Chapter VI

Identification of Consciousness

Prayer is a cry from inside addressed to we know not whom for the fulfillment of a need within. To maintain uninterrupted spiritual consciousness prayer is a vehicle that goes deeply into the levels of consciousness to find the self.

In a poem *The Vedantin's Prayer* Sri Aurobindo's prayer is:

"Spirit Supreme
Who muses in the silence of the heart
Eternal"\(^1\)

Part of Abraham's prayer when he commenced the construction of the *Kabah* in Makkah went like this:

"Lord, make this town one of peace. Preserve me and my descendants from serving idols. Lord, they have led many men astray. He that follows me shall surely belong to me, but if anyone turns against me, You are surely Forgiving, Merciful. Lord, I have settled sum of my offspring in a barren valley near Your Sacred House, so that they may observe the prayer."\(^2\)
Prayers speak always of the identification of consciousness with the supreme. There is also the other identification of the consciousness, on the other side, namely, with things and beings, with the world outside. In reality, however, there is only one consciousness. It is everywhere, in all subjects, in the universe and beyond. When a limit is put around it somewhere it becomes an individual consciousness. It is man's ego cutting and shutting itself off from the global consciousness. This separative consciousness is asked to break the limits and regain its natural unity with the one consciousness. When the consciousness has been separated and individualized in different centres, even then it exists and acts in hiding in all the multiple varieties of forms, from the tiniest to the biggest. The same consciousness is alive in the atom, the stone, the plant, the animal, in the earth and the sun and the stars, in the universe as a whole. Each object big or small, living or non-living, conscious or unconscious contains that consciousness at its centre and expresses it in various ways.

It is Sri Aurobindo's prayer revealed in a poem *Surrender*.

"Thou of whom I am the instrument,
O secret Spirit and Nature housed in me,
Let all my mortal being now be blent,
In Thy still glory of divinity."³
Consider, for example, our country, India. When we say 'India', what do we mean to convey? Is it the geographical boundary that goes by the name or the expanse of soil contained within that boundary or its hills and rivers, forests and fields or the beasts that range in it or its human inhabitants or all of these together? No, it is something else. It is a centre of consciousness. It has as its bodily frame the particular geographical boundary. It dwells in its mountains and meadows, vibrates in its vegetation, lives and moves in its animal kingdom. It is behind the mind and aspiration of its people, animating its culture and civilization and moving it towards higher and higher illuminations and achievements. It is not India alone, but every country upon earth has its consciousness, which is the central core of its life and culture. Not only so, even the earth itself, the earth as a whole, has a consciousness at its centre and is the embodiment of that consciousness. The earth's evolution means the growth and expression of that consciousness. Likewise the sun too has a solar consciousness, a solar being presiding over its destiny. Further, the universe too has a cosmic consciousness, one and indivisible, moving and guiding it. "And still beyond there lies the transcendental consciousness, outside creation and manifestation."4
Notes


