Occultist	<u>Avatara</u> or Mystic
18	Triple transformation of prakriti: <u>Tamas</u> , <u>Rajas</u> and <u>Sattwa</u>	Four-fold transformation of prakriti: Wisdom, Strength, Harmony and Perfection
19	<u>Aṣṭāṅga</u> Yoga	Integral Yoga
20	Prose ( <u>Sūtras</u> )	Poetry ( <u>Mantras</u> ) Savitri
21	Patañjali	Sri Aurobindo

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