The third view makes Shakti the highest truth, and Shiva is conceived of as the best support of Shakti. Shakti is the more important as the contained, while Shiva is the container. Shakti is the all-creating, all preserving and all destroying power of which Shiva is the best container (adhara). In some of the Puranas the male deity as the Shaktimat (the possessor of Shakti) has been described as the male aspect of the ultimate truth which is Shakti. It is from this point of view that the Mother worshippers would give a subsidiary place to Shiva, whereas Shakti as the Mother is taken to be the highest object of adoration.\textsuperscript{14}

To conclude worship of the Mother Goddess is widely practiced throughout India in one form or the other, and in the homes, in temples and Mutts and Mandirs. All agree that it is the One Divine Mother or Shakti to whom they pay their homage and offer themselves to Her, invoking Her blessings. The worship of Mother Goddess is an inseparable aspect of Indian culture and tradition through the ages and is widely practiced.\textsuperscript{15}
CHAPTER – IX
CONCEPT OF THE MOTHER PRINCIPLE IN
SRI AUROBINDO’S YOGA

1) Aim and Significance of Sri Aurobindo’s Yoga

Sri Aurobindo has said that all problems of existence are essentially the problems of harmony and in the levels of consciousness beyond the mind lies our destiny and the solutions to our problems. Sri Aurobindo also claimed that the mind or the thinking principle is the fundamental cause for all the existing problems of humanity and therefore all these problems will exist eternally as long as the humanity is based on this principle the mind and so it is his endeavour to replace it by yet another higher principle the Supermind or the Truth Consciousness through his yoga.

Therefore the Mother has once said about Sri Aurobindo’s yoga “what Sri Aurobindo represents in earth-history and human history is not a teaching or a message not even a revelation but a dicisive action from the supreme.”

There are ample evidences in the records of writing of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother that the path and the aim of their endeavour were the same from the beginning. Therefore the entire philosophy, and practice and the purpose of yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother is centered around this new principle the Supermind or The Truth Consciousness which when established in the earth consciousness will bring about an Integral transformation of Nature and Humanity and will thus establish a Divine Life in a Divine Body and an eternal Harmony in the universe. Thus Sri Aurobindo gave a new depth and dimension to the human thought through which he claims the whole world and humanity can rest in everlasting peace and harmony which
is the very need of the day and probably the biggest hope and aspiration of man ever since he has begun to think.

Sri Aurobindo and the Mother wanted an Integral knowledge to be the basis of an integral method (yoga) to transform human life into a Divine life on earth. Sri Aurobindo and The Mother had acquired the conviction, based on their spiritual experience and they knew that the time had come to realize the Divine life here and now, and that it was they themselves who had to initiate the required transformation in matter, in the body, on earth. If this conception was fantastic and equally true, then the moment of their meeting was indeed the meeting of East and West.2

Sri Aurobindo had many times affirmed, “The Mother’s consciousness and mine are the same, the one Divine Consciousness in two, because that is necessary for the play”.3 Mother had acknowledged this view by saying on a different occasion “Without him I do not exist and without me he is unmanifest”.4

Both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother represented in themselves the highest and deepest spiritual aspirations of Humanity and are together considered as the leaders or masters of evolution. Their aim was to hasten the evolutionary process and to manifest the Supermind as its decisive step. Both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother gave an exhaustive description of the nature of the Supermind and its immense potentialities when it is manifested or replaced in place of mind. The essential character of the Supermind is a Truth Consciousness. It is the knower possessing the knowledge. It is both a dynamic and static power or a Shakti which can manifest its world of Truth and Light in which all is luminously based on the harmony and unity of the One, not disturbed by a veil of ignorance or any disguise as in the case of mind. It is also a fact that mind being an
instrument of ignorance, by itself can never understand the Supermind. This is not surprising. After-all, the animal with all its vital instincts and sensations can not follow the working of man’s mind. Supermind represents a level and realm of consciousness radically different from and superior to mind, just as in the evolutionary process mind is a higher range of consciousness than life. Sri Aurobindo said that in its passage to Supermind, the mind must learn to fall into silence and then progressively open itself to the ranges of higher consciousness.

Therefore Sri Aurobindo's teaching and method of practice is also quite unique. It is not his object to develop any one religion or to amalgamate the older religions or to found any new religion - for any of these things would lead away from his central purpose. The one aim of his Yoga is an inner self-development by which each one, who follows it, can in time discover the One Self in all and evolve a higher consciousness than the mental - a Spiritual and Supramental Consciousness which will transform and Divinise human nature.

In all the traditional systems of yoga, Mukti or Jeevanmukti or Moksha is supposed to be the ultimate aim or escape or liberation from the bondage of birth and death or becoming one with the Divine or Brahman or the Abolute. In the Vedic sense Mukti or Moksha means untying or releasing and in its extended sense it has come to mean liberation from many kinds of fetters such as evil, disease, want, fear and death etc. In the Upanishadic sense Mukti means a release from all desires and freedom from bondage or works arising from desire. He who is established in Brahman attains freedom from death (Amaratva) says the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.

Rebirth in the world is looked upon as a source of bondage bringing experience of pleasure and pain, joy and suffering, disease
and death. It binds the soul to the play of three gunas — Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. It forges karma which acts, inexorably as a cause effect sequence binding souls to cycle of existence. As the Upanishads say, “As a person intends, so he acts, as he acts so he becomes,”. Thus the soul creates its own destiny. It is the energy of karma that drags the soul to the cycle of birth and death.

According to Gita, it is not action or karma as such which binds; it is kama — desire. The real karma sanyasa is kama sanyasa or desirelessness. Desire produces attached activities. Desire is the motive force. The Gita advocates a life of activity but without desire and attachment. We should perform action with detachment, with devotion and to the best of our ability. By so doing we cease to become links in the endless chain of karma. Ultimately we will reach the state of liberation.

Although in the Indian religious and spiritual tradition, the source of inspiration are primarily the Vedas, Upanishads and the Gita, yet several paths or disciplines have been designed out of the same source, culminating in as many ways of God-realisation. There are but many kinds of relations that can be established between the seeker and the Divine — various lines of Mukti,

As Sri Aurobindo points out “There is a union in spiritual essence by identity; there is a union by the indwelling of our soul in this highest Being and Consciousness, there is a dynamic union of likeness of oneness of nature between ‘That’ and our instrumental being here. The first one is liberation from the Ignorance and identification with the Real and Eternal, Moksha — Sayujya which is the characteristic aim of the yoga of knowledge. The second, the dwelling of the soul with or in the Divine is samipya salokya is the
intense hope of all yoga of Love and Beatitude. The third, identity in nature and likeness to the Divine, to be perfect as That is perfect, Sadharmya, is the high intension of all yoga of power and perfection of Divine works and service.⁶

As Against this background of Mukti the term Jeevanmukti has a special sense. As the word denotes it is the attainment of liberation while one still lives in this physical existence. But according to one line of Vendantic traditon liberation is not possible while one lives in the body, which means liberation is possible only after death. According to this view some kind of spiritualhood may be possible while living but true liberation follows only after the body is shed. But there are of-course other points of view, other lines of truth of Jeevanmukti which is important in respect of Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo. In this yoga a state of Jeevanmukti is not only highly desirable but forms an indispensable state to carryon this yoga further to reach higher goals. By Jeevanmukti one attains spiritual consciousness, his soul of spirit is identified with the highest consciousness, he is assured of his freedom from rebirth. But here in this yoga he has other goals, higher ends to reach and Jeevanmukti here is such a stage from where he embarks on a greater and higher spiritual journey, it is in this sense that Sri Aurobindo says that his yoga begins from where all other yogas end.

Jeevanmukta is an exalted condition of an embodied being in which wisdom reigns and dispels doubts, and action is no bondage. Here he is (a Sada Mukta), living consciously in Brahmic state always, even while engaged in external activities (Sada Mukta). He is in Samadhi at all times even while engaged in outer life movements. This waking Samadhi state is his effortless, normal stage of consciousness. Sri. Kapalisastriar observes that not all Jeevanmuktas are stamped in the same mould. For instance one Jeevanmukta after
realizing his identity with the Brahman, may stop all his mundane activities or keep them to the minimum possible, another one even while maintaining his identity with the Divine can plunge himself into any kind of work, because he realises that all powers proceed from Him and executed by Him, the man being no more than a surrendered instrument of the Divine. If one by realizing God through the path of knowledge, he could be allowed to say every thing is Maya, there is no bondage or no birth, we all are undying self, Atman is alone true, all the rest is unreal and on the other hand if a Jeevanmukta is temperamentally a devotee, he loves the whole manifestation, men, women, children, animals and plants, or if he is a soul that is chosen by the Divine for specific work, he is under the constant guidance of all controlling eternal Divine consciousness. So Sastriar sums up these different types or moulds of Jeevanmukti in these words “While the experience of unity on the realisaton of Brahman or God, the Omnipresent - One, may be common to all Jeevanmuktas, their behaviour of life, their thoughts and language are the formulation of method and if they happen to be thinking, their construction of philosophical systems vary very largely and quite often”.

In the ‘Hour of God’ Sri Aurobindo observes “All who go out of the universal consciousness do not necessarily go into Parabrahman. Some go into undifferentiated Nature (avyakrita Prakriti), some lose themselves in God, some pass into dark state of non recognition of universe, some into luminous state of non-recognition of universe – pure undifferentiated Atman, Pure Sat or Existence Basis of universe, some into temporary state of deep sleep (Susupti) in the impersonal principles of Ananda, Chit or Sat. All these are forms of release and ego gets from God by his Maya or Prakriti the impulse towards any of these to which the Supreme Purusha choose to direct him. There whom he wishes to liberate yet keep in the world, he makes them
Jeevanmuktas or sends them out again as his Vibhutis, they consenting to wear for the divine purpose a temporary veil of Avidya."

However to Sri Aurobindo Brahman and Parabrahman they are not two, but in fact one. He equates Brahman with Sachidananda. He who has attained the Brahman has become Sachichadananda and he is a Jeevanmukta, if he chooses, he can after death of his body, merge with Parabrahman, the Absolute, the unknowable and go out of manifestation. He may however choose to remain in the world to carryout Divine works, Parabrahman can always at will draw Sachidananda into itself and Sachidananda can always and at will draw into Parabrahman.

However, it is evident that through any means, or through any path or system Mukti is not easy to attain. Its demands are radical and practice, immensely difficult. It calls for sustained and prolonged period of purification of mind, heart, emotions, sense, impulse and other life activities and this kind of far reaching purification requires an almost interminable time and toil probably extending over many lives. For example it is not easy to surrender to the Divine even with the best intention to do so and arrive at a stage of Grace. It is the Divine Grace that dispels ignorance and brings about liberation. We have to learn to perform selfless action, we should motivate no selfish desire. We must shed out ego and surrender our will to the Divine will.

It is also very clear that without the Divine Grace attainment of mukti or Jeevanmukti is impossible. Sastriar emphasis this truth in these explicit words. "Nor is such an exalted state reached by any one through personal exertion alone. However straightforward, enlightened and one pointed may be the efforts made by the seeker the ultimate result is not worked out by the ego bound mentality of
the man - personal exertion, though usually a necessary condition for preparing the human being for spiritual realization, cannot bear fruit without the finishing touch for consummation favoured by the higher power which may act through a human Guru or may be directly by the Divine Grace itself.\(^9\)

To sum up, a Jeevanmukta is one who has solved his personal problem - the problem of ignorance and he has realized the self, the impersonal Divine or the Divine personality, whichever aspect was dear to him. Whether this phenomenal world appears to him real or illusory depends upon the type of realization he has had. Pain and pleasure, happiness or sorrow have no relevance to him, they leave no trace. He deals every thing with an unperturbed calm and equality. He is no longer the ego he once was, he is through with the fear of birth or death, he is no more obsessed with fate or destiny. He cares less for the result of his works. He is not bound by Karma nor Karma binds him. He has no personal desires and his will is tuned to the Divine will for all time.

It is actually from this state of Jeevanmukta, the Supramental Yoga of Sri Aurobindo begins. Sri Aurobindo is very clear in the aim of his Integral Yoga, which goes far beyond the personal salvation or Mukti to reach greater aims. The life that wins its aim asks greater aims because in the personal salvation he believes that only half God's work is done. It is very interesting that Sri Aurobindo and the Mother are very relevant in answering many questions that could be asked as to what will be after the personal salvation or Mukti of the embodied soul. Is the purpose of manifestation is this, only to reach individual souls to the source they came from? Is this the sole intention of creation, the purpose for which the world was made? Sri Aurobindo answers to these questions through his Synthesis or Supramental Yoga.\(^{10}\)
2) Yoga

It is only through the process of yoga one can become gradually aware of the different planes and parts of the being in oneself which are normally hidden or which one is normally not aware of.

Yoga means union with the Divine, a union either transcendental or cosmic or individual or all three together. Or it means getting into a consciousness in which one is no longer limited by the small ego, personal mind, personal vital and body, but is in union with the supreme self, or with the universal or cosmic consciousness or with some deeper consciousness within, in which one is aware of one's own soul, one's own inner being and of the real truth of existence. In the yogic consciousness one is not only aware of things, but of forces and also the conscious being behind the forces.

The principle of Yoga is the turning of one or of all powers of our human existence into a means of reaching the Divine Being. In an ordinary Yoga one main power of being or one group of its powers is made the means, vehicle, or the path, but in a Synthetic Yoga all powers will be combined and included in the transmuting instrumentation.

According to the established traditions of Yoga, there is a force which accompanies the growth of the new consciousness and at once grows with it and helps it to come about and to perfect itself. This force is the Yoga Shakti. It is here coiled up and asleep in all the centers of our inner being (chakras) and is at the base what is called in the Tantras the Kundalini Shakti. But it is also above us, above our head as the divine force not there coiled up, involved, asleep, but awake, scient, potent, extended and wide; it is there waiting for manifestation and to this force are to open ourselves. In the mind it manifests itself as Divine mind-force or a universal mind-force and it
can do everything that the personal mind cannot do; it is then the Yogic mind-force. When it manifests and acts in the vital or the physical in the same way, it is there apparent as a Yogic life force or a Yogic body-force. It can awake in all these forms, bursting outwards and upwards, extending itself into wideness from below; or it can descend and become there a definite power for things; it can pour downwards into the body, working, establishing its reign, extending into wideness from above, link the lowest in us with the highest above us, release the individual into a cosmic universality or into absoluteness and transcendence.

In this discipline of yoga, the inspiration of the Master, and in the difficult stages his control and his presence are indispensable – for it would be impossible otherwise to go through it without much stumbling and error which would prevent all chance of success. The Master is one who has risen to a higher consciousness and being and he is often regarded as its manifestation or representative. He not only helps by his teaching and still more by his influence and example but by a power to communicate his own experience to others.

However here the yoga is dealt with in two ways;
I) Traditional ways of yoga; (II) Sri Aurobindo’s synthesis of yoga.

I) Traditional ways of yoga
a) Hathayoga

In Hathayoga the instrument is the body and life. All the power of the body is stilled, collected, purified, heightened, concentrated to its utmost limits or beyond any limits by Asana and other physical processes; the power of the life too is similarly purified, heightened, concentrated by Asana and Pranayama. This concentration of powers is then directed towards that physical centre in which the divine
consciousness sits concealed in the human body. The power of Life, Nature-power, coiled up with all its secret forces asleep in the lowest nervous plexus of the earth-being, for only so much escapes into waking action in our normal operations as is sufficient for the limited uses of human life, rises awakened through centre after centre and awakens, too, in its ascent and passage the forces of each successive nodus of our being, the nervous life, the heart of emotion and ordinary mentality, the speech, sight, will, the higher knowledge, till through and above the brain it meets with and it becomes one with the Divine Consciousness.

b) Rajayoga

In Rajayoga the chosen instrument is the mind. Our ordinary mentality is first disciplined, purified and directed towards the Divine Being, then by a summary process of Asana and Pranayama the physical force of our being is stilled and concentrated, the life-force released into a rhythmic movement capable of cessation and concentrated into a higher power of its upward action, the mind, supported and strengthened by this greater action and concentration of the body and life upon which it rests, is itself purified of all its unrest and emotion and its habitual thought-waves, liberated from distraction and dispersion, given its highest force of concentration, gathered up into a trance of absorption. Two objects, the one temporal, the other eternal, are gained by this discipline. Mind-power develops in another concentrated action, abnormal capacities of knowledge, effective will, deep light of reception, powerful light of thought-radiation which are altogether beyond the narrow range of our normal mentality; it arrives at the Yogic or occult powers around which there has been woven so much quite dispensable and yet perhaps salutary mystery. But the one final end and the one all-important gain is that the mind, stilled and cast into a concentrated
trance, can lose itself in the Divine Consciousness and the soul be made free to unite with the Divine Being.

c) Jnana, Karma and Bhakti Yoga

The triple way of knowledge, work and devotion takes for its chosen instruments the three main powers of the mental soul-life of the human being. Knowledge selects the reason and the mental vision and it makes them by purification, concentration and a certain discipline of a God-directed seeking its means for the greatest knowledge and the greatest vision of all, God-knowledge and God-vision. Its aim is to see, know and be the Divine. Works or action selects for its instruments the will of the doer of works; it makes life an offering of sacrifice to the Godhead and by purification, concentration and a certain discipline of subjection to the Divine Will a means for contact and increasing unity of the soul of man with the Divine Master of the Universe. Devotion selects the emotional and aesthetic power of the soul and by turning them all Godward in a perfect, purity, intensity, infinite passion of seeking makes them a means of God-possession in one or many relations of unity with the Divine Being. All aim in their own way at a union or unity of the human soul with the Supreme Spirit.

Each Yoga in its process has the character of the instrument it uses; thus the Hathayogic process is psycho-physical, the Rajayogic mental and psychic, the way of knowledge is spiritual and cognitive, the way of devotion spiritual, emotional and aesthetic, the way of works spiritual and dynamic by action. Each is guided in the ways of its own characteristic power. But all power is in the end one, all power is really soul-power. In the ordinary process of life, body and mind this truth is quite obscured by the dispersed, dividing and distributive action of Nature which is the normal condition of all our
functionings, although even there it is in the end evident; for all material energy contains hidden the vital, mental, psychic, spiritual energy and in the end it must release these forms of the one Shakti, the vital energy conceals and liberates into action all the other forms, the mental supporting itself on the life and body and their powers and functionings contains undeveloped or only partially developed the psychic and the Spiritual Power of the being. But when by Yoga any of these Powers is taken up from the dispersed and distributive action, raised to its highest degree, concentrated, it becomes manifest soul-power and reveals the essential unity. Therefore the Hathayogic process has too its pure psychic and spiritual result, the Rajayogic arrives by psychic means at a spiritual consummation. The triple way may appear to be altogether mental and spiritual in its way of seeking and its objectives, but it can be attended by results more characteristic of the other paths, which offer themselves in a spontaneous and involuntary flowering, and for the same reason, because soul-power is a all-power and where it reaches its height in one direction its other possibilities also begin to show themselves in fact or incipient potentiality. This unity at once suggests the possibility of a Synthetic Yoga.

d) Tantra Yoga

Tantric discipline is in its nature a synthesis. It has seized on the large universal truth that there are two poles of being whose essential unity is the secret of existence, Brahman and Shakti, Spirit and Nature, and that Nature is power of the Spirit or rather is Spirit as Power. To raise nature in man into manifest power of Spirit is its method and it is whole nature that it gathers up for the spiritual conversion. It concludes in its system of instrumentation the forceful Hathayogic process and especially the opening up of the nervous centers and the passage through them of the awakened Shakti on her
way to her union with the Brahman, the subtler stress of the Rajayogic purification, meditation and concentration, the leverage of will-force, the motive power of devotion, the key of knowledge. But it does not stop short with an effective assembling of the different powers of these specific Yogas. In two directions it enlarges by its synthetic turn the province of the Yogic method. First, it lays its hand firmly on many of the main springs of human quality, desire, action and it subjects them to an intensive discipline with the soul's mastery of its motives as a first aim and their elevation to a diviner spiritual level as its final utility. Again, it includes in its objects of Yoga not only liberation, which is the one all mastering preoccupation of the specific systems, but a cosmic enjoyment of the power of the spirit, which the others may take incidentally on the way, in part, casually, but avoid making a motive or object, it is a bolder and large system.12

ii) Sri Aurobindo’s Synthesis of Yoga

Sri Aurobindo declared that he had discovered yoga as a method of accelerating this evolutionary process. He found however that each system of yoga is a specialization in a more or less limited field of achievement and therefore none of them was sufficient for the total movement of evolution. In his analysis of the various systems of yoga he showed how an integrating principle of yoga could be discovered, and how a synthesis could be achieved so that the yoga could meet the total demands of evolutionary movement. Therefore Sri Aurobindo called his yoga as Integral yoga or A synthesis of yoga or Supramental yoga and gave an exhaustive description of the details of his yoga and as to how it differs from all other yogas of the past and as to how it will accomplish its purpose of bringing out an Integral Transformation of Nature and Humanity by establishing this new
principle of Supramental or the Truth Consciousness into the earth consciousness.

The following words of the Mother, are a formidable hope for realising the importance, significance and the truths of this transformation. In the words of the Mother "If we want to find a true solution to the confusion, chaos and misery of the world, we have to find it in the world itself. And this is in fact where it is to be found. It exists potentially, we have only to discover it; it is neither mystic nor imaginary; it is altogether concrete and disclosed to us by Nature herself, if we know how to observe her. For the movement of Nature is an ascending one; from one form, one species, she brings forth a new one capable of manifesting something more of the universal consciousness. All goes to show that man is not the last step in terrestrial evolution. The human species will necessarily be succeeded by a new one which will be a man what man is to the animal; the present human consciousness will be replaced by a new consciousness no longer mental but Supramental. And this consciousness will give birth to a higher race, superhuman and divine.

The time has come for this possibility, promised and anticipated for so long, to become a living reality upon earth, and that is why you are all unsatisfied and feel that you have been unable to obtain what you wanted from life. Nothing but a radical change of consciousness can deliver the world from its present obscurity. Indeed, this transformation of the consciousness, this manifestation of a higher true consciousness is not only possible but certain; it is the very aim of our existence, the purpose of life upon earth. First the consciousness must be transformed, then life, then forms; it is in this order that the new creation will unfold. All Nature's activity is in fact a progressive return towards the Supreme Reality which is both the
origion and the goal of the universe, in its totality as well as in its smallest element. We must become concretely what we are essentially; we must live integrally the truth, the beauty, the power and the perfection that are hidden in the depths of our being, and then all life will become the expression of the sublime, eternal, divine Joy. 

In this method of synthesis of Sri Aurobindo, another clue or principle has been pursued which is derived from another view of the possibilities of Yoga. This starts from the method of Vedanta to arrive at the aim of the Tantra. In the tantric method Shakti is all important, becomes the key to the finding of Spirit. In this synthesis Spirit or the Soul is all important and becomes the secret of the taking up of Shakti. The tantric method starts from the bottom and grades the ladder of ascent upwards to the summit; therefore its initial stress is upon the action of the awakened Shakti in the nervous system of the body and its centers; the opening of the six lotuses is the opening up of the ranges of the power of Spirit. But the synthesis takes man as a spirit in mind much more than a spirit in body and assumes in him the capacity to begin on that level, to spiritualise his being by the power of the soul in mind opening itself directly to a higher spiritual force and being and to perfect by that higher force so possessed and brought into action, the whole of his nature. For that reason the initial stress falls upon the utilization of the powers of soul in mind and the turning of the triple key of knowledge, works and love in the locks of the Spirit. The Hathayogic methods can be dispensed with, or it may be used partially. the Rajayogic methods will only enter as an informal element.

The principles in view is a self-surrender, a giving up of the human being into the being, consciousness, power and delight of the Divine, a union or communion at all the points of meeting in the soul.
of man, the mental being, by which the Divine himself, directly and
without veil master and possessor of the instrument, shall by the
light of his presence and guidance perfect the human being in all the
forces of the Nature for a divine living. Here we arrive at a farther
enlargement of the objects of the yoga. The common initial purpose of
all Yoga is the liberation of the soul of man from its present natural
ignorance and limitation, its release into spiritual being, its union
with the highest self and Divinity. But ordinarily this is made not
only the initial but the whole and final object; enjoyment of spiritual
being there is, but either in a dissolution of the human and individual
into the silence of self-being or on a higher plane in another existence.
The Tantric system makes liberation the final, but not the only aim; it
takes on its way a full perfection and enjoyment of the spiritual power,
light and joy in the human existence, and even it has a glimpse of a
supreme experience in which liberation and cosmic action and
enjoyment are unified in a final overcoming of all oppositions and
dissonances. It is this wider view of our spiritual potentialities from
which we begin, but we add another stress which brings in a
completer significance. We regard the spirit in man not as solely an
individual being traveling to transcendent unity with the Divine, but
as a universal being capable of oneness with the Divine in all souls
and all Nature and we give this extended view an entire practical
consequence. The human soul's individual liberation and enjoyment
of union with the Divine in spiritual being, consciousness and delight
must always be the first object of the Yoga; its free enjoyment of the
cosmic unity of the Divine, becomes a second object; but out of that a
third appears, the effectuation of the meaning of the Divine unity with
all beings by a sympathy and participation in the spiritual purpose of
the Divine in humanity. The individual Yoga then turns from its
separateness and becomes a part of the collective Yoga of the divine
Nature in the human race. The liberated individual being, united with
the Divine in self and spirit, becomes in his natural being a self-perfecting instrument for the perfect out flowering of the Divine in humanity.\(^{14}\)

There are many things belonging to older systems that are necessary on the way, an opening of the mind to a greater wideness and to the sense of the Self and the Infinite, an emergence into what has been called the cosmic consciousness, mastery over the desires and passions; an outward asceticism is not essential, but the conquest of desire and attachment and a control over the body and its needs, greeds and instincts are indispensable. There is a combination of the principles of the old system, the way of knowledge through the mind's discernment between Reality and the appearance, the heart's way of devotion, love and surrender and the way of works turning the will away from motives of self-interest to the Truth and the service of a greater Reality than the ego. For the whole being has to be trained so that it can respond and be transformed when it is possible for that greater Light and Force to work in the nature.

Sri Aurobindo clarifies by saying “By transformation I do not mean some change of the nature – I do not mean, for instance, sainthood or ethical perfection or Yogic Siddhis (like the Tantrik's) or a transcendental (cinmay) 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 evolved out of a vital and material animal world. If anything short of that takes place or at least if a real beginning is not made on that basis, a fundamental progress towards this fulfillment, then my object is not accomplished.
A partial realisation, something mixed and inconclusive, does not meet the demand I make on life and Yoga.\textsuperscript{15}

iii) Role of Grace and its Demands – Aspiration, Rejection and Surrender

Yogic Sadhana of Sri Aurobindo is a wonderful record of his personal effort and Tapasya carried out consistently for several years. It is a monumental record of the minutest details of his sadhana of understanding and purification of every human nature in all its aspects. His another monumental book ‘The Mother’ is a practical guide to a seeker of Integral yoga which gives details of sadhana to be carried out by the seeker, of Aspiration, Rejection and Surrender – the famous triple formula of his yoga, and so as to himself become eligible to receive the Grace of the Supreme Divine Mother in full, and from then on how the Sadhana is taken up by the Divine Mother and is carried out safely till the end in fulfillment of Her aim.

Sri Aurobindo has time and again affirmed that to accomplish this difficult aim the Grace of the supreme Divine Mother is essential, and indispensable and inevitable. Man can never achieve this aim on his personal efforts alone. To this effect Sri Aurobindo’s views are exemplary. He writes

“There are two powers that alone can effect in their conjunction the great and difficult thing which is the aim of our endeavour, a fixed and unfailing aspiration that calls from below, and a supreme Grace from above that answers.

But the supreme Grace will act only in the conditions of the Light and the Truth; it will not act in conditions laid upon it by the Falsehood and the Ignorance. For if it were to yield to the demands of the Falsehood, it would defeat its own purpose.
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. There must be a total and sincere surrender; there must be an exclusive self opening to the divine power; there must be a constant and integral choice of the Truth that is descending, a constant and integral rejection of the falsehood of the mental, vital and physical powers, and appearances that still rule the earth Nature”.

Sri Aurobindo also narrates the details of the Sadhana to be carried out by the Sadhaka on his part. “The surrender must be total and seize all the parts of the being. It is not enough that the psychic should respond and the higher mental accept or even the inner vital submit and the inner physical consciousness feel the influence. There must be in no part of the being, even the most external, anything that makes a reserve, anything that hides behind doubts, confusions and subterfuges, anything that revolts or refuses.

If a part of the being surrenders, but another part reserves itself, follows its own way or makes its own conditions, then each time that, happens one is pushing the divine Grace away from himself.

If behind devotion and surrender one makes a cover of his desires, egoistic demands, and vital insistences and if one puts these petty things in place of true aspiration or mix them with it and try to impose them on the Divine shakti, then it is futile to invoke the Divine Grace to transform him.

If you open yourself on one side or in one part to the truth and on another side are constantly opening the gates to hostile forces, it
is vain to expect that the divine Grace will abide with you. You must keep the temple clean if you wish to instal there the living presence.

If each time the power intervenes and brings in the Truth, you turn your back on it and call in again the falsehood that has been expelled, it is not the Divine Grace that you must blame for failing you, but the falsity of your own will and the imperfection of your own surrender.

If you call for the Truth and yet something in you chooses what is false, ignorant and undivine or even simply is unwilling to reject it altogether, then always, you will be open to attack and the Grace will recede from you. Detect first what is false or obscure in you and persistently reject it, then alone can you rightly call for the divine power to transform you. Do not imagine that truth and falsehood light and darkness surrender and selfishness can be allowed to dwell together in the loss consecrated to the Divine. The transformation must be integral and therefore the rejection of all that withstands it must also be integral.

Reject the false notion that the divine power will do and is bound to do everything for you at your demand and even though you do not satisfy the conditions laid down by the Supreme. Make your surrender true and complete, then only all else will be done for you.

Reject also the false and indolent expectation that the divine power will do even surrender for you. The Supreme demands your surrender to Her. But does not impose it. You are free at every moment, till the irrevocable transformation comes, to deny and to reject the Divine or to recall your self giving, if you are willing to suffer the spiritual consequence. Your surrender must be self made and free. It must be surrender of a living being, not of an inert automation or mechanical tool.
An inert passivity is constantly confused with the real surrender, but out of inert passivity nothing true and powerful can come. It is the inert passivity of physical nature that leaves it at the mercy of every obscure or undivine influence. A glad and strong and helpful submission is demanded to the working of the Divine Force, the obedience of the illumined disciple of the Truth, of the inner warrior who fights against obsecurity and falsehood, of the faithful servant of the Divine.

This is the True attitude and only those who can take and keep it, preserve a faith unshaken by disappointments and difficulties and shall pass through the ordeal to the supreme victory and the great transmutation.¹⁷

This is how Sri Aurobindo in very explicit terms and very clearly describes the personal effort of the sadhaka in every aspect of his nature and to fulfil the conditions of Aspiration, Rejection and Surrender until the Divine Shakti begins to takeover the sadhana in him and in proportion to his surrender and self consecration.

Sri Aurobindo is also very clear that in this yoga the surrender and consecration to the supreme Divine Mother of the supramental plane alone is also equally necessary and indispensable, and not to any other forms of the popularly known Gods or Goddesses of the Indian spiritual or religious traditions, is also equally necessary and indispensable. According to him only this power of the Supramental plane has the capacity of transforming all the obscurities of man's mind, life and body into the mould of a Divine being, which is the final aim of his yoga. This transformation can not take place if surrender is made to forces of other planes simply because such gods and goddesses have no power to perform this formidable task and because these are gods and goddesses of different planes put
forth by the Supreme Mother to perform their appointed cosmic task. Sri Aurobindo also describes four main personalities of this plane, of this ‘Supreme Mother, which are the original governing and sustaining forces behind the entire creation. These original governing and sustaining forces of this Supramental plane Sri Aurobindo describes as Maheshwari, Mahalakshmi, Mahakali, and Mahasaraswati, the details of the working of these Supreme Forces as narrated in Sri Aurobindos’ The Mother have been amply described in the following pages of this chapter. Sri Aurobindo further says that the true nature of power of these four main aspects of the Divine Mother were largely unknown to man as She chose to remain behind the veil of Her emanations and act through them during this evolution in ignorance. It is only when a sadhaka turns to the principle sustaining force behind all hereto known gods and goddess that he can gradually understand and experience the nature and working of the Supreme Mother.18

3) Evolution of Consciousness in Sri Aurobindo’s Yoga

What is new in this yoga or how it differs from all other older yogas. Sri Aurobindo says “Because it aims not at departure out of the world and life into Heaven or Nirvana, but a change of life and existence, not as something subordinate or incidental but as a distinct and central object. In old yogas the ascent of the individual into the Heaven or to become one with the Divine is the real object. But here the descent of the New Supramental Consciousness into the earth consciousness is the basic object. Here the object sought is not an individual achievement of Divine realisation for the sake of the individual, but something to be gained for the earth consciousness here. The thing to be gained also is the bringing in of the power of the Supramental Consciousness into the earth and to organise and make it active in the earth consciousness.”19 Sri Aurobindo further says “It
is not for some personal greatness that I am seeking to bring down the supermind. I care nothing for greatness or littleness in the human sense. I am seeking to bring some principle of inner Truth, Light and Harmony and Peace into earth consciousness”.20

The descent of the Supramental is to bring the Higher consciousness down into earth consciousness and establish it there as a constant realized force, (Just as mind and life have been established and embodied in matter), so as to establish and embody the Supramental Force. This force will be there in the earth consciousness as a living force just as thinking mental and higher mental are already there.

The very basic principles of teachings and works of Sri Aurobindo is best understood on the basis of evolution of consciousness in universe. Evolution in the view of Sri Aurobindo is rather different from evolution as explained by scientific materialism, but appears to be more rational and convincing. As Sri Aurobindo puts it “Evolution is an inverse action of the involution”.21 Logic as well as spiritual experience made it clear to him that nothing can evolve which has not previously been involved. The fact of universal evolution is naturally the consequence of the Divine hiding himself from himself. This descent of the Supreme Reality is in its nature a self concealing, and in the descent there are successive levels, in the concealing successive veils. Necessarily, the revelation takes the form of an ascent; and necessarily also the ascent and revelation are both progressive, which summarises the process of involution and evolution.22

According to Indian wisdom, the three ultimate attributes of Brahman or The Absolute are Sat, Cit and Ananda i.e. Existance, Consciousness and Bliss. The Absolute that is all-being, all existence,
all-Joy. Chit is actually a double term, cit-tapas or Cit-shakti; Consciousness Force, for in the Absolute everything seen automatically is. There, there is no schism between the seeing will and its execution as there is in humans. These three ultimate attributes are Power- Powers are energies, energies are consciousness, Consciousness are beings, on all levels of the manifestation. For Brahman does not create out of nothing, it manifests all out of its own being endlessly. “Brahman is in all things, all things are in Brahman, all things are Brahman”.23

Brahman or The Absolute is however seen in its two aspects: a silent and active. In its silent aspect Absolute is self existing, self-sufficient, complete in its Infinity and Eternity, indefinable and unnamable, as all mystics have confirmed. In its active aspect Brahman is manifesting itself in the glory of its infinite riches through all eternity for in that Being there is neither beginning nor end. “The fundamental truth of Being must necessarily be the fundamental truth of Becoming. All is a manifestation of That.”24

Out of its inexhaustible riches, Brahman creates worlds without number, peopled with beings without number, all sharing in the Existence, consciousness-force and joy according to their place in the universal hierarchy. But among the infinite possibilities within the Absolute there is the venture of the Absolute hiding himself from himself in his opposites, for reasons surpassing our understanding. And as every possibility in the Absolute must of necessity work itself out, Satchitananda turned into its opposites: Being became Death. The light of consciousness became the Darkness of Ignorance, the Truth of consciousness became Falsehood, Joy became Suffering. In that manner was the black Inconscient created, as infinite as its luminous origin and containing in a covert way everything its origin contains. In that manner was the foundation laid of the adventurous
development of this evolutionary worlds in which our souls, infinite “Sparks” of all infinite Fire, chose to participate in order to experience the joy of the recovery and rediscovery of That, which we have always been: the Glory, the Ecstasy, the Divine.25

According to Sri Aurobindo the so called Inconscient and the Subconscient are the basis of matter the physical and the body, life and mind. All upon earth is based on the Inconscient as it is called, though it is not really Inconscient at all, but rather a complete Subconscience in which there is everything but nothing formulated or expressed. The Subconscient of which Sri Aurobindo speaks lies in between the Inconscient and the conscious mind, life and body. It contains all the reaction to life which struggle out as a slowly evolving and self formulating consciousness, but it contains not as ideas or perceptions or conscious reactions but as a blind substance of these things.

Sri. Aurobindo's concept of Inconscient and its evolutionary process through various stages to Superconscinet is simply exemplary. According to him the Inconscient is the state of absolute inertia, the endless, starless night ‘darkness wrapped in darkness’ (Rig Veda) – The primeval stuff out of which evolution would successively create its forms, ever more complex and conscious. Matter is an already highly organized and conscious mode of existence compared to its base the Subconscinet and all the way down the Inconscinet. Nevertheless, the Supreme is also present in that utter Inconscinece and in the subconscious, for nothing can exist outside of Him. The Inconscient is the sleep of the Super-conscient wrote Sri Aurobindo in Savitri and he named the Inconscient also ‘a masked Gnosis’ and as such Infinite.
Also all that is consciously experienced sinks down into the Subconscient not as experience but as obscure but obstinate impression of experience and can come up at any time as dreams, as mechanical repetition of past thought, feeling, action etc., as complexes excluding into action and event etc.,. The Subconscient is the main cause why all things repeat themselves and nothing ever gets changed except in appearance. It is the cause why, people say character cannot be changed, also of the constant return of things one hoped to have got rid of. All seeds are there and all the Samskaras of the mind, vital and body – it is the main support of death and disease and the last fortress of (seemingly impregnable) Ignorance. All that is suppressed without being wholly got rid of sinks down there and remain in seed, ready to surge up or sprout up at any moment. This is how Sri Aurobindo described the action of the Subconscient.26

According to Sri Aurobindo evolution is not only physical, but it is first and foremost spiritual. All evolution is in essence a heightening of the force of consciousness in the manifest being so that it may be raised into the greater intensity of what is still unmanifest, from matter into life, from life into mind, from mind into the Spirit.

Sri Aurobindo wrote even more explicitly “A theory of Spiritual evolution is not identical with a scientific theory of form-evolution and physical life-evolution; it must stand on its own inherent justification. It may accept the scientific account of physical evolution as a support or an element, but the support is not indispensable. The scientific theory is concerned only with the outward and visible machinery and process, with the detail of Nature’s execution, with the physical development of things in matter, and the law of development of life and mind in matter; its account of the process may have to be considerably changed or may be dropped altogether in the light of a new discovery but that will not affect the
self-evident fact of a Spiritual evolution, an evolution of Consciousness, a progression of the soul’s manifestation in material existence."  

This concept of evolution of Consciousness is being increasingly acknowledged by the scientific community today. Science or Technology and Consciousness, both terms appear to be contradictory. Technology is objective whereas Consciousness is subjective immeasurable and almost indefinable. Today science has come around a full circle and is face to face with its own limitations. Science appears to have reached a dead-end. But in an effort to break out of this end are the seeds of a new science – a future science. Now few scientists have begun to realize that their traditional approach of accepting matter as the root of things has a basic flaw in it and is the cause of most of the current problems of science. These scientists are exploring the approach of taking Consciousness as being more basic than matter.

For these scientists the established theory of evolution, that evolution grew out of a random game of chance and selection and survival of the fittest etc., is most inadequate to explain the complexity and innumerable variety of life on earth and delicate balances of ecology. More over the evolutionary process cannot be duplicated in a computer simulation. Therefore now for scientists random selection can not alone explain evolution.

The Mother had long back explained very clearly that even cells have self awareness and can be made to behave and mutate consciously. This was one of the greatest experiments the Mother did through intense meditation. But to scientists this was nonsense. Recently biologists have proved conclusively that cells can mutate intelligently and that cells can consciously devide to mutate to adapt
to changed circumstances. This experiment has demonstrated that evolution is not a product of chance but of a conscious adaptation. (In this regard Sri Aurobindo does not accept the theory of accidentalism or what is called Yadrichavada, which is propounded by Charvaka.) This is the first scientific support for the concept of physical transformation as has been envisaged by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Through the cellular consciousness and an overall body consciousness, one can modify behaviour of individual cells. This type of changes that can be brought about in behaviour of individual or a group of cells has a very wide ranging application in Medical Science. Although this has no sufficient scientific explanation at present its applications are increasingly being acknowledged in Medical Science which is evident in using disciplines such as Yoga and Meditation etc as means of therapy in curing many illnesses such as physical, mental and behavioural as well. But once the fact of overall body consciousness is accepted, it is obvious that the body consciousness changes the behaviour and growth of individual cells and changes even the cellular structure – Physical Transformation to be precise.28

This transformation of the physical was precisely what Sri Aurobindo and the Mother intended to bring about through their Integral Yoga, which according to them was possible by the descent of the Supramental principle into the earth consciousness and establishing it here as a constant living force.

4) Yoga of Transformation

In his yoga Sri Aurobindo speaks of three transformations of the being. In his magnum opus, The Life Divine’, Sri Aurobindo has explained at length the philosophy of ascent and descent in the context of spiritual evolution and provided a detailed exposition of the
entire process of integral transformation, consisting of a triple transformation, the psychic, the spiritual and the supramental.

i) The Psychic being and its Transformation

Sri Aurobindo uses the word ‘psychic’ in the Greek sense where it does not connote merely the inner psychological powers, but stands for the inmost soul. The psychic entity is, according to Sri Aurobindo, the true soul secret in us, screened behind the body, life and mind, and its presence burns in the temple of the inmost heart. It is the flame of the Godhead always alight within us, inextinguishable even by the dense unconsciousness which obscures our outward nature. It is this psychic entity which puts forward gradually a psychic personality which changes, grows and develops. At first, the psychic being can exercise only a concealed and partial and indirect action through the mind, the life and the body, for it permits these parts of Nature to develop as its instruments of self-expression. But in due course, it can come forward and lead our entire growth, internal as well as external. In the words of Sri Aurobindo:

“It is this secret psychic entity which is the true original Conscience in us deeper than the constructed and conventional conscience of the moralist, for it is this which points always towards Truth and Right and Beauty, towards Love and Harmony and all that is a divine possibility in us, and persists till these things become the major need of our nature. It is the psychic personality in us that flowers as the saint, the sage, the seer; when it reaches its full strength, it turns the being towards the knowledge of Self and the Divine, towards the supreme Truth, the supreme Good, the supreme Beauty, Love and Bliss, the divine heights and largenesses, and opens us to the touch of spiritual sympathy, universality, oneness.”
The coming forward of the psychic person marks a momentous stage in the Yoga of Sri Aurobindo. It then begins to govern overtly and entirely our outer nature of mind, life and body, and these can be cast into soul images of what is true, right and beautiful, and in the end the whole nature can be turned towards the real aim of life, the supreme victory. A transformation of the mind, life and body by the presence and powers of the psychic being is effected. This process may be rapid or tardy according to the resistance in our developed nature. But ultimately, by the greater and greater infusion of the psychic light every part of the being is psychicised, as Sri Aurobindo describes it.

Every region of the being, every nook and corner of it, every movement, formation, direction, inclination of thought, will, emotion, sensation, action, reaction, motive, disposition, propensity, desire, habit of the conscious or subconscious physical, even the most concealed, camouflaged, mute, recondite, is lighted up with the unerring psychic light, their confusions dissipated, their tangles desentagled, their obscurities, deceptions, self-deceptions precisely indicated and removed; all is purified, set right, the whole nature harmonized, modulated in the psychic key, put in spiritual order.

This psychic transformation is the one necessary condition of the total transformation of our existence, but that is not all that is needed for the largest spiritual change. As explained by Sri Aurobindo, since this is the individual soul in Nature, it can open to the hidden diviner ranges of our being and receive and reflect their light and power and experience, but another, a spiritual transformation from above is needed for us to possess our self in its universality and transcendence.
ii) Spiritual Transformation or Spiritualisation of the Being

Light of realisation is not the same thing as Descent. Realisation by itself does not necessary transform the being as a whole; it may bring only an opening or heightening or widening of the consciousness at the top, so as to realize something in the Purusha part without any radical change in the parts of Prakriti. One may have some light of realisation at the spiritual summit of the consciousness but the parts below remain what they were. There must be a descent of the light not merely into the mind or part of it but into all the being down to the physical and below before a real transformation can take place. A light in the mind may spiritualise or otherwise change the mind or part of it one way or another, but it need not change the vital nature; a light in the vital may purify and enlarge the vital movements or else silence and immobilize the vital being, but leave the body and the physical consciousness as it was, or even leave it inert or shake its balance. And the descent of Light is not enough, it must be the descent of the whole higher consciousness, its Peace, Power, Knowledge, Love, Ananda. Moreover, the descent may be enough to liberate, but not to perfect, or it may be enough to make a great change in the inner being, while the outer remains an imperfect instrument, clumsy sick or inexpressive.

iii) Supramentalisation of the Being

Finally, transformation effected by the Sadhana cannot be complete unless it is a Supramentalisation of the being. Psychicisation is not enough, it is only a beginning; Spiritualization and the descent of the higher consciousness is not enough, it is only a middle term; the ultimate achievements needs the action of the supramental Consciousness and Force. Something less than that
may very well be considered enough by the individual, but it is not enough for the earth-consciousness to take the definitive strike forward it must take at one time or another.31

Therefore according to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother The Supermental yoga is not an escape from the physical world which leaves it irrevocably to its fate, nor is it a helpless acceptance of material life for what it is, without any hope of decisive change of man or of the world as the final expression of the Divine will. The Integral Yoga aims at scaling all the degrees of consciousness form the ordinary mental consciousness to a Supramental and Divine Consciousness and when the ascent is completed to return to the material world and infuse it with the Supramental Force and Consciousness that have been won, so that the earth may be gradually transformed into a Supramental and Divine world, eventually transforming the human nature into Divine Nature and human being into Supramental being. The Mother has also affirmed that there would be a connecting link between the human being and the Supramental being and that link is called the Superman. In this context the Mother is very clear that the Superman thus to be evolved by this spiritual endevour is not a supergiant, not a hero of impossible feats, not a mighty man with physical, vital and mental powers. He is not a solitary ego who feels qualified to rule over men and worlds. Sri Aurobindo also has affirmed that a superman does not mean any Olympian, Appolonian, or Dionysian or any angetic or demonic supermanhood, as normally the term would convey to normal mentality. But to both Sri. Aurobindo and the Mother Superman is the pioneer of a new race, the man of tomorrow, the one Immortal in this lower mental being. He is one whose whole personality has been offered up into the being, nature and consciousness of the one transcendent and universal divinity and by loss of the smaller self has found its greater self and has been divinised. In short Superman
is the divinised human being at its best. Infact the Mother has made some revealing observations concerning the coming of a Superman. Superman is a being now in the making. He is a new species, a new race with new capacities, new force of consciousness, bringing new principles of truth and action in the new age that is dawning. The work of Superman will be to transform his physical being into a Supramental being.

Sri Sastriar also tries to sum up the whole process in simple terms. Supermind is the creative power of Sachidananda. It is the first status through which manifestation takes place. It is also called the Gnostic Mind or Gnosis, to differentiate it from the mind of ignorance. Supermind is the dynamic Truth consciousness Real-Idea, Rit-Chit of the Vedas, or self-awareness of the supreme in which knowledge and power are inseparably one, like light and heat of the sun. From mind of Ignorance to the highest light and power of the supermind, a thick veil separates the two. From mind to Supermind in fact there are several intervening planes such as Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuitive Mind and overmind etc. Man is incapable of reaching Supermind on his own. So Herculean is the task of crossing these planes, that is crucial stages of main evolutionary career. Avatars have had to descend to bridge the great gulfs and make it possible for man to cross over and reach higher consciousness. Krishna is one such Avatar who embodied Overmind consciousness and established it on earth. Now in this age Sri Aurobindo and the Mother are the pioneers of the Supramental age. For many decades they have laboured and struggled and finally have realized the Supramental and have established it in the earth's consciousness. With this force and power of this Supramental the work of transformation has begun which will eventually lead the humanity into a new race of Supramental beings.
5) Practical Aspect of Yoga of Transformation by Sri Aurobindo and The Mother

Sri Aurobindo has said that even one man's perfection can still save the world. This is probably the basic object of his yoga, to prepare if possible a few units of perfection or at least a single unit of perfection on this earth and later on to transfer or apply the method to a larger group or society as a whole to have universal implication.

The desire to conquer suffering, eliminate the limitations of the mind, life and body, establish a law of harmony in all our activities and relations to the world has prompted our ancients to study and analyse the constitution of the body in detail and discover the causes of suffering and limitation and offer ways and means to remove those causes. According to them the body as a product of Nature is subject to endless strife of the gunas, since all limitation and miseries originate from this ceaseless strife, a life of harmony and happiness is impossible without changing the gunas themselves. Since Nature is an original substance so they thought there is no way to change it. The solution suggested therefore was to recoil or withdraw from nature by giving up the embodied existence. Therefore generally speaking individual Salvation or liberation of the individual soul from embodied existence has been the highest aim of spiritual seeking in our country. For pluralism the souls are entirely distinct from one another, where as the monism which considers the soul to be nothing but the absolute spirit, the souls perception of other individuals is an illusion. Therefore, in both cases liberation is only an individual issue. Further they insist that since embodied life is due to an inexplicable fall of the soul into matter, liberation is not only freedom from false identification with the body but complete withdrawal from embodied life as well.
In this Sri Aurobindo's solution or salvation to all these problems is entirely new, rational, revolutionary and as he says is also highly practical through his path of yoga, though the path is orduvous and difficult. According to Sri Aurobindo the solution lies in transforming the material nature into Divine Nature and transformation of the physical body into the Divine Body by transforming the basic structure Matter of which the physical body is made of. He says this is possible when the divine Supramental subsance is brought down into and is made active in the earth consciousness. This to become possible or to be realised the Grace of the Supreme Divine Mother is indispensable. Therefore to Sri Aurobindo individual liberation is not an end in itself. But only a means to this higher aim of Supramental realization. For him this individual realisaiton or liberation insists on putting an end to the embodied life of the individual and withdrawing the soul from the world without any consideration for the suffering humanity and its redemption. In Sri Aurobindo's openion the liberated soul cannot be indifferent to the suffering of others and to humanity in general. Therefore he says that it is neither for his personal salvation nor for some personal greatness that he is seeking to bring down the Supermind, but he is seeking to bring some principle of inner truth, light and hormony and peace into earth consciousness.

In Sri Aurobindo's view the Nature of the gunas is netiher an original substance nor is unchangeable as has been believed. It is but a lower formation of a higher divine nature – Para Prakriti. Therefore it is not impossible to change the material nature and bring forward the divine Nature in which the gunas and their strife are replaced by their real counter parts. Thus when the gunas and their strife disappear into their divine counter parts, all limitation and sufferings fall away from man. Therefore in the Supramental transformation of Nature, there is not merely the transcendence of the three gunas of
Nature (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) but the three gunas themselves become purified, refined and changed into their divine equivalents; Sattva becomes Jyoti – The authentic spiritual light, Rajas becomes Tapas – the tranquilly intense divine force, Tamas becomes Shama - the divine quiet, rest, peace. But this can be done in its fullness in the physical only when physical life is finally transformed by the Supramental Power.33

Sri Aurobindo agrees that an exclusive development of the spiritual consciousness is necessary as it helps to establish the supremacy of the spirit in man, but to him it is not the real aim of the spirit in earthly manifestation. Its real aim is to develop an appropriate body for its manifestation and through that establish itself as an integral part of earth nature. Therefore embodied life must be used not only to discover the spirit but to provide a suitable abode for its manifestation by changing the very physical into a divine body. To Sri. Aurobindo this is the inevitable and logical consequence of the evolution of consciousness and of form evolution in Nature.

i) Concept of Avatars in Evolution of Consciousness

In this context the evolutionary line represented by the Avatars in the Hindu tradition is remarkable considering the concept to be thousands of years old compared to the recent theories of evolution. “The Hindu procession of the ten Avatars is itself as it were a parable of evolution” writes Sri Aurobindo, “the progression is striking and unmistakable”. The fish was the first vertebrate in the womb of the ocean. Then comes the tortoise - an amphibian, then the boar – a mammal. The man-lion represents the transitional being between animal and man. Then follows homofaber as Rama with the axe, followed by Rama with the bow i.e. homosapiens, the species we all belong to and which is now present in great numbers on this planet.
In mentally conscious humanity an opening is possible toward the supermental realms, thanks to Krishna, and the nirvanic state can be consciously attained by following the path of the Buddah. Kalki, finally will bring about a great revolution which will result in the super humans and the kingdom of God no longer is an ethereal, hypothetical hereafter, but on a transformed earth. Thus will come about the realization of the dream cherished since its origin by the toiling, suffering, unsatisfied human species. The word Avatar means descent. It is a coming down of the Divine below the line which divides the divine from the human world or status. In other words, the Avatar is an embodiment of the Divine in a materialized living form, a direct Divine incarnation on earth. The Author Georges Van Vrekhem writes “It becomes clear at once that the Avatar concept is actually well known in the west, for Jesus Christ was an Avatar according to this definition. This is why the theological disputation concerning his Avatarhood or the preponderance of either his divine or his human nature has its parallels in the literature of the Hindus. And this is why Sri Aurobindo, in his ‘Essays on the Gita’ mentions time and again the names of Christ, Krishna and Buddha in the chapters about Avatarhood. About the Avatarhood of the Christ the author further writes “However while the East recognizes the full evolutionary line of the ten Avatars (and in certain enumeration more), the Christianised west recongises only one. The importance of the Christ – Avatar is generally accepted, but the evolutionary and historical development of the Earth and of mankind is put into warped perspective by affirming him as the one and only Avatar, a belief which makes the mission of Christ appear arbitrary and unreal ......”

It is also very interesting to know the working of Avatars in the mystic views of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. The Mother has said more than once that the Buddha is still present in the atmosphere of the Earth and goes on working to keep his promise, given out of
compassion when he was about to enter Nirvana, that he would assist humanity all along on the road of its complete liberation. At least few disciples were aware that Sri Aurobindo literally was Krishna, firstly as the same aspect of the central Divine that also had manifested in the Krishna Avatar and secondly because Krishna was permanently present in Sri Aurobindo's body, which, since that November 24, 1926 which is termed the “Siddhi day” he had made his own. Therefore the Mother often would say “I always saw Krishna near Sri Aurobindo”.36

In Sri Aurobindo's view, when the world appears out of Prakriti the first to appear are organized material forms and then through a process of evolution, living matter out of inert matter, thinking matter out of living matter successively came into existence. Therefore a hierarchy of forms was worked out by a process of evolution subsequent to the manifestation of the world. Sri Aurobindo refers to the Aitereya Upanishad in which a parable of creation occurs which is a clear parable of the creation of more and more developed form till one was found that was capable of housing a developed consciousness. Sri Aurobindo says that form revolution is likely to continue and create another superior form so as to accommodate the emerging Spirit in an appropriate body. This body will evolve out of the present human body and establish itself as the highest in the hierarchy of forms upon earth.

Parallel to the order of form - evolution, there is also an evolution of the involved consciousness in form, ascending from lower to a higher grade. Just as the emergence of mind in life transformed the animal into human body, so also the appearance of the spirit in mind will transform the human into the divine body.

The appearance of the spirit leading to the evolution of a divine body upon earth will mark the establishment of the kingdom of God
not only within us but outside, in a collective human life also and fulfil the age-long dream of our race.

Therefore the Poorna Yoga or Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo has three dimensions. In this discipline there is first the realisation of oneself with the psychic being which represents the inner divine. This is followed by an enlargement of consciousness in the universal context, the individual being arrives at unity with cosmic self. This leads to the third step. Transcendence of both the individual and universal and arriving at the Truth Consciousness that is at the head of all manifestations. The sadhaka not only arrives at this Truth Consciousness, but calls its power down into his being at each successive level till it reaches the nethermost physical the Inconscient. This operation of descent of higher consciousness power play an important role in this yoga. There is of course the ascent of consciousness, Arohana and this is followed by the descent-Avarohana. As a result of this joint operation nature is subjected to a steady change of character. It undergoes a transformation from human to the divine. In other words there ensures a growing perfection at every level. Thus Psychicisation, Spiritualization, Supramentalisation and as a consequence a total Transformation.

Naturally this achievement is at first individual. It spreads from individual to individual practicing this yoga, thereby creating conditions for the Divine consciousness to establish itself on earth through perfected beings whom Sri Aurobindo called the Gnostic Beings. In this yoga there is a conscious surrender to the Yoga Shakti, it is not an inert movement, but a dynamic instrumentalisation of oneself. The emphasis is not on withdrawal but on participation from an enlightened level.
There is a conscious hormonisation of the different aspects of the divine reality in oneself. The Sadhana aims at the Impersonal in the first round. But does not make it the whole objective, based on the impersonal foundation the personal aspect of the manifestation is embodied in action- physical, vital and mental. The two aspects are thus not treated as opposites but complimentary of a still higher poise of the reality, the transcendent Purusha.

In the later stages of the yoga, the Power of the supreme truth, Vijnana, is invoked to plunge into the depths of the Subconscient and the still lower Inconscient and purify them as the first step of subliming them. If in the course of the working of the yoga, uncommon powers manifest themselves, they are not shunned. They are utilised according to the higher will. But they are not sought for, not cultivated. From the very beginning, there is an entire reliance on the power of the Divine shakti, the Mother, who works out the sadhana. The role of the sadhaka is one of enabling collaboration on every level of the being. This path is not exclusive in the least. Realisation that are commonly looked upon as mutually contradictory are reconciled in the consciousness of the integrated individual. It is possible to live in union with the self, Brahman, at the core of the being – Advitha. Simultaneously at the level of the soul or the Antaratman, one can have a relation with the Lord of the being, that of a child or a servitor or beloved – Visistadvaita. In the external nature, at the level of Prakrithi, there is the obvious relationship between the Purusha within and Prakriti without, two realities – Dvaita thus there is a simultaneity of relations based on the fact of multiple grades of consciousness, the many faceted manifestaions of the One.38

Therefore it is very clear that this most difficult task of transforming the very human nature a decisive evolutionary step,
which was deemed impossible in the whole of the previous history of mankind, (by all the Great souls) has been consciously and willingly taken by Sri. Aurobindo and the Mother somewhere in 1927. Matter is the first born of the Inconscient and the Subconscient and completely impregnated also in the human body. As a result of which transformation of the human body - (the physical), in otherwords the heightening of its consciousness and its eventual devinisation, were held by one and all to be unachievable and so to transform and immortalize the material body - its material substance and hence the basis of that substance has to be transformed. That is to say that the Subconscinence and ultimately the universal Inconscience has to be transformed an enterprise no body until then had dared to undertake upon them. So to carry out this enormously difficult task, both of them Sri Aurobindo and the Mother had thought of the two possibilities. The choice was of vital importance. One possibility was that they would personally work out the Supramental transformation for themselves, then take up the burden of the mass of humanity only after their own body had been transformed and in the other their would be an action on all fronts simultaneously. They themselves did not know before hand which was the right solution to the problem as it was an altogether first great adventure. Finally they decided to carry out the first choice, that is of bringing about this transformation in their physical body. Therefore they called their more and more expanding and representative bodies as the 'Laboratory'. But how exactly was the collaboration between them for this Divine task. Their work was complimentary and their division of tasks rooted in the One, in the inner core of those Great Beings behind their visible personality. Sri Aurobindo as the 'masculine' Purusha or Iswara (Lord) kept himself in the background and worked from there, while the Mother as the 'feminine' Prakriti, Shakti or Creatirix converted his spiritual acquisitions into practical facts of change and growth. But
they were always one Devine consciousness and therefore acted on a plane far above, behind and within the physically perceptible.  

In their division of tasks, Sri Aurobindo had taken up the inner labour and the Mother left that completely to him even with regard to the tranformation of her own body. About this she says “Because I knew he was looking after it. For all the realizations he had I too had automatically”. And everything she received in this way. She transferred as much as possible to the group she had accepted as the laboratory and in her consciousness as ‘in an egg’. She guided and organized all that. The Mother converted Sri Aurobindo’s realizations into a concret material form for the Earth.

Although it is beyond the reach of ordinary mind to comprehend the great labour and all the hardship Sri Aurobindo had to undergo in his Sadhana of Integral Yoga one can surely get a glimpse of it in a deeply moving poem ‘A God’s Labour’ which Sri Aurobindo wrote almost in the midst of his intense Sadhana.

A God’s Labour

“My gaping wounds are a thousand and one
And the Titan kings assail,
But I cannot rest till my task is done
And wrought the eternal will ... 

A voice cried, “Go where none have gone!
Dig deeper, deeper yet,
Till thou reach the grim foundation stone
And knock at the keyless gate.”

I saw that a falsehood was planted deep
At the very root of things
Where the gray Sphinx guards God’s riddle sleep
On the Dragon’s outspread wings.

I left the surface gods of mind
And life’s unsatisfied seas
And plunged through the body’s alleys blind
To the nether mysteries.

I have delved through the dumb Earth’s dreadful heart
And heard her black mass’ bell.
I have seen the source whence her agonies part
And the inner reason of hell.”

“Expressed in an almost freely floating, singing rhythm the words ring through with the ominous conjuring force of the experiences undergone by Sri Aurobindo. To those who are not familiar with the work Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have performed for the Earth, there lives will probably be not much more than bizarre fiction, but when one has got some insight into their pioneering work, they provide a profound understanding of their action. Here no word is fictitious, superfluous or poetically overstated. The poem gives a condensed impression of their descent into matter and into the Subconscient and the Iconscient, which influence or even determine most of our human condition. That was the place where the battle had to be fought and victory won”.

To both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother a perfect man in a perfect society is the goal. The Mother claims that she had a clear and concrete vision of the Supramental creation and said that the Supramental world would be the perfect hieratic manifestation, spontaneous, essentially true and without coercion of any kind where each one will be conscious of his own perfection. If a Divine Harmony
is established in a permanent way there can no longer be illness, no longer be accidents, no longer be disorders and all things should be harmonized. Establishment of such a perfect and harmonized society and thus establishing an Ideal of Human Unity is the goal of this Supramental Yoga of Sri Aurobindo. Perfection of the individual and of the collectivity are complementary to each other. Therefore Sri Aurobindo said that it is impossible to achieve total individual transformation without some measure of transformation in the collectivity. One can greatly change in his consciousness but the total conquest, the material transformation certainly depends to a great extent on some degree of progress in the collectivity. The individual progress in a way is restrained or checked by the collective state. Between the collectivity and the individual there exists an interdependence from which it is impossible to free oneself totally even if one tries. Therefore to the endevour for personal progress and realisation must be joined an endevour to uplift the whole and make it progress so as to follow a greater progress of the individual. In other words the progress of the mass allows the individual to take a further step forward. Therefore individual progress and perfection and the progress and perfection in the collectivity are complimentary to each other.

To both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother their endevour to bring down the Supramental and to establish it in the earth consciousness was not an easy task and therefore they called their new path of Integral Yoga an Adventure into the unknown. As for the stupendous task they had to do in heaving altogether a new path in this unpresented Tapasya Sri Aurobindo wrote “As for the Mother and myself we have had to try all ways, follow all methods, to surmount mountains of difficulties, battles to fight, wounds to endure, ways to cleave thorough impenetrable morass, deserts and forests, hostile
masses to conquer, a work such as I am certain none else had to do before us."\(^{43}\)

Satprem a renounced sadhak of Integral Yoga, a staunch disciple and a close associate of the Mother in Pondicherry for many years and an author of repute of a number of books on Sri Aurobindo, the Mother and their yoga called this yoga a great Adventure. In his call to the Sadhaks of this yoga Satprem has said that there is no necessity of spiritually redoing what others have done before, because their adventure begins after that. The question is of a new creation entirely new with everything it entails of the unforeseen, of risks and hazards. A real Adventure goal of which is certain victory but whose course is unknown and has to be traced out step by step in the unexplored, something which has never been in the present universe and which will never again be in the same way. What will happen to you tomorrow we don't know. Therefore it was his call to all the aspirants of this yoga to dare to venture into this adventure leaving aside all plans, all projects, all mental constructions and to walk into the unknown. Come what may.

About the nature of their Sadhana and about the battle they had to encounter in the course of their yoga the Mother is reported to have said that the fact of attempting to use their individual bodies to transform the whole, that is to utilize the form of the body to act on the universal body substance was an endless endeavour. There was no end to the difficulties, no end to the battle. One does not make war on body. As soon as you want to progress, he at once encounters the resistance of everything in and around him that does not want to progress. But one must really be a fighter to do this yoga.
At this Juncture it is important to know Sri Aurobindo’s point of views about the existence of The Divine and Evil or Hostile Forces in action and their origin and role in this evolutionary universe.

ii) The Divine Forces in action

The gods are a fact. If the Divine Reality is a fact the gods too are true. The Divine is both impersonal and personal. When it is personal in form, creating and relating itself to the Creation we call it God. It is God who forms, oversees, indwells this creation of ours. And for purposes of this manifestation as the Cosmos, God puts out several emanations with various powers and assignments for carrying on the activities of the universe.

All the gods are thus derived from the One Godhead. Each is a Power but also a Personality with a distinct character and function in the scheme of the worlds. Sri Aurobindo describes them as cosmic functionaries. When they are of the nature of executive Energies they are known as goddesses. When they are of the presiding type they are called gods. This distinction between male and female has no sexual connotation; it is a question of the status of the consciousness embodied in each deity.

Naturally the gods have forms. And these forms are not arbitrary. Sri Aurobindo describes how some of the forms are received by the human mind at high moments from the world of the gods and some are those which have been offered by the human soul and accepted by the gods. Each form has a history and significance. Each god has his Name which is the key to his manifestation, his Mantra which is the sound-body of his characteristic truth, his vehicle which symbolizes the mode of his operation.
The gods are realities. They are prior to men and form the link with the Supreme Reality above. They are present in us in their principles and grow in us through their characteristic qualities and powers. These gods are on all levels of our creation, each in his world, his proper sphere. Thus there are the higher gods, (Uccha devatas) and the lower gods, (Ksudra devatas). The higher the gods the nearer they are to their source in Truth and the greater their empire. The lesser gods have a narrow range and they are mostly active on planes nearer the physical – the lower vital, the lower mental etc., It is these who are usually worshipped in local traditions with quaint customs. Often lower spirits masquerade as gods and thrive on the faith and worship of men. They are known as gramadevata, local village deities. They are indeed effective in their little domain; they are wont to fulfil the little wishes of their devotees even as they are quick to strike the offender. It may also happen that in a shrine where a god has been invoked and established by an adept, the presence gradually wanes with the passage of time and thickening of the grossness of the atmosphere. A vital being may take its place and establish its field of power.

It is believed that each god has his station. He has his power but he is limited to his range. If he desires to extend himself, he has to grow in his consciousness which he cannot do unless he takes birth on earth and ascends the ladder of evolution. A god is a typal (non evolutionary) being. Man is an evolutionary being and therefore is not limited to his humanness. He is thus superior in potentiality to the gods as such. Both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother are the best examples in this tradition who although were born as human beings, could surpass the potentialities of all the here to known gods and goddesses in successfully carrying out their formidable Supramental Yoga.
However, the gods are jealous of their rights. They will shower their bounty on man when they are pleased with him, but they will not easily allow him to go beyond them. Each god tends to keep his devotee in his grip. The higher gods are also wary of men who aspire to exceed them. But they do not normally prevent. They insist on the seeker passing certain tests; then alone will they give the password.

Now since all creation, forms one organism and all gods and men, planes and spheres of existence - are interrelated, it follows that we can establish contact with the gods through appropriate ways. It has been a fairly common experience in India for devotees to be in concrete relation with the Deities of their choice and being guided by them. The Vedic vision of gods and men journeying together, the Gita's injunction for men and gods to prosper with mutual regard, are accepted norms in our society.

Can you see a god today in the twentieth century? Yes, definitely yes, provided you take the necessary steps therefore. The Mother relates an interesting experience of hers. When she came and settled down in India from the West, she did not know how far the Indian legends of gods and goddesses were true to life, the remover of obstacles, giver of wealth and prosperity. In Pondicherry Vinayaka plays a great part in the religious and social life of the people. His famous temple here is hardly a minute's walk from the main ashram buildings. One day, in the early years of the Ashram, after a discussion on wealth, prosperity etc., the Mother wondered if all that story of Ganesh was not pure imagination. Thereafter she went into Meditation along with a few of the disciples who were present. And the first sight that greeted her in her vision was a living, luminous being with a long trunk, coming with a smile and sitting in front of her. The Mother exchanged a few pleasantries with him and he promised to arrange for the monetary needs of the Work undertaken
by the Mother. This arrangement worked for over a decade. But when the numbers in the Ashram increased by leaps and bounds and the work expanded, his supply trickled off. When asked by the Mother, Ganesh said that the situation was beyond him. And there the matter was left.44

But the contact did not cease. Many years later the Mother once found little Ganesh rummaging through her cupboard with his trunk. She playfully asked him what he was doing there and told him to go and get some money instead. And he did. For some time money started flowing and the finance improved.45

Although it is only a passing reference as to how one can derive help and assistance from a traditional deity or god in one’s spiritual endeavour, in the following pages however there are many references of instances as to how both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother derived significant help in the course of their yoga from some traditional gods and Avatars especially from Krishna in particular.

iii) The Evil or the Hostile forces in Action

To Sri Aurobindo the existence of these so called evil forces or the negative or hostile forces or the forces of darkness and Ignorance are equally real or as real as the existence of Divine forces. Sri Aurobindo has given a detailed description as to the origin, the nature of action of all these innumerable hostile forces existing in the universe and how these forces are to be dealt with in the process of one’s spiritual sadhana of evolution in consciousness.

According to Sri Aurobindo as there are Powers of Knowledge and Forces of Light (the Gods), so there are powers of Ignorance and tenebrous forces of darkness whose work is to prolong the reign of Ignorance and Inconscience. Behind the visible events in the world
there is always a mass of invisible forces at work unknown to the
outward minds of men. The hostile forces exist and have been known
to yogic experience ever since the days of the Veda and Zoroaster in
Asia, Egypt and in Europe also from old times.46

The origin of the hostile forces is known to us. The four
primordial powers of Light, Truth, Life and Bliss started imagining
that they were, each by himself the Supreme. This is how they
separated from the One in their consciousness and thereby became
as it were its counter forces as the Lords of Darkness, Falsewood,
Suffering and Death. It was the great fall in the beginning from which
originated our universe fundamentally based on the principles of the
Freedom and Ananda (Bliss) (Precisely the freedom and enjoyment by
which the four great Lords had been able to fancy that they were the
Divine). In India these four Lords are called Asuras. Like all higher
beings, they had the power to produce lesser entities of themselves,
emanations existing by themselves and able to act independently, but
essentially remaining the being who put themforth. The big Four
have thus brought forth cascades of lesser beings, so to speak who are
intensely active on the lower levels of creation.

However the four big Asuras are not the only progenitors of
hostile forces. We know that the One or the Supreme ceaselessly
manifests 'typal' worlds out of himself which are the concretization of
his inherent qualities from the highest - Existence, Consciousness,
Bliss down to lowest that is, the lower vital worlds. All those worlds
exist in their own gradation or substance, but the gross substance
we know of and are made of and which we call 'matter' is a product
of the Inconscient and therefore exist exclusively in our evolutionary
world. It is as if our world originated in a shadow cast by the
Supreme, and is Provisionally, the dark spot in the limitless garden of
worlds which is His ecstatic, prolific manifestation. We have also seen
that by the process of evolution time after time a higher gradation or world, of the hierarchy of typal worlds is inserted in our evolving universe. The beings of the typal worlds (worlds of gods and goddesses) are immortal and on their level fully satisfied with their existence. This according to the basic principle of the Omnipresent Divine Ananda or Bliss. So too are the beings of the lower vital worlds, who for the most part are vicious little mischief makers. Their nasty games and tricks are a source of inexhaustible fun for themselves, but they are very bothersome for us humans when we are the butt of their fun. They have no motive to collaborate in any way whatsoever and they only pursue the satisfaction of their petty desires.

In India, the hostile forces are broadly divided in three categories. At the top are Asuras and they belong to mental and the higher vital levels. All Asuras are radically against the work of the Divine evolution and do every thing possible to thwart it, on the one hand out of pure self-complacency and on the other hand because the material embodiment on the earth of Divine beings, like the future supramental beings would bring the mastery they are now exerting here to an end.

Far below the Asuras are Rakshasas, beings of the lower vital level (especially in the occult way). To satisfy their instiable hunger, they prey on all possible kinds of embodied and unembodied forces and feed on them. They are ugly folk, but can take on the most seductive shapes and even appear as divinities and they mainly roam about in the dark.

At the bottom of the hierarchy are the Pishachas, the little gruesome people, finding their vicious pleasure in the annoying little tricks they can pester themselves and the humans with making our
lives into an uninterrupted affair of unease, dissatisfaction, and restlessness.\(^47\)

All these beings, like all beings not embodied in gross matter are immortal – like the Titan from Greek mythology (A Rakshasa), who, when slain, became alive again through each contact with the life-force of the earth and continued fighting. The only medium that can bring to an end their manifested existence is the Divine White Light, by which they are dissolved into their origin. This White Light is the Light of the Mother. “There is only one Force in the world that can destroy them categorically without any hope of return and this is a force belonging to the Supreme Creative Power. It is a force from beyond the supramental world and therefore not at every bodies disposal. It is a luminous force of a dazzling whiteness, so brilliant that ordinary eyes would be blinded if they looked into it. It suffices that a being of the vital world be touched by this light to make it dissolve instantly – it liquefies, like the snails that turn into water when you put some salt on them”\(^48\) said the Mother herself.

Nevertheless the hostile forces too have their significance and their role in the great plan. “In the occult world or from the occult point of view all these adverse forces are very real, their action is very real, completely concrete, and their attitude towards the Divine realization is positively hostile. But as soon as you pass beyond this domain and enter in the Spiritual world where there is nothing other than the Divine, who is everything, these adverse forces become part of the total play and they can no longer be called the adverse forces. It is only a posture that the Divine has taken in his play. But all the same it may be a play from the point of view of the Divine, but to the beings incarnated on the Earth including the humans, that play is in dire earnest, even when having been promised a more enjoyable future.”\(^49\)
Sri Aurubindo and the Mother, the center of the accelerated evolution on Earth, even with their formidable Spiritual attainments were also the focus of the resistance and attacks of hostile forces of every kind. As early as 1924 referring to these adverse forces Sri Aurobindo is reported to have told some disciples “You do not know how strong they are. I alone know it, you only have a glimps of it....... Wherever Yoga or Yajna is done, there the hostile forces gather together to stop it by any means.” To the hostile forces this yoga in particular was no in-offensive yoga, for in this yoga it was clearly the intension to terminate the dominance of these forces on the earth by bringing the Divine Light into the twilight of the Subconscient and into the pitch darkness of the Inconscient in order to make the transformation of matter and the formation of the Supramental body possible.

According to Sri Aurobindo his Yoga begins from where all the other traditional yogas end. Sri Aurobindo said that it is absolutely impossible to have the Supramental transformation without being universalized. That is the first condition. And to become universalized means to accept everying to be every thing and to become everything. In other words the realisation of the self and the cosmic realisation or an union with the Divine which is the ultimate aim of many of the traditional paths of yoga. But these realisation are only a prerequisite to begin with this Supramental yoga. Therefore this is an Integral method where in a total transformation is the central object.

Sri Aurobindo was so sure of this Supramental descent, when he said “If I believe in the probability and not only possibility, if I feel practically certain of this supramental descent it is because I have my grounds for the belief. Not a faith in the air. I know that the supramental descent is inevitable. I have faith in view of my
experience that the time can be and should be now and not in a later age."

It was also his unfailing faith that he has to do it himself, come what may and under any circumstance and even if it may cost his life and even if it has not been possible by any one before him in the history of mankind. In Sri Aurobindo's own words "I see it above and know what it is. I feel it ever gleaming down on my consciousness from above and I am seeking to make it possible for it to take up the whole being into its own nature power instead of the nature of man continuing to remain in half light and half darkness. I believe that the descent of this truth opening the way to a development of Divine Consciousness have to be the final sense of the earth evolution.

If greater men than myself have not had this vision and this idea before them, that is no reason why I should not follow my Truth Sense and Truth Vision. If human sense regards me as a fool to do what all others and even Krishna did not try, I do not in the least care. It is a question between Divine and myself – whether it is a Divine will or not, whether I am sent to bring that down or open the way for its descent or at least make it more possible or not. Let all men jeer at me if they will or all Hell fall upon me if it will for my presumption – I go on till I conquer or perish. This is the spirit in which I seek the Super mind....". In this statement Sri Aurobindo shows the spirit with which one has to pursue one's sadhana. "It looks like foolishness, but everything new has always seemed foolish before it became reality".

It is probably with this affirmation and faith that Sri Aurobindo went into total seclusion in a room upstairs in Pondicherry Ashram, and immersed himself in his intense spiritual Sadhana from November 1926 onwards. In the course of his intense Sadhana he
has said “My whole life has been a struggle with hard realities. My life has been a battle from its early years and is still a battle. The fact that I wage it now from a room upstairs and by spiritual means, as well as others that are external, makes no difference to its character....” His description about the state of his Sadhana at that time is self explanatory.

“I cannot call it a condition or a state. It is rather a complex movement. I am at present engaged in bringing the Supermind into the physical consciousness, down even to the sub material. The physical is by nature inert and does not want to be rendered Conscient. It offers much greater resistance as it is unwilling to change. One feels as if ‘digging the earth’ as the Veda says. It is literally digging from the Supermind above to Supermind below. The being has become conscious and there is a constant movement up and down. The Veda calls it ‘the two ends’ – The head and tail of the dragon completing and encompassing the Consciousness. I find that so long as matter is not Supramentalised the mental and vital also can not be fully Supramentalised. The physical is, therefore to be accepted and transformed. I am trying to bring the highest layer of the Supermind into the physical consciousness”.

Therefore about the ordial or difficulties in the process of transformation of the physical Sri Aurobindo has said that “When the higher consciousness after descending to the mental level, comes down to the vital and even below the vital, then a great transformation takes place in the nervous and even in the physical being. But this is most orduous of all things. The physical layer is a very obstinate thing and it requires to be worked out in detail. It is not like the mind or the vital where it is easier for the higher power to work. Besides there in the mind and in the vital one can establish a general law leaving out the details, but the physical is not so. It is something
like a solid and immovable block which cannot be shaken even by most material shock, less so by the mental or vital shocks. On the physical when one attempts to work out one thing, and some other thing in him that have not been worked out turns up and shows that conquest is not complete. So it requires constant patience. Therefore the process takes such a long time. The higher consciousness is to be established in every atom of the body.

Sri Aurobindo and the Mother dedicated their lives to this Supramental Yoga aim of which was to replace the present human consciousness by a new Supramental Consciousness which will give birth to a new race of beings – Superhuman and Divine.

It is their affirmation that through their strenuous and grueling and intense sadhana for several decades continuously they have not only brought down and established the Supramental into the earth consciousness but also have a concrete accult vision of the Supramental world and the Supramental being in the making.

Sri Aurobindo who is considered a greatest spiritual master and a great visionary and a Rishi of our times with all his spiritual experience of a unique kind to his credit finally declared to all his disciples that the Mother of the Ashram was the individual embodiment of the Supreme Divine Mother. And that ‘Her embodiment’ is a chance for the earth consciousness to receive the Supermind into it"56. Therefore, it is not surprising that Sri Aurobindo not only called her ‘the Mother’, but also deliberately admitted that all his realisation would have remained theoretical as it were so far as the outer world was concerned and it was the Mother who showed the way to a practical form and without her no organised manifestation would have been possible. And the Mother who closely associated with Sri Aurobindo in all his spiritual endeavour had duely
acknowledged this view of Sri Aurobindo. And such was their mutual spiritual collaboration throughout. Thus the Mother represents the practical phase of Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy.

Sri Aurobindo further assured to his disciples that since the Supreme Mother appeared on this earth in a physical form it is now easy for an aspirant of this yoga to identify her and to surrender to her force which is the only thing needed in this yoga.

The Mother who is thus an individual embodiment of the Supreme - Divine Mother with her concrete vision and experience of the Supramental world declared that “When I returned from the Supramental world along with the memory of the experience, I knew that the Supramental world is permanent and that my presence there is permanent, and only a missing link is needed to allow the Junction with the consciousness and the substance, and it is this link which is in the process of being built.”

It was also an assurance by the Mother to all the aspirants of this yoga that by the very fact of their living on earth at this time, whether they are conscious of it or not or even whether they want it or not with the very air they breathe, they are absorbing that new Suprmental substance which is spreading throughout the earth's atmosphere and it is preparing things in them that will materialize very suddenly, as soon as they have taken a decisive step.

The way of the yoga followed here has a different purpose from others, for its aim is not only to rise out of the ordinary ignorant world consciousness into the Divine Consciousness, but to bring the Supramental power of that Divine Consciousness down into the ignorance of mind, life and body, to transform them, to manifest the Divine here and create a Divine Life in matter. This is an exceedingly difficult aim and difficult yoga; to many it may seem impossible. All
the established forces of the ordinary ignorant world consciousness are apposed to it, deny and try to prevent this change or transformation, and the sadhak will find his own mind, life and body full of the most obstinate impediments to its realisation. If one can only accept this ideal whole heartedly, face all the difficulties, leave the past and its ties behind and ready to give up everything and risk everything for this Divine possibility and only then one can hope to discover by experience the truth behind this.

The Sadhana of this yoga does not proceed through any set of mental teaching of prescribed form of meditation, mantras or other but by an Aspiration by a self conservation inwards and upwards and by a progressive self opening to an influence of the Divine Power above and allows its workings in himself freely in his mind and heart, and by a total Rejection of all that opposes these things, It is only by Faith, Aspiration and Surrender that this self opening can come.

This implies not only the realisation of God, but an entire change of the inner and outer life till it is fit to manifest a divine Consciousness and become part of a divine work. This means an inner discipline far more exacting and difficult than mere ethical and physical austerities. One can not venture to enter into this path of yoga which is far more vaster and arduous than most ways of yoga, unless one is sure of his inner call and one's readiness to go through to the end.

In the older yogas, the experiences of the Spirit or an eternal union with the Divine was the principle aim to be sought. For this the nature had to change only enough to prevent its being an obstacle to that knowledge and experience. Even if a complete change down to the physical was sought for by a few, it was only for more as a 'siddhi'
or as an individual achievement than any thing else, but not as a manifestation of a new Nature in the earth consciousness.

But in this yoga, all the consciousness in the human being, who is the mental embodied in living matter has to rise so as to meet the higher consciousness, and the higher consciousness also has to descend into mind, into life and finally into matter or the physical. In that way the barriers will be removed and the higher consciousness will be able to take up the whole lower nature to transform it by the power of the Supermind.

The earth is a material field of evolution. Here the life, the mind, Supermind and Satchidanand are in principle involved there in the earth consciousness. But only matter is the first to organise itself, then the life principle descended from the life plane into matter and organised it into plant and animal kingdom and then the mind descended into it from the mind plane to create man a new species. Now Supermind is to descend into it so as to create a new supramental race or a new Superhuman species or a Superman a perfect Divine being.

6) The Mother – Sri Aurobindo’s Perspective

The concept of the Mother as described by Sri Aurobindo and as Practiced in his yoga is unique and is conspicuously different from the traditional or religious concept of the Mother worship in India. According to Sri Aurobindo the great goddess Mother is the power or the conscious force of the supreme and it has different aspects of her, emanations and manifestations.

Sri Aurobindo was more radical in the spiritual evolution he had brought about, than he was as the ideologist of the political extremists. This radicality, this unconditionality we find also in the
first lines of the first chapter of ‘The Synthesis of Yoga’ the greatest book about yoga ever written where Sri Aurobindo wrote: If we are to be free in the spirit, if we are to be subject only to the supreme truth, we must discard the idea that our mental or moral laws are binding on the Infinite or there can be anything sacrosanct, absolute or eternal even in the highest of our existing standards of conduct.”

Therefore it can be said that Sri. Aurobindo was a revolutionary and a reformer in the spiritual field as well.

Sri Aurobindo called himself the path finder, hewing his way through the Virgin forests. His supramental Yoga is therefore definitely an adventure into the unknown and into the seemingly impossible. He said “The traditions of the past are very great in their own place in the past, but I do not see why we should merely repeat them and not go further.”

In the spiritual development of the consciousness upon earth, the great past ought to be followed by a great future”. Sri Aurobindo being fully aware of the great power and potentialities of the Mother declared that “What is known as Sri Aurobindo’s yoga is a joint creation of Sri. Aurobindo and the Mother.”

Sri. Aurobindo with all his formidable spiritual experiences, and his great occult knowledge and yogic power to his credit also declared “The Mother is not a disciple of Sri Aurobindo. She has had the same realization and experience as myself.” He also said “The Mother’s consciousness and mine are the same, the one Divine consciousness in two, because that is necessary for the play”.

“Therefore both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother were the pioneers of a new creation on the earth, who were the only ones to know about and who had to build the foundations of it in themselves before they could involve other selected representatives of the existing human
species. This was the task which by far surpassed the potentialities of the human nature in which they had incarnated.\textsuperscript{63}

Because of the formidable task they undertook in the evolving consciousness or of bringing and establish the Supramental to the earth consciousness and of consequent transformation of human nature into Divine Nature both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother can be termed as Avatars even in the very conventional and practical sense of the term. About the Avatarhood Sri Aurobindo says "The Divine puts on an appearance of humanity, assumes the outward human nature in order to tread the path and show it to human beings but does not cease to be the Divine".\textsuperscript{64} This statement scrupulously conforms to the nature and work of both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

It is very important to note that even Sri. Aurobindo received very significant spiritual help from the Mother besides equally collaborating throughout, in his mighty Sadhana. Sri Aurobindo confirms that "The Ashram is the Mother's creation and would not have existed but for her, and she presents the dynamic, the manifestation side of his teachings. It is she who has given a practical shape to his philosophy of Life Divine".\textsuperscript{65} He has also gone on record saying that "She is the only person from whom he received real spiritual help."\textsuperscript{66} It is also very significant that the entire Aurobindo Ashram at Pondichery, the magnificent 'International School' at Pondicherry and the world renowned new township of 'Aroville' – A magnificent International Yogic Center are all entirely the creations of the Mother, which no doubt many times surpass the potentialities of human nature and therefore a significant proof of her Avatarhood beyond any reasonable doubt. This has been amply confirmed time and again by no less a person than Sri. Aurobindo himself.
According to Sri Aurobindo “The Avatar is a direct embodiment of the Godhead. An Avatar roughly speaking is one who is conscious of the presence and the power of the Divine both in him and descended into him and governing from within his will, life and action; he feels identified inwardly with the Divine Power and Presence.” To human comprehension this remains an enigma, because the common human contact with the Avatar is during his life time through the senses or the thinking, and it needs an advanced psychic development to be able to perceive the inner divinity of the Avatar. However the metaphysical definition of the Avatar and the function of his incarnation in evolution are not difficult to understand according to the traditional formulation especially with reference to Sri. Aurobindo and the Mother.

Sri Aurobindo who is thus an Avatar himself, had long back declared to all his disciples “The Mother is the Consciousness and Force of the Supreme. The Mother was inwardly above the human even in childhood... It is so that, you should regard her as the Divine Shakti..... she is That in the body, but in her whole consciousness she is also identified with all other aspects of the Divine.”

In 1926 when Sri aurobindo decided to retire into total seclusion to enable himself to persue his sadhana more intensely, he asked all his disciples to henceforth receive spiritual guidance from the Mother. To some of the disciples who had some doubt about this arrangement Sri. Aurobindo wrote. “If you consider that the Mother can be of no help to you... If you can not profit by her help you would find still less profit in me. But in any case I have no intension of altering the arrangement I have made for all the disciples without exception that they should receive the light and force from her and not directly from me and be guided by her in their spiritual progress. I have made the arrangement not for any temporary purpose, but
because it is the one way, provided the disciple is open and receives, that is true and effective." Also in reply to queries from disciples regarding the Mother's spiritual stature and her role in the yoga, he wrote some wonderfully revealing letters which were later compiled in the form of a booklet 'The Mother'. “Although it is small in size, it is but a masterpiece and the elevated magnificence of its language acts as a Mantra”.

Sri Aurobindo always said to his disciples that the Mother was not a disciple of Sri Aurobindo. On the other hand “He never tired of declaring her to be not only equal to him but also indispensable for his mission and even suggested that if she were not there as his counterpart he would be incomplete.”

Sri Aurobindo further said “There is no difference between the Mother’s path and mine, we have always had the same path, the path that leads to the Supramental change and the Divine realization, not only at the end but from the beginning they were the same.” He also said “The Mother and I are one but in two bodies. The Mother and myself stand for the same power in two forms”. The Mother from her side also said “Sri Aurobindo and I are always one and the same consciousness, one and the same person. Like the masculine Avatar, the feminine Avatar represents the whole God-head. Both are One”.

After coming to Pondicherry Sri Aurobindo followed only the dictates or Adesh he received from the Supreme and from within. He said “When I came to Pondicherry a programme was dictated to me from within, for my Sadhana. I followed it and progressed for myself, but could not do much by way of helping others. Then came the Mother and with her help I founded the necessary method.” The Mother has also confirmed this by saying that she had already worked out the complete spiritual programme as that of Sri Aurobindo by
around 1912 about two years before she came to Pondicherry. Even in terms of surrender it is evident that both in attitude and in yoga the surrender between the two was mutually equal and total. "The Mother in her attitude of surrender always put Sri Aurobindo above her, which was the reason why she usually sat down at his feet on the floor or on a small stool. But Sri Aurobindo's yogic development had revealed the Divine Mother to him, and he on his part had surrendered totally and unconditionally to her. This revelation and his surrender he has expressed in the canto of Savitri called The Adoration of the Divine Mother.

She is the golden bridge, the wonderful five,
The luminous heart of the Unknown is she,
A power of silence in the depths of God;
She is the Force, the inevitable Word,
The magnet of our difficult ascent,
The sun from which we kindle all our suns,
The light that leans from the unrealized Vasts,
The joy that beckons from the impossible,
The Might of all that never yet came down.....
Once seen, his heart acknowledged only her.\textsuperscript{76}

The Mother' a small booklet is a wonderful creation of Sri Aurobindo describing all the aspects of the Supreme Divine Mother and her working in the Universe and the Cosmos and at all levels of her creation and also the role played by her in the realization of his Supramental Yoga and Yoga of Transformation. It is not surprising that Sri Aurobindo declared in all humility to his disciples in the Ashram, that the entire narration of the booklet referred to the Mother of the Ashram who according to him was the incarnation of the Supreme God-head in human form. Therefore it was his instruction to all the disciples that in order to progress in one's
Sadhana a scrupulous, sincere and total surrender to this incarnation of the supreme divine Mother of the Ashram was indispensable. This also gives a detailed description as to how different aspects of the Mother or her Grace works directly and also through her various emanations, and helps in the Sadhana of the sadhaka, and also as to how the attitude of the sadhak in all aspects of Aspiration, Rejection and Surrender should be, in order to derive or invoke the Grace of the Supreme. Here are few excerpts from the small booklet reproduced below which go a long way in understanding and comprehending Sri Aurobindo's concept of Divine Mother and its working in the realization of the integral yoga of Sri Aurobindo.

i) Mother - Universal Mahashakti

The four powers of the Mother are four of her outstanding personalities, portions and embodiments of her divinity through whom she acts on her creatures, orders and harmonizes her creations in the worlds and directs the working out of her thousand forces. For the Mother is one but she comes before us with differing aspects; many are her powers and personalities, many her emanations and Vibhutis they do her work in the universe. The one whom we adore as the Mother is the divine Conscious Force that dominates all existence, one and yet so many sided that to follow her movement is impossible even to the quickest mind and for the freest and most vast intelligence. (Hence Swamy Vivekananda speaks of it as terrible. According to him, Maya is both tremendous and terrible. Because being a fact we can not describe Maya in terms of why and how. It is a fact but it is inexplicable. It is equally terrible because, the more we effort to overcome it more it binds us). The Mother is the consciousness and force of the Supreme and far above all she creates. But something of her ways can be seen and felt through her embodiments and emanations and the more seizable because more defined and limited
temperament and action of the goddess-forms in whom she consents to be manifest to her creatures.

According to Sri Aurobindo; “There are three ways of being of the Mother of which one can become aware when one enters into touch of oneness with the Conscious Force that upholds us and the universe. Transcendent the original supreme Shakti, she stands above the worlds and links the creations to the ever unmanifest mystery of the Supreme. Universal, the cosmic Mahashakti, she creates all these beings and contains and enters, supports and conducts all these million processes and forces. Individual, she embodies the power of these two vaster ways of her existence, makes them living and near to us and mediates between the human personality and the divine Nature”. This concept of the Mother as the mediatric between individual and divinity is very important in Vishistadwaita. Mother is supposed to be the mediator, through whom the union of the individual and divinity is brought.

The original transcendent Shakti, the Mother stands above all the worlds and bears in her eternal consciousness the Supreme Divine. Alone she harbours the absolute Power and the ineffable Presence; containing or calling the Truths that have to be manifested, she brings them down from the Mystery in which they were hidden into the light of her infinite consciousness and gives them a form of force in her omnipotent power and her boundless life and a body in the universe. The Supreme is manifest in her for ever as the everlasting Sachidananda, manifested through her in worlds as the one and dual consciousness of Ishwara-Shakti and the dual principle of Purusha-Prakriti, embodied by her in the Worlds and the Planes and the Gods and their Energies and figured because of her as all that is in the known worlds and in unknown others. All is her play with the Supreme, all is her manifestation of the mysteries of the Eternal,
the miracles of the Infinite. All is she, for all are parcel and portion of the divine Conscious-Force. Nothing can be here or else where but what she decides and the Supreme sanctions; nothing can take shape except what she, moved by the Supreme perceives and forms after casting it into seed in her creating Ananda.76

The universal Mother – Mahashakti, works out whatever is transmitted by her transcendent consciousness from the Supreme and enters into the worlds that she has made; her presence fills and supports them with the divine spirit and the divine all-sustaining force and delight without which they could not exist. That which we call Nature or Prakriti is only her most outward executive aspect; she marshals and arranges the harmony of her forces and processes, impels the operations of Nature and moves among them secret or manifest in all that can be seen or experienced or put into motion of life. Each of the worlds is nothing but one play of the Mahashakti of that system of worlds or universe, who is there as the cosmic Soul and Personality of the transcendent Mother. Each is something that she has seen in her vision, gathered into her heart of beauty and power and created in her Ananda.

But there are many planes of her creations, many steps of the Divine Shakti. At the summit of this manifestation of which we are a part

1) There are worlds of infinite existence, consciousness, force and bliss over which the Mother stands as the unveiled eternal Power. All beings there live and move in an ineffable completeness and unalterable oneness, because she carries them safe in her arms for ever. This corresponds to the planes of Gods and Goddess. Sri Aurobindo calls these worlds as
'typal' a new word coined by him meaning non-evolutionary they exist outside human limitations and mortality.

This roughly corresponds to the class of the jivas recognized by Vishistadwaitins namely Nityasuris. The Nityasuries have never tasted the life of bondage. They are ever liberated.

2) Nearer to us are the worlds of a perfect supramental creation in which the Mother is the supramental Mahashakti, a Power of divine omniscient Will and omnipotent Knowledge always apparent in its unfailing works and spontaneously perfect in every process. There all movements are the steps of the Truth; there all beings are souls and powers and bodies of the divine Light, and there all experiences are seas and floods and waves of an intense and absolute Ananda.

3) But here where we dwell are the worlds of Ignorance, world of mind and life and body separated in consciousness from their source, of which this earth is a significant centre and its evolution a crucial process. This world too with all its obscurity and struggle and imperfection is upheld by the Universal Mother, this too is impelled and guided to its secret aim by the Mahashakti.

The Mother as the Mahashakti of the triple world of the ignorance stands in an intermediate plane between the supramental Light, the Truth life, the Truth creation which has to be brought down here and this mounting and descending hierarchy of planes and consciousness that like a double ladder lapse into the nescience of Matter and climb back again through the flowering of life and soul and mind into the infinity of the Spirit. Determining all that shall be in this universe and the terrestrial evolution by what she sees and feels and pours from her, she stands there above the Gods and all her Powers and
Personalities are put out in front of her for the action and she sends
down emanations of them into these lower worlds to intervene, to
govern to battle, to conquer, to lead and form their cycles, to direct the
total and the individual lines of their forces. These Emanations are
the many divine forms and personalities in which men have worshipped her under different names throughout ages. But also she
prepares a shapes through these Powers and their emanations the
minds and bodies of her Vibhuties, even as she prepares and shapes
minds and bodies for the Vibhuties of the Ishwara, that she may
manifest in the physical world and in the disguise of the human
consciousness some ray of her power and quality and presence. All
the scenes of the earth-play have been like a drama arranged and
planned and staged by her with the cosmic Gods for her assistants
and herself as a veiled actor.

The Mother not only governs all from above but she descends
into this lesser triple universe. Impersonally, all things here, even the
movements of the Ignorance, are herself in veiled power and her
creations in diminished substance, her Nature – body and Nature –
force, and they exist because, moved by the mysterious fiat of the
Supreme to work out something that was there in the possibilities of
the Infinite, she has consented to the great sacrifice and has put on
like a mask the soul and form of the Ignorance. But personally too
she has stooped to descend here into the Darkness that she may lead
it to the Light, into the Falsehood and Error that she may convert it
into the Truth, into this Death that she may turn it to god like Life,
into this world-pain and its obstinate sorrow and suffering that she
may end it in the transforming ecstasy of her sublime Ananda. In her
deep and great love for her children, she has consented to put on
herself the cloak of this obscurity, condescended to bear the attack,
and torturing influences of the powers of the Darkness and the
Falsehood, born to pass through the portals of the birth, that is a
death, taken upon herself the pangs and sorrows and sufferings of the creation, since it seemed that thus alone could be lifted to the Light and Joy and Truth and eternal Life. This is the great sacrifice called sometimes the sacrifice of the Purusha, but much more deeply the holocaust of Prakriti, the sacrifice of the Divine Mother.

**ii) Four Aspects Of The Divine Mother**

The four great Aspects of the Mother, four of her leading Powers and Personalities have stood in front in her guidance of this Universe and in her dealings with the terrestrial play. One is her personality of calm, wideness and comprehending wisdom and tranquil benignity and inexhaustible compassion and sovereign and surpassing majesty and all ruling greatness - the Maheshwari. Another embodies her power of splendid strength and irresistible passion, her warrior mood, her overwhelming will, her impetuous swiftness and world shaking force - the Maha Kali. A third is vivid and sweet and wonderful with her deep secret of beauty and harmony and fine rhythm her intricate and subtle opulence her compelling attraction and her captivating grace – the Mahalakshmi. The forth is equipped with her close and profound capacity of intimate knowledge and careful flawless work and quite and exact perfection in all things – the Mahasaraswathi. Wisdom, Strength, Harmony, Perfection are their several attributes and it is these powers that they bring with them into the world, manifest in a human disguise in their Vibhutis and shall found in the divine degree of their ascension in those who can open their earthly nature to the direct and living influence of the Mother. To the four we give the *four great names Maheswari, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi and Mahasaraswathi*. 
a) Maheshwari

Imperial Maheshwari is seated in the wideness above the thinking mind and will and sublimes and greatens them into wisdom and largeness or floods with a splendour beyond them. For she is the mighty and wise One who opens us to the supramental infinities and the cosmic vastness, to the grandeur of the supreme Light, to a treasure-house of miraculous knowledge, to the measureless movement of the Mother’s eternal forces. Tranquil is she and wonderful, great and calm for ever. Nothing can move her because all wisdom is in her; nothing is hidden from her that she chooses to know; she comprehends all things and all beings and their nature and what moves them and the law of the world and its times and how all was and is and must be. A strength is in her that meets everything and masters and none can prevail in the end against her vast intangible wisdom and high tranquil power. Equal, patient and unalterable in her will she deals with men according to their nature and with things and happenings according to their Force and the truth that is in them. Partiality she has none, but she follows the decrees of the Supreme and some she raises up and some she casts down or puts away from her into the darkness. To the wise she gives a greater and more luminous wisdom; those that have vision she admits to her counsels; on the hostile she imposes the consequence of their hostility; the ignorant and foolish she leads according to their blindness. In each man she answers and handles the different elements of his nature according to their need and their urge and the return they call for, puts on them the required pressure or leaves them to their cherished liberty to prosper in the ways of the Ignorance or to perish. For she is above all, bound by nothing, attached to nothing in the universe. Yet has she more than any other the heart of the universal Mother. For her compassion is endless and inexhaustible; all are to her eyes her children and portions of the one,
even the Asura and Rakshasa and Pisacha and those that are revolted and hostile. Even her rejections are only a postponement, even her punishments are a grace. But her compassion does not blind her wisdom or turn her action from the course decreed; for the Truth of things is her one concern, knowledge her centre of power and to build our soul and our nature into the divine. Truth her mission and her labour.

b) Mahakali

Mahakali is of another nature. Not wideness but height, not wisdom but force and strength are her peculiar power. There is in her an overwhelming intensity, a mighty passion of force to achieve, a divine violence rushing to shatter every limit and obstacle. All her divinity leaps out in a splendour of tempestuous action; she is there for swiftness, for the immediately effective process, the rapid and direct stroke, the frontal assault that carries everything before it. Terrible is her face to the Asura, dangerous and ruthless her mood against the haters of the Divine; for she is the Warrior of the Worlds who never shrinks from the battle. Intolerant of imperfection, she deals roughly with all in man that is unwilling and she is severe to all that is obstinately ignorant and obscure; her wrath is immediate and dire against treachery and falsehood and malignity, ill-will is smitten at once by her scourge. Indifference, negligence and sloth in the divine work she cannot bear and she smites awake at once with sharp pain, if need be, the untimely slumberer and the loiterer. The impulses that are swift and straight and frank, the movements that are unreserved and absolute, the aspiration that mounts in flame are the motion of Mahakali. 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 outstretched 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. When she is allowed to intervene in her strength, then in one moment are broken like things without consistence the obstacles that immobilize or the enemies that assail the seeker. If her anger is dreadful to the hostile and the vehemence of her pressure painful to the weak and timid, she is loved and worshipped by the great, the strong and the noble; for they feel that her blows beat what is rebellious in their material into strength and perfect truth, hammer straight what is wry and perverse and expel what is impure or defective. But for her what is done in a day might have taken centuries; without her Ananda might be wide and grave or soft and sweet and beautiful but would lose the flaming joy of its most absolute intensities. To knowledge she gives a conquering might, brings to beauty and harmony a high and mounting movement and imparts to the slow and difficult labour after perfection an impetus that multiplies the power and shortens the long way. Nothing can satisfy her that falls short of the supreme ecstasies, the highest heights, the noblest aims, the largest vistas. Therefore with her is the victorious force of the Divine and it is by grace of her fire and passion and speed if the great achievement can be done now rather than hereafter.

C) Mahalakshmi

Wisdom and Force are not the only manifestations of the supreme Mother; there is a subtler mystery of her nature and without it Wisdom and Force would be incomplete things and without it perfection would not be perfect. Above them is the miracle of eternal beauty, an unseizable secret of divine harmonies, the compelling magic of an irresistible universal charm and attraction that draws and holds things and forces and beings together and obliges them to meet and unite that a hidden Ananda may play from behind the veil and make of them its rhythms and its figures. This is the power of
Mahalakshmi and there is no aspect of the Divine Shakti more attractive to the heart of embodied beings. Maheshwari can appear too calm and great and distant for the littleness of earthly nature to approach or contain her, Mahakali too swift and formidable for its weakness to bear; but all turn with joy and longing to Mahalakshmi. For she throws the spell of the intoxicating sweetness of the Divine; to be close to her is a profound happiness and to feel her within the heart is to make existence a rapture and a marvel; grace and charm and tenderness flow out from her like light from the sun and wherever she fixes her wonderful gaze or lets fall the loveliness of her smile, the soul is seized and made captive and plunged into the depths of an unfathomable bliss. Magnetic is the touch of her hands and their occult and delicate influence refines mind and life and body and where she presses her feet course miraculous streams of an entrancing Anada.

And yet it is not easy to meet the demand of this enchanting Power or to keep her presence. Harmony and beauty of the mind and soul, 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 Mahalakshmi. Where there is affirmity to the rhythms of the secret world-bliss and response to the call of the All-Beautiful and concord and unity and the glad flow of many lives turned towards the Divine, in that atmosphere she consents to abide. But all that is ugly and mean and base, all that is poor and sordid and squalid, all that is brutal and coarse repels her advent. Where love and beauty are not or are reluctant to be born, she does not come; where they are mixed and disfigured with baser things, she turns soon to depart or cares little to pour her riches. If she finds herself in men's hearts surrounded with selfishness and hatred and jealousy and malignance and envy and strife, if treachery
and greed and ingratitude are mixed in the sacred chalice, if grossness of passion and unrefined desire degrade devotion, in such hearts the gracious and beautiful Goddess will not linger. A divine disgust seizes upon her and she withdraws, for she is not one who insists or strives; or, veiling her face, she waits for this bitter and poisonous devil’s stuff to be rejected and disappear before she will found anew her happy influence. Ascetic bareness and harshness are not pleasing to her nor the suppression of the heart’s deeper emotions and the rigid repression of the soul’s and the life’s parts of beauty. For it is through love and beauty that she lays on men the yoke of the Divine. Life is turned in the supreme creations into a rich work of celestial art and all existence into a poem of sacred delight; the world’s riches are brought together and concerted for a supreme order and even the simplest and commonest things are made wonderful by her intuition of unity and the breath of her spirit. Admitted to the heart she lifts wisdom to pinnacles of wonder and reveals to it the mystic secrets of the ecstasy that surpasses all knowledge, meets devotion with the passionate attraction of the Divine, teaches to strength and force the rhythm that keeps the might of their acts harmonious and in measure and casts on perfection the charm that makes it endure for ever.

d) Mahasaraswati

Mahasaraswati is the Mother’s Power of Work and her spirit of perfection and order. The youngest of the Four, she is the most skilful in executive faculty and the nearest to physical Nature. Maheshwari lays down the large lines of the world-forces. Mahakali drives their energy and impetus, Mahalakshmi discovers their rhythms and measures, but Mahasaraswati presides over their detail of organization and execution, relation of parts and effective combination of forces and unfailing exactitude of result and fulfillment. The science and craft and technique of things are
Mahasaraswathi’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, organizer, 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. For the will in her works is scrupulous, unsleeping, indefatigable; leaning over us she notes and touches every little detail, finds out every minute defect, gap, twist or incompleteness, considers and weighs accurately all that has been done and all that remains still to be done hereafter. Nothing is too small or apparently trivial for her attention; nothing however impalpable or disguised or latent can escape her. Moulding and remoulding she labours each part till it has attained its true form, is put in its exact place in the whole and fulfils its precise purpose. In her constant and diligent arrangement and rearrangement of things her eye is on all needs at once and the way to meet them and her intuition knows what is to be chosen and what rejected and successfully determines the right instrument, the right time, the right conditions and the right process. Carelessness and negligence and indolence she abhors; and scamped and hasty and shuffling work, all clumsiness and misfire, all false adaptation and misuse of instruments and faculties and leaving of things undone or half done is offensive and foreign to her temper. When her work is finished, nothing has been forgotten, no part has been misplaced or omitted or left in a faulty conditions; all is solid, accurate, complete, admirable. Nothing short of a perfect perfection satisfies her and she is ready to face an eternity of toil if that is needed for the fullness of her creation. Therefore of all the Mother’s powers she is the most
long-suffering with man and his thousand imperfections. Kind, smiling, close and helpful, not easily turned away or discouraged, insistent even after repeated failure, her hand sustains our every step on condition that we are single in our will and straightforward and sincere; for a double mind she will not tolerate and her revealing irony is merciless to drama and histrionics and self-deceit and pretence. A mother to our wants, a friend in our difficulties, a persistent and tranquil counselor and mentor, chasing away with her radiant smile the clouds of gloom and fretfulness and depression, reminding always of the ever-present help, pointing to the eternal sunshine, 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.

There are other great Personalities of the Divine Mother, but they were more difficult to bring down and have not stood out in front with so much prominence in the evolution of the earth-spirit. There are among them Presences indispensable for the supramental realization-most of all one who is her Personality of that mysterious and powerful ecstasy and Anada, which flows from a supreme divine Love, the Anada that alone can heal the gulf between the highest heights of supramental spirit and the lowest abysses of Matter, the Ananda that holds the key of a wonderful divinest Life and even now supports from its secrecies the work of all the other Powers of the universe. But human nature bounded, egoistic and obscure is inapt to receive these great Presences or to support their mighty action. Only when the Four have founded their harmony and freedom of movement in the transformed mind and life and body, can those other rarer Powers manifest in the earth movement and the supramental action become possible. For when her personalities are all gathered in
her and manifested and their separate working has been turned into a harmonious unity and they rise in her to their supramental godheads, then is the Mother revealed as the supramental Mahashakti and brings pouring down her luminous transcendences from their ineffable ether. Then can human nature change into dynamic divine nature because all the elemental lines of the supramental Truth consciousness and Truth-force are strung together and the harp of life is fitted for rhythms of the Eternal.\(^7\)

### iii) Mother Of The Supramental Plane

It is also very necessary and important to note the essential differences between the Mother which Sri Aurobindo refers in his yoga and the Mother referred to in all other traditional religious beliefs. The power or the force and the concept to which Sri Aurobindo is referring here as the Mother is not the same as the concept traditionally accepted by the Indian spiritual or religious systems. Although theoretically it appears to be quite similar and refers to the executive or creative power of the Supreme, yet there is a vast difference between the powers that have been referred to in the past as the divine Mother, and The Consciousness and Force of the Supreme described by Sri Aurobindo as the Mother. This difference needs to be properly understood if one wants to truly comprehend and practice Sri Aurobindo’s Integral yoga.

The essential difference between the two concepts is the different levels of consciousness that the Mother represents. The Power that Sri Aurobindo defines as the Mother originates from the Supreme or what Sri Aurobindo calls the ‘Supramental’ plane, a plane of ‘Truth-consciousness’.\(^8\) In Samkhya and Advaita, Prakriti or Maya, is inert in nature, where as according to Sri Aurobindo Mother in her metaphysical aspect is not inert. According to both views,
Mother is the principle of creation, according to Samkhya, prakriti is capable of evolving itself into the universe in the passive presence of purusha. According to Adwaita, Maya evolves itself into the universe under the sentient guidance of Brahman. According to Sri Aurobindo however, what we call Maya or Mother, though a creative force is not inert in nature. It is consciousness in nature. It is the highest creative power of the Supreme. All creations in this universe, whether visible or invisible is the manifestation of the Supreme Mother from this plane of consciousness and her plunge into the ignorance as a Lila or play of the Supreme. In this descent, her true All-Powerful and All-Blissful self has embraced the laws of ignorance and taken the form of even gross matter with a view to manifesting her original divine consciousness in this apparently unconscious substance through the process of evolution. The gradual unfolding or emergence of this concealed divine consciousness in matter till it manifests the light and beauty and delight of the Divine is the secret of this earthly existence.

"Life appearing from matter in plant and animal was the first sign of this emergence, mind developing in man was the next. But these were only intermediary stages of the complete divine plan. The final stage will arrive with the full manifestation of the hidden divine consciousness which will completely transform the very basis of matter. As a result of this transformation a new life form, a new species, what Sri Aurobindo has termed as the 'Supramental' being, will appear on this earth and a divine life will be established. The Supreme Mother, in the course of her downward manifestation from the supramental plane has brought into existence various levels of consciousness which she governs through her own emanations put forth by her for this purpose. However, she does not reveal her true power or nature in any of these emanations which represent only a fragment of her original self".81
The universe is a manifestation of a quarter of the Divine glory. The remaining three-fourth of the divine glory lay hidden in God. It is in unmanifest or potential state. In other words the whole universe is an insufficient manifestation of the divine glory. The view can be seen in purusha hymn – thripadoordhva udayit purushaha padosyeha bhavat punaha. Similarly same view can be seen in Bhagvadgita also. While commenting upon the seventh verse of the 11th Chapter of the Gita, Ramajuja interprets the word ‘Ihykastham’ as in a small part of the all pervasive body of the Supreme. The whole universe does not exhaust the entire body of Brahman, it constitutes or fills only a part of the all pervasive body of the Supreme. “At her origin on the supramental plane, she is the source of all manifestation, the Mother of all creations. But her emanations born out of her self-imposed limitations during her plunge into the ignorance for creating this world are subjected to the laws of ignorance, however powerful or blissful they might appear. It is only through these emanations that she sustains this creation and over a period of time it is only these executive powers which have so far come to the fore of human knowledge and experience in the form of various gods and goddesses. The true identity of the Supreme Mother was never revealed and therefore never known. Consequently, all references of the past saints to the divine Mother were only for her emanations at various lower levels. The existence of either the supramental plane or the Supreme Divine Mother of that plane was not clearly known to them, so they could not have referred to her.

Sufficient indication about the supramental plane, however, were there in the Vedas, especially in the Rig-Veda and also in the Upanishads. But their true import could never be, understood properly due to wrong interpretations.
In the Indian spiritual tradition, many goddesses have been described as the divine Mother: Durga, Parvati, Uma, Kali, while in truth they are only a part of the Supreme Mother put forth by her for fulfilling her own evolutionary objective of leading the creation from the ignorance towards the divine truth and light. Though in their origin they are emanations of the Divine Mother, they are not the same as her and it is a gross mistake to identify the Supreme Mother with the goddesses of other levels.

The Mother in Sri Aurobindo’s Yoga therefore is the creative energy of the Supreme Divine at the supramental plane and not any other form of the popularly known goddesses of the Indian spiritual or religious traditions. In his essays on the Divine Mother, Sri Aurobindo has described her four main personalities of this plane which are the original governing and sustaining forces behind the entire creation. They are: Maheshwari, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi and Mahasaraswati. These four aspects of the Divine Mother must not be confused with the goddessess of the Hindu tradition known by similar names such as Kali, Lakshmi or Saraswati. As explained before, these are the goddesses of different planes put forth by the Supreme Mother to perform their appointed cosmic task. Sometimes even these goddesses are referred to as Mahakali or Mahalakshmi or Mahasaraswati. But it is only to emphasise their greatness that they are called so and not because they belong to the supramental plane. The true nature of power of the four main aspects of the Divine Mother is largely unknown to man as she chose to remain behind the veil of her emanations and act through them during this evolution in ignorance. It is only when one turns to the principle sustaining force behind all hereto known gods and goddesses that one can gradually understand and experience the nature and the working of the Supreme Mother.
In Sri Aurobindo’s Yoga, which is nothing but a conscious attempt of man to evolve out of this world of ignorance towards a life of Divine Truth, one is supposed to surrender to this Force of the Supreme Mother alone and to nothing else. For only this Power of the supramental plane has the capacity of transforming all the obscurities of man’s mind, life and body into the mould of a divine being, which is the final aim of Sri Aurobindo’s Yoga. This transformation cannot take place if the surrender is made to forces of other planes simply because such gods and goddesses have no power to perform this formidable task. It is therefore absolutely essential that one clearly understand this difference between the Supreme Mother and her various emanations at the lower planes and turn to her alone, if one wishes to practise Sri Aurobindo’s yoga of supramental transformation.

Sri Aurobindo gives a few practical and extremely useful hints which are essentially the basic principles in the process of his yoga.

“If you desire this transformation, put yourself in the hands of the Mother and her powers without cavil or resistance and let her do unhindered her work within you. Three things you must have, consciousness, plasticity, unreserved surrender. For, you must be conscious in your mind and soul and heart and life and the very cells of your body, aware of the Mother and her powers and their working, for although she can and does work in you even in your obscurity and in your unconscious parts and moments it is not the same thing as when you are in an awakened and living communion with her. All your nature must be plastic to her touch, - not questioning as the self-sufficient ignorant mind questions, doubts and disputes and is the enemy of its enlightenment and change; not insisting on its own movement as the vital in man insists and persistently opposes its refractory desires and ill-will to every divine influence, not obstructing
and entrenched in incapacity, inertia and tamas as man's physical consciousness obstructs and clinging to its pleasure in smallness and darkness, cries out against each touch that disturbs its soulless routine or its dull sloth or its torpid slumber. The unreserved surrender of your inner and outer being will bring this plasticity into all the parts of your nature; consciousness will awaken everywhere in you by constant openness to the wisdom and light, the force, the harmony and beauty and perfection that come flowing down from above. Even the body will awake and unite at last to the supramental super consciousness force, feel all her powers permeating from above and below and around it and thrill to a supreme love and Ananda.

But be on your guard and do not try to understand and judge the divine Mother by your little earthly mind that loves to subject even the things that are beyond it, to its own norms and standards, its narrow resonings and erring impressions, its bottomless aggressive ignorance and its petty self-confident knowledge. The human mind shut in the prison of its half-lit obscurity cannot follow the many-sided freedom of the steps of the divine shakti. The rapidity and complexity of her vision and action outrun mind's stumbling comprehension; the measures of its movements are not its measures. It will not recognize the way of the supreme power when it is circling and sweeping upwards through the maze of the ignorance to a supernal light. Therefore open rather your soul to her and be content to feel her with the psychic nature and see her with the psychic vision, that alone make a straight response to the truth. Then the Mother herself will enlighten your psychic elements, your mind and heart and life and physical consciousness and reveale to them her ways and her nature.

Avoid also the error of the ignorant mind's demand on the divine power to act always according to our crude surface notions of
omniscience and omnipotence. For our mind clamours to be impressed at every form by miraculous power and easy success and dazzling splendour, otherwise it cannot believe that here is the divine. The Mother is dealing with the ignorance in the fields of the ignorance, she has descended their and is not all above. Partly she veils, and partly unveils her knowledge and her power, often she holds them back from her instruments and personalities and follow that she may transform them the way of the seeking mind, the way of the aspiring psychic, the way of the battling vital, the way of the imprisoned and suffering physical nature.

There are conditions that have been laid down by a supreme will, there are many tangled knots that have to be loosened and cannot be cut abruptly. The Asura and Rakshasa hold this evolving earthly nature and have to be met and conquered on their own terms in their own long conquered fief and province. The human in us has to be led and prepared to transcend its limits and is too weak and obscure to be lifted up suddenly to a form far beyond it. The divine consciousness and force are there and do at each moment the things that is needed in the conditions of the labour, take always the step that is decreed and shape in the midst of imperfection, the perfection that is to come. But only when the supermind has descended in you can she deal directly as the supramental shakti with supramental natures. If you follow your mind, it will not recognize the Mother even when she is manifest before you. Follow your soul and not your mind, your soul that answers to the truth, not your mind that leaps at appearances; trust the Divine power as she will free the god like elements in you and shape all into an expression of Divine nature.

The supramental change is the thing that is decreed and inevitable in the evolution of earth-consciousness; for, its upward ascent is not ended and mind is not its last summit. But that the
change may arrive, take form and endure, there is needed a call from below with a will to recognize and not deny the Light when it comes, and there is needed the sanction of the supreme from above.

The power that mediates between the sanction and the call is the presence and power of the Divine Mother. The Mother's power and not any human endeavour and Tapasya can alone rend the lid entire the covering and shape the vessel and bring down into this world of obscurity and falsehood and death and suffering, Truth and Light and Life Divine and the immortal's Ananda."

Therefore in this yoga it is the Divine who is the Sadhaka and the Sadhana; it is his Shakti-with her light, power, knowledge consciousness, Ananda, acting upon the adhara, and when it is opened to her, pouring in to it with these divine forces, that makes the sadhana possible. But so long as the lower nature is active the personal effort of the sadhaka remains necessary.

This personal effort required is a triple labour of aspiration, rejection and surrender.

i) An aspiration – vigilant, constant, unceasing-aspiration and a strong, pure and true will to open to the highest force to act upon it.

ii) 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, selfishness, pride, arrogance, lust, greed, jealousy, envy, hostility to the Truth, so that the true power and joy may pour from above in to a calm, large, strong, and consecrated vital being. - rejection of the physical natures, stupidity, doubt, disbelief, obscurity, obstinacy, pettiness, laziness, unwillingness to change; tamas, so that the true
stability of Light, Power, Ananda may establish itself in a body, growing always more divine.

iii) Finally – surrender of one-self 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 Sadhak becomes conscious of the Divine Shakti doing the Sadhana, pouring in to 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.

Note that a tamasic surrender refusing to fulfil the conditions 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.

The Mother guides, helps each according to his nature and need and where necessary, herself intervenes with her power enabling the Sadhan to withstand the rigours and demands of the path. She has placed herself with all the Love, peace, knowledge and consciousness that she is at the disposal of every aspiring soul that looks for help.

The Divine Grace and Power can do everything but with the full assent of the Sadhaka. To learn to give that full assent is the whole meaning of the Sadhana.84
iv) The Nature of the Mother’s Work in Transformation of the Physical

Integral Yoga is a great adventure, as one can gather from many saying of Sri. Aurobindo and the Mother. It is not a path for people soft of mind or construction. It is a yoga requiring the temperament of the heroic warrior. Without heroism man can not grow into the Godhead. Courage, energy and strength are among the very principles of the divine nature in action. The Mother wrote “We have not come for peace but for victory, because in a world ruled by hostile forces victory has to precede peace”.

In this difficult yoga, “The descent of Supermind into the Inconscient and manifestation of the Supermind in material life - This was the clear object on which Sri Aurobindo and the Mother worked together. A major portion of this work, in its external aspect was the development and organization of their research laboratory, which was named ‘Sri Aurobindo Ashram’. This laboratory consisted of an increasing number of individuals who represented a special difficulty in the process of transformation. Each individual received from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother all the care and attention that were required for his or her growth...... Each individual was given a special work, and everyone was expected to spend at least 8 hours a day on a work useful for the entire collectivity. The work had to be done with a certain attitude and in a certain state of consciousness in consonance with the demands of the yoga of Transformation. The Ashram was not created for renunciation of action, but for a dynamic Sadhana which would accelerate the evolution of Supermind in the life on the earth.

The entire organization of the Ashram embodied the dynamic principles of the Supermental Yoga. Each must find his own truth, and this can not be done by imposing uniformity, or external rules of
behaviour. Everybody was given a work appropriate to the needs of his or her growth...... The idea behind this organisation was that each individual carries in himself a truth and that it is with that truth that he must unit himself. The road that he or she follows to join and realise that truth becomes also the road which would bring him or her the nearest possible to the anvil of transformation. All activities were under minute observation... Everything was under test".86

However in the creation and establishment of an Ashram of this kind, both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother were quite aware and highly conscious that it would not result into a cult or a sect or a religion of its own. Sri Aurobindo's opinions in this was very clear. He said "I don't believe in advertisement except for books etc, and in propaganda except for politics and patent medicines. But for serious work it is a poison. It means either a stunt or a boom - and stunt and booms exhaust the thing they carry on their crest and leave it lifeless and broken high and dry on the shores of nowhere - or it means a movement. It means that hundreds or thousands of useless people join in and corrupt the work or reduce it to a pompous farce from which the Truth that was coming down recedes into secrecy and silence. This is what has happened to the religions and it is the reason of their failure".87 And he added "I prefer to do solid work, and that if the work got accomplished it would spread by itself. If that work gets done, then it will propagate itself so far as propagation is necessary - if it were not to get done, propagation would be useless."88

In This context it is of interest to note about the nature or the quality of disciples Sri Aurobindo wanted for his adventurous yoga. "I do not want hundreds of thousands of disciples. It will be enough if I can get a hundred complete men empty of petty egoism, who will be instruments of God. I have no faith in the customary trade of the Guru. I do not wish to be Guru...."89
Sri Aurobindo and the Mother were aware that their fully elaborated and forceful vision of the Supermind and supermanhood could easily lead to the growing self-assertion of fanatic sectarians. The Mother therefore warned “Truth is not a dogma that one can learn once and for all and impose as a rule. Truth is Infinite like the Supreme Lord himself and it manifest at every moment in those who are sincere and attentive...... With Sri Aurobindo it is impossible to talk of a teaching or even of a revelation, his is a direct Action by the Lord, and thereon no religion can be founded. Spiritual life can only exist in its purity when it is free of all forms of mental dogma.” It is with this spirit, principle and purpose that Sri Aurobindo Ashram was founded. The entire work of establishing the Ashram on these lines belonged to the Mother, which she did splendidly. Sri Aurobindo has always said that the Mother represents the practical or manifestation side of his yoga. The one aspect of this practical side of her action was the establishment of the Ashram as a laboratory experiment in their yoga and taking the entire responsibility of guiding the inmates and disciples in their practice of yoga and in accordance with the demands of Sadhana for a transformation in collectivity, this especially after Sri Aurobindo went into total seclusion in November 1926. The other practical or manifestation side of the Mother’s action was the experiment of the Yoga of Transformation on her body, which forms an extremely significant aspect of Sri Aurobindo’s Yoga of establishing the Supermental Light into the physical or into the Inconscient. “Your body is indispensable for the work. Without your body the work cannot be done.” Sri Aurobindo had said to the Mother when he had decided to withdraw from his physical body which act, he felt was inevitable to enable the Sadhana to progress further. To this the Mother who was indeed Shakti in action and who was aware of this fact said “Well in that respect, it is absolutely
undeniable that my body has an infinitely greater capacity than Sri Aurobindo’s had.”

How exactly was this practical side of their Sadhana, although it appears to be rather beyond comprehension to normal mentality but still a brief description can give an insight or a glimpse as to the depth of their vision and practice of their Yoga of Transformation of the physical.

The Integral Yoga aims at an Integral Transformation. There is indeed an ascending path which by various processes or by combination of various processes takes us to higher and higher levels of consciousness. And then there is a descending path for bringing down the higher levels of consciousness including Supermind into the lower levels of matter, right up to the lowest, which is the Inconscient inorder to bring about transformation.

Speaking of these paths the Mother said “When you follow the ascending path the work is relatively easy. I had already covered this path by the beginning of the century and had established a constant relationship with the Supreme – That which is beyond the Personal and the gods and all the outward expressions of the Divine, but also beyond the Absolute Impersonal. It is something you can not describe; you must experience it, and this is what must be brought down into Matter. Such is the descending path, the one I began with Sri Aurobindo, and there, the work is immense. The thing can still be brought down as far as the mental and vital planes (although Sri Aurobindo said that thousand of life times would be needed merely to bring it down to the mental plane, unless one practiced a perfect surrender). With Sri Aurobindo, we went down Matter right into the Subconscient and even into the Inconscient. But after the descent come the transformation and when come down to the body, when
you attempt to make it, take one step forward - not even a real step, just a little step, everything starts grating; it is like stepping on an anthill.... The path is difficult."\(^{93}\)

This durable transformation necessitated the descent into Inconscience with the power of the Supermind. Necessarily owing to the resistance of the lower levels of consciousness, particularly of Matter, and Subconscience and Inconscience, the process is long and there are several stages. Higher and higher levers of consciousness had to be fixed in Matter. By 1926, the Overmind was brought down into Matter, and an overmental creation came into view. Something momentous was being worked out. As the Mother explained "In 1926, I had begun a sort of overmental creation, to make each god descend into a being – there was an extraordinary upward curve. Well I was in contact with these beings and I told Krishna (because I was always seeing him around Sri Aurobindo). "This is all very fine, but what I want now is a creation on earth - you must incarnate". He said yes, then I saw him – I saw him with my own eyes join himself to Sri Aurobind."\(^{94}\)

**a) The Great Siddhi of Sri Aurobindo Of November 24th 1926**

This descent of Krishna in total into Sri Aurobindo's body is regarded as a significant and a decisive turn in the yoga of Sri Aurobindo. This is termed the Siddhi, which took place on the November 24th 1926 and this day every year is celebrated as 'Siddhi Day' in the Ashram. The significance of this descent of Overmind Godhead Krishna has been, as described by the Mother to the disciples "Krishna Consented to descend into Sri Aurobindo's body – to be fixed there; there is a great difference, between incarnating, being fixed in a body, and simply acting as an influence that comes and goes and moves about. The gods are always moving about, and
it is plain that we ourselves in our inner beings, come and go and act in a hundred or a thousand places at once. There is a difference between just coming occasionally and accepting to be permanently tied to a body – between a permanent influence and a permanent presence. These things have to be experienced." It is probably after this very significant realization, that Sri Aurobindo officially introduced her to the disciples as the ‘Mother’ some where in 1926, whom until then he used call ‘Mirra’.

The Mother further said that the phenomenon was important for the creation. But Sri Aurobindo himself was rather indifferent to it, and infact it was she who did tell him about the event. It was at that time that Sri Aurobindo decided to stop dealing with people and to confine himself to his room to do an intensive Sadhana for the descent of the Supermind and asked the Mother to take the entire charge of the Ashram work and also the work of guiding the disciples. This Sri Aurobindo declared to all people around him in very clear terms. “I have decided to retire to my room….. I am withdrawing for the purposes of Sadhana, and Mother will take charge of everyone; you should address yourself to her, she will represent me and she will do all the work.”

At this point of time it is also interesting to know how Sri Aurobindo was not for this overmental manifestation and wanted to proceed straight to the Supramental manifestation and he was not satisfied with any thing short of this how so ever it was attractive and miraculous to others. As for this overmental creation, in which Mother had asked various gods to incarnate, to identify themselves with a body, the fact was that the gods were beginning to manifest. But as Mother, explained: “In the end, Sri Aurobindo told me it was an overmental creation, but this is not the highest truth we are seeking.” And he intended Mother to undo the whole process. The
Mother's reaction to this was "I made no reply, not a word. In half an hour I had undone everything – I undid it all, really everything, cut the connection between the gods and the people here, demolished absolutely everything. Because you see, I knew it was so attractive to people (they were constantly seeing the most astonishing things) that the obvious temptation was to hand on to it and say, we will improve on it – which was impossible. So I sat down quietly for half an hour, and I undid it all. We had to start over again with something else. But I said nothing. I told no one about it except Sri Aurobindo. At the time I let no one know, because they would have been completely discouraged."  

Overmental creation would have meant the possibility of establishing a new religion, but as Sri Aurobindo pointed out "It is far from my purpose to propagate any religion, new or old, for humanity.... A way to be opened that is still blocked, not a religion to be founded is my conception of the matter."  

After his total seclusion from 1926 onwards Sri Aurobindo concentrated entirely on bringing and establishing the Supermind into the earth consciousness, but the very practical side of its manifestation into and of transformation of the physical at the level of Matter or the Inconscient was left to the Mother. The work and the progress was very rapid until around 1935, but later their Sadhana received a very severe set back because of the world situation growing difficult and grim, and this set back persisted until the end of the Second World War.  

In around 1935 Sri Aurobindo had noticed a significant breakthrough in his Sadhana. About the descent of the Supermind he wrote in a letter "Now I have got the hang of the whole hanged thing - like a very Einstein I have got the mathematical formula of the whole
affair (unintelligible as in his own case to anybody but myself) and I am working it out figure by figure. The tail of the Supermind is descending. It is only the tail at present, but where the tail can pass, the rest will follow. My formula is working rapidly.

About the nature of their Sadhana at the time the Mother had said “When there was a special force that came down or an opening or a Supermental manifestation, we both knew it at the same time, in the same way. And we did not even need to speak to each other about it, only for consequences, for the practical results in the work, did we some time exchange a word or two. I never had this with any one except Sri Aurobindo... The work was microscopic, the work was complex, the work was both external and internal. After the Overmind was fixed in matter, the next step in the work was to fix the Supermind in Matter. It became clearer that the task of fixing the Supermind in the physical had to be done by opening up the physical cell....”

About this transformation of the physical the Mother also used to say “I am doing the sadhana really along a path that has never been trod by any one. Sri Aurobindo did it in principle, but he gave the charge of doing it in the body to me....”

b) A Great Set-back to Sadhana – Events of Second World War

At this very point of time and when the Sadhana was in serious progress, there were great expectations around and questions were pressing on Sri Aurobindo and the Mother as to when exactly this Supramental descent would take place and as to its immediate consequences etc., but at the same time Sri Aurobindo and the Mother were encountering a great resistance from all around and it was a great set back. By around 1935, the pressure and resistance had grown. In answer to a disciple Sri Aurobindo wrote “I find that
more the Light and Power are coming down the greater is the resistance. You yourself can see that there is something pressing down. You can also see that there is the tremendous resistance. 103

From then on the world situation progressively became restless and grim and even dreadful and until the world war broke out finally in 1939, when with the growing resistance this evolutionary yoga also came to a halt. To both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother it was the play of the Hostile Forces in action the aim of which was mainly to offer as great a resistance as possible for the advent of this adventurous yoga of transformation and both of them had to concentrate entirely on countering these adverse or Asuric forces and to re-establish a favourable and condusive atmosphere for this yoga. Of course there are innumerable instances on record describing their interference in these world events in their own occult way and through their yogic power, but however it is not intended to go into any of such details here. 104

"The emergence of Nazism was, infact, the emergence of barbarism, a terrible threat to the advancement of culture and to the work of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. It signaled even a possibility of an attack on the physical being of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, Indeed this possibility became a concrete event when Sri Aurobindo himself sustained an accident, he slipped and fractured his right leg above the knee. This was on November 24th 1938. Within a year the Second World War broke out. The ferocity and speed of the Nazi victories were so great that Sri Aurobindo concentrated on the War and declared that he had put all his Yogic Force on the side of the Allies." 105 Sri Aurobindo wrote, "The victory of one side (The Allies) would keep the path open for the evolutionary forces. The victory of the other side would drag back humanity, degenerate it horribly and
might lead even, at the worst, to in eventual failure as a race, as others in the past evolution failed and perished.”

On another occasion the Mother had described the event of war like this. “Throughout the war Sri Aurobindo and I were in such a constant tension that it completely interrupted the yoga. And that is why the war started in the first place – to stop the work. At that time there was an extraordinary descent of the Supermind. It was coming like that, a descent exactly in 1939. Then the war broke out and stopped everything cold......”

Howsoever it may look incredible “There is no doubt that Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have constantly intervened in the war events with their spiritual force.” And Sri Aurobindo in fact called this war as ‘The Mother’s war’ only to emphasise the significant and decisive role she played through her occult powers during the course of the war and on several accessions, for the victory of the Allied Forces.

The war ended in 1945, with the victory for the Allies, as Sri Aurobindo had willed. And yet, the difficulties were not over for Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. In July 1948, Sri Aurobindo wrote in a letter to a disciple “Things are bad, are growing worse and may at any time grow worst or worst than the worst if that is possible and anything seems possible in the present perturbed world...... all this was necessary because certain possibilities had to emerge and be got rid of, if a new and better world was at all to come into being .....”

c) Sri Aurobindo Leaves His Body – The Mystic Significance and the Mind of Light

At this time in the year 1950 Sri Aurobindo decided to leave his physical body and to act from behind the scene to hasten the process
of his yoga. As soon as he decided this, he hastened, the work of writing Savitri (the work which he had commenced as early as 1899 in Baroda) and completed it by November 10th 1950, just about 25 days before he had to leave his body. He left his physical body on December 5th 1950, with an assurance to the Mother that he would consciously guide her with a dynamic presence in action. From then on it was the Mother who would continue the work of yoga all alone but of course with this dynamic power and action of Sri Aurobindo from behind the veil.

About leaving his body Sri Aurobindo is reported to have told the Mother “I have left the body purposely.... I shall manifest again in the first Supramental body built in the Supramental way.”

But as soon as Sri Aurobindo left his body, it is said, he transmitted all of his yogic acquirements at once in to the body of the Mother to allow her to continue the work. About this amazing occult phenomenon the Mother has said “When Sri Aurobindo had left, there was an entire part – the most material part of the descent into the material body down to the mental – which visibly left his body and entered into mine, and that was so concrete that I felt the friction of the forces going through the pores of my skin... It was as concrete as if it had been material.”

This yogic light which entered or got realized into the body of the Mother, as soon as Sri Aurobindo left his body, was called ‘The Mind of Light’ by the Mother.

“The supermind had descended long ago.... Into the mind and even into the vital. It was working in the physical also but indirectly through those intermediaries. The question was about the direct action of the Supermind in the physical. Sri Aurobindo said it could be possible only if the physical mind received the Supramental Light.
The physical mind was the instrument for direct action upon the most material. This physical mind receiving the Supremetal light is called the Mind of Light.\textsuperscript{112}

Then why did Sri Aurobindo leave his body. To this the Mother had said “There was nothing ‘mortal’ about Sri Aurobindo.... Sri Aurobindo did not die of physical causes. He had complete control over his body.”\textsuperscript{113} The Mother also said in December 1950, “Sri Aurobindo had entered death voluntarily – He was not compelled to leave his body, he chose to do so for reasons so sublime that they are beyond the reach of human mentality. No doubt, the fact is so complex and our knowledge of its real factors and background so limited that our understanding of them is limited too.”\textsuperscript{114}

The Mother, also explained briefly the main reason for Sri Aurobindo’s departure. “The lack of earth’s receptivity and the behaviour of disciples are largely responsible for what happened to his body. But one thing is certain. The great misfortune that has beset us, in no way affects the truth of his teaching. All he said is perfectly true and remains so. Time and the course of events will make this abundantly clear.”\textsuperscript{115} It can also be said that the world was not yet ready or rather it was the totality of things around him that was not ready and through his yogic vision he saw that it would be done much faster if he were not there. Or in other words it would be better done in the Mother’s body. This the Mother has recalled Sri Aurobindo as saying in a conversation a few days earlier and when she had expressed her readiness to leave the body in the event, one of them should leave, “No, you can’t go. Your body is better than mine. You can undergo the transformation better than I can do.”\textsuperscript{116} And that his body was not capable of enduring the transformation, and also that he had arranged everything in a way nothing would be able to disrupt the continuation of his work. “It was a technical,
practical, occult exigency to hasten the manifestation of the Supermind and the Supermental transformation on Earth. It might not be unreasonable to postulate that this acceleration was seen as imperative by Sri Aurobindo to make it possible that the foundations of the divine future of humankind – the task for which the double Avatar had incarnated – might be built while the Avatar, now physically embodied only in the Mother, would still be on Earth. Otherwise a new incarnation would have been required somewhere in the future, which means that the manifestation of the Supermind would have been postponed;"^{117}

d) The Mother's Work – Her Divine Potentialities

Since December 1950 Sri Aurobindo kept himself working from behind the veil for this transformation in the physical to be worked out more rapidly. He gave, the entire programme and knowledge into the hands of the Mother to complete the Work, for which both of them had come to a successful end.

"To this question as to what exactly was the work of Sri Aurobindo and how Mother continued that work it would need a thorough understanding of the relevant writings of Sri Aurobindo and 13 volumes of ‘Mother's Agenda’ would be necessary. Satprem has made a detailed study of this question in his biography of Sri Aurobindo ‘Sri Aurobindo or the Adventure of consciousness and in his biography of the Mother in Three volumes, Mother or the Divine Materialism, Mother or the New Species, Mother or the Mutation of Death."^{118}

The descent of Supramental had already been made possible by Sri Aurobindo. But its manifestation upon earth took place on 29th Feb 1956. On this day the Supramental Light and Force and Consciousness rushed down upon earth in an uninterrupted flow as
the Mother has described. The distinctive difference between the
descent and manifestation as described by the Mother – “The descent
is an individual event and it takes place in the individual
consciousness, whereas, when the descent is in the form of a flood
and is to the entire earth consciousness it is manifestation. It is a
Force that spreads everywhere. After this event of 1956 Mother called
this day of 1956 ‘Golden day’.” On this event the Mother said “The
aim for which the Supramental Avatar had incarnated on Earth was
accomplished. A new evolution, the evolution of a divine species could
begin.”

About the appearance or arrival of this new divine species of
Supramental beings on Earth, according to Sri Aurobindo which has
already been decreed, the author of ‘Beyond Man’ Georges Van
Vrekhem writes, “After the many cycles of the human presence and
Evolution on Earth, the time had come for the arrival of this new
species without humankind even being aware of it. Sri Aurobindo and
the Mother, the Avatar, the Two-in-One had come to make this
possible. Therefore they had to take the past of the evolution upon
and into them, and they had to work in order to make the earthly
embodiment of the new species realizable. To be able to descend
deeper than ever into Matter and its foundations, the Subconscient
and Inconscient, they first had to claim higher than ever in the Spirit
by means of a New Yoga beyond the existing yogas. Only after
discovering there the divine Unity – Consciousness and acquiring it,
could they descend more deeply in to the caves of existence, guided
by the Light of which they had become the bearers.”

The Mother concentrated on the work of transformation of the
Physical with this Supramental Force and of establishing a link
between the existing world and the Supramental world. This was a
formidable task and was a walk entirely in an unknown and a new
path, and was indeed an adventure. In Mother's own words "It is really walking blindly, without any help, in a desert, a desert strewn with every possible trap and difficulty and obstacle. .... I am absolutely in the midst of hewing a road through the virgin forest - worst than a virgin forest." Although Every minute details of her sadhana over the years has been recorded minute by minute and day by day in 'Mother's Agenda' 13 volumes, it is not intended to go into any of those details here. It is only intended to picture briefly the Nature of Mother's work as described by Sri Aurobindo and herself as Shakti in action.

The Mother was a cyclone of Force in absolute surrender. Mother's pressure for a change was always strong – even when she doesn't put it as a force, it is there by the very nature of the Divine Energy in her. The Mother was the incarnated Shakti, the executive, manifesting Energy of the Divine. As Sri Aurobindo wrote about the Nature of the Mother "She was the Universal Mother, the divine Mahashakti, Original Power, Supreme Nature, holding in herself Infinite existence and creating the wonders of the Cosmos.... All Powers of all the planes must be seen and known as self – formulations of the one spiritual Shakti, Infinite in being, consciousness, and Ananda." He also wrote about the Supramental personality of the Mother which from behind the veil presides over the aim of the present manifestation. "This was the source of her existence, of her knowledge of her action. There is nothing that is impossible to her who is the conscious Power and universal Goddes all - creative from eternity and armed with the Spirits Omnipotence."122

How exactly she did the work of transformation of the physical or the inconscience of Matter even at the level of her own body cells, it is interesting and amazing to know, although it is probably beyond
one's comprehension. The Mother describes "At last the body is experiencing the conquest of Matter..... of inertia, of tamas, of this misery and suffering and this kind of illusion disappears with the victory over death.... It is a kind of illumination, a kind of revelation of the inner reality, of the secret of Matter which awakes from its torpor and reveals the Knowledge and Ananda of its existence. It is a delightful work I am engaged in, constantly, night and day, with more or less ardour, according to the circumstances. Even when I am outwardly occupied with some laborious work which demands a lot of attention, even then this inner work of transformation of the cells continues unabated with a vigilance and an absolute concentration. It is true that at night when I am all alone, left to myself, the work of transformation proceeds faster. But it demands an enormous patience of a different kind, with an unparalleled tenacity and exactitude, to work minutely with a meticulous precision and without reserve."123

The Mother describes further her experiment of transformation at the level of her body cell "I take up one cell, it is very small, microscopic, which one can not see with naked eye, but I possess that Power and that Vision. Like this I take up one tiny little cell and I open it to the transforming light of the Divine Consciousness. Then in it I infuse this immutable Divine Joy with an unwavering Peace and I charge it with the Luminous Power of the Divine Reality. In this way it becomes complete in all the aspects of the Lord. This is how I work, And I charge each cell with this Divine Consciousness and then I take up another cell..."124 And she continues her experience and describes how useful is the work to other sadhaks...... "What I find interesting is what I am doing on myself, not for a particular result, but for the possibility that is opening for the earth... for a new process which extends from here, with me as base, from my body, where I have been able to charge this matter with the supramental substance,
to those who are ready to open to the New Consciousness, who aspire for the transformation of the body. For them it will be so much less work, so many difficulties removed by the work that I have done on myself. What I have succeeded in doing in me as the forerunner, the first to trace this root towards the Supramental, is astonishing, it is marvelous. And I have begun to take a lot of interest in it, a lot of Joy, with an enthusiasm which cannot be expressed in words. It has become an essential part of my existence. I find an extraordinary meaning in what I am pursuing, in what I am doing on myself.....”

Besides Sri Aurobindo, who was fully aware of the Divine potentialities of the Mother expressing time and again her Divine Nature to the disciples, she herself has revealed her True Nature on several occasions and one such revelation is like this. “My child, I am the Unknown that is unseizable, yet I consent to be seized; I am the Unknowable, yet men pretend to know me. I am the Infinite but I am constrained to limit myself in a physical body by time and space. I am the Eternal who has submitted itself to be bound in evolution. I am Immortality which awakes in its innumerable aspects that perish, in order to climb back towards the One, and which has consented to a birth, in order to suffer the terrestrial consequences. I am the Nihil where everything disappears; the Inconscience that denies my presence, yet each atom of this mass of ignorance palpitates with my consciousness. I am the Mystery – the great paradox which has begun to unveil the innate secrets of this divine manifestation in the terrestrial and cosmic evolution. By the fact of this immense descent of the Supramental upon earth, we foresee the gradual dissolution of the duality, the contradictions and many other things which trouble ordinary men.

My child, I am the Cause, the great Creatrix from whom everything emanates. All that you can conceive of is created from me,
by me and for me it exists. Nothing is which is not in me. You understand, it will take you hundreds of births to understand what I am. And yet I reveal myself to my devotees who love me; and still I shall remain unseizable...

Let us not speak of it any more because the words and the expressions are so lamentably poor, - one would say it is childish, - to express this state of grandeur and sublimity.... How can you conceive that I am more strong and powerful than all that you can imagine; yet I am more delicate and sweet than all that exists. You see, I can enumerate to you thousands of ways and attitudes of my existence and still you will remain where you are and the whole world will not understand.”

It is no wonder therefore that Sri Aurobindo made this declaration to the Sadhaks of Integral Yoga, about this Divine Incarnation of the Supreme, “Since the Supreme Mother appeared on this earth in a physical form it is now easy for an aspirant of this yoga to identify her and to surrender to her Force, which is the only thing needed in this yoga”.

But it appears to be a great misfortune to India in particular, that at a time when in due recognition of his stupendous work Sri Aurobindo was to be nominated for Nobel Peace Prize, Sri Aurobindo left his body the year before the decision was to be made. And as it was not a precedent to give the prize to people posthumously he could not get it. But in a latter, year when some people wanted the Mother, to be nominated for the same prize and she was asked for a statement, the Mother in all humility while declining the proposal is reported to have said that she did not want name and fame and “That it wasn’t this person (The Mother) who did things - it was all Sri Aurobindo”. “I have a profound aversion to publicity” said the
Mother as she had as strong an aversion to sectarianism in all its forms.

7) Evolution of consciousness in collectivity - Society, Nation and Community of Nations

The objective of the Integral yoga is to span existence from the lowest levels of the Inconscience to the peak of Superconscience, embracing the variegated manifestation in the throes of evolution. It seizes upon man, the human being, as the focusing centre, but does not stop with him in his present figure of imperfection and limitation. It works to make him whole and more. It forges the degrees of his further evolution. Man develops into Superman, and Superman into the Supramental or Gnostic being as a destined result of human aspiration from below and the continuous action of the responding Grace from above.

Similarly the same process of development of the individual through which - the man with imperfection and limitation turns into a whole or complete man – The Superman and into a Supramental being or a Perfect or Gnostic being – can be as well applied to the collective, the society and Nation and a group of Nations as a next step in the process. In this direction the concept of the National Soul that is emerging appears to be a highly rational and logical consequence in the development of a perfection in collectivity and a perfect society.

According to Sri Aurobindo an individual is not a mere form of life that appears and disappears on earth. He is a being a soul, a power of the Spirit. His purpose is to manifest something that he carries within himself potentially. His life seeks self development strives to find and formulate the law, that govern this purposive growth, create conditions favourable to its fulfilment. Like the
individual his collectivity – society, community or nation – also seeks its own development and fulfillment. This also is a power of the Eternal Truth, a manifestation of the Spirit on a cosmic level. Like the individual, the Nation or society has a body, an organized life, a temperament, a mind and even a soul. Only this soul is a group-soul. It has to first arrive at a distinct self formulation and then exert itself for its rightful expression in the diverse fields of life.

Naturally, this group-soul is more complicated than the individual soul. It is constituted of so many developing self-conscious mental individuals instead of a mass of subconscious cells. That is precisely the reason why the group-soul takes longer to find itself. This process of self finding and self formulation has two aspects, the subjective and objective. The subjective is at first vague and superficial. The objective formation takes the shape of some emotional conception of the Nation centering round its physical features, the geographical aspect, its land, its mountain, rivers etc. It is only after this identification of the Nation with its body outgrowth, it is realized that it is the men and women who compose the Nation-unity that are more important, that we get closer to the truth of the corporate soul. Although these objective considerations are predominant factors, it is also true that few individuals who shape, operate or influence these factors also play a role in directing the collective movements. But however it is seen that behind both individuals and social and economic movement there is a greater subjective force striving to express itself. That is the subconscious power of the group-soul that is emerging.¹³⁰

This fact of the subjective life of a Nation is discernible in its marked preferences, tendencies etc., outwardly and in the directions it takes in its thought, art, music and the like. Mostly it is only the outer habits, prejudices etc., that are noticed. This emphasis on the
outer forms and idiosyncrasies is unmistakably seen in the history of religions. The soul of religion, the spiritual truth is completely lost sight of and whole campaigns have been undertaken to enforce formation of dogmas, beliefs, rites and ceremonies which are the most physical and dispensable forms of religions.

Happily this stage in the development of the Nation soul is now a thing of the past. Societies and nations are looking deeper into themselves to spot out and find their true soul and make it active in life. This trend is more marked in the new Nations that are struggling to find their identity, for example the countries in the course of their liberation from foreign rule. They draw upon their subjective existence in order to rectify the situation in their outer life. This tendency at times creates a new type of National movement as in the case of India or Irland before attainment of Independence in the earlier ages of their struggle.

It is now an accepted fact that even Nation has some special character, some special personality which it should be free to express in the developing life as that is its special contribution to the progress of the humanity in general.\textsuperscript{131}

Especially in case of India, the ancient Rishis and great personalities like Sri Bankimchandra, Sri Aurobindo and Sri Swami Vivekananda and may others in the recent past have contributed profusely for development of a special character, and personality to the Nation which also in course of time may help in development of a larger universal impact or to the progress of humanity in general as one unit.

Sri Aurobindo's own words in this regard is highly significant, Referring to Sri Bankimchandra as a Rishi of the present age he has said "There are many who, lamenting the by-gone glories of this great
and ancient Nation, speak as if the Rishis of the old (who were the inspired creators of thought and civilization) were a miracle of our heroic age, not to be repeated among degenerate men in our distressful present. This is an error and thrice on error. Ours is an eternal land, the eternal people, the eternal religion, whose strength, greatness, holiness may be over clouded but never for a moment utterly cease. The hero, the saint, the Rishi are the natural fruits of our Indian soil and there has been no age in which they have not been born. One such Rishi of the present age was Bankim chandra."

Himself being a Rishi of the present age to the letter, Sri Aurobindo has further said "India of the ages is not dead nor has she spoken her last creative word; she lives and has still something to do for herself and the human people. India is the Guru of the Nations, the physician of the human soul in its profounder maladies. She is destined once more to new-mould the life of the world and restore the peace of the human spirit. Thus the sun of India’s destiny would rise and fill all India with its light and overflow India, overflow Asia and overflow the world". These profound words, spoken from him out of his immense spiritual experiences and out of a powerful mystic vision of the future, are definitelly a hope for the bright future to the humanity as a whole.

Now it is very significant that innumerable literature with ample scientific proofs are pouring in from all over the world which are in conformity with this revolutionary concept of a conscious emergence of a New Species in the making. Now we are finding new books being published every now and then by eminent personalities, intellectuals and scientists as well, on this subject to describe the rational or logical culmination or to describe as to the immediate next step in the evolutionary process that is progressing.
In his famous book ‘Unknown Man – Mysterious birth of new species’ the Author describes innumerable instances and factors which are driving this planet to its threshold level and its jump into a new dimension is becoming inevitable. These threshold points he calls bifurcation points, which are caused by the pressure of the biosphere of which man is a significant contributing factor.\(^{134}\)

The Author further says that evolution is seen as a co-operative venture. This planet is thus a vast self organizing system, a living organism which contains billions of ‘far-from-equilibrium’ states which continually are creating new Microsystems, which inturn like the primitive bacteria that once helped to create the Earth’s vast atmospheric envelope, alter the Macro-system. Evolution is a gigantic, ever changing work of art, continually being created at these thresholds where the system could go any way. These critical cross roads or ‘bifurcation points’ are the points at which the system suddenly jumps to a new configuration.

“When matter is becoming disturbed by non equilibrium condition it organises itself; it wakes up. It happens that our world is a non equilibrium system. The author thus concludes “Life appears no longer a phenomenon unfolding in the universe. The universe itself becomes increasingly alive”.\(^{135}\)

In another famous book ‘Beyond Man’, The Author Georges Van Vrekhem presents a positive evaluation of the crisis our earth is subject to at this very moment and also gives a hopeful perspective on the coming of a Superhuman Species and a Divine Life upon earth.

The Author writes any one who is in some measure knowledgable about the past of India cannot deny that this country, the Assia of Assia the heart of the world’s spiritual life – has been the carrier and treasurer of the authentic spiritual riches since Vedic
times. The message of the East to the West is a true message, “only by finding himself can man be saved”\textsuperscript{136}

“India had a grand past. Those who know the country better must be moved by the intelligence, the psychological depth and plasticity and the physical harmony of the races inhabiting it. The light of which it is the bearer shines in the eyes and the smiles of its children. But because of illusionism, it has temporarily withdrawn its attention from material reality, thus being weighed down by habits and traditions which have lost their meaning and are devoid of vigour. The problems are many and colossal. Population explosion, poverty, corruption, political chaos, the cast system, religious division, blind solipsism, of the individual and the group etc.,. Despite the country's apparently unpromising present situation Sri Aurobindo and the Mother – They who saw – have predicted a golden future for it.\textsuperscript{137} Now it appears that their vision or the prediction is gradually in its own way coming true. Any one can notice that India amidst all its problems and difficulties is emerging as a world power economically, socially, politically and spiritually.

A few instances on record can be cited as to how their predictions have come true.

To a question by an Indian as for back as 1915, how is India likely to get freedom, the Mother had given a straight reply “Listen, the Britsh did not conquer India. You yourself handed over the country to the British. – A truth applicable to practically all colonial conquests in the East. In the same manner the British will themselves hand over the country to you. And they will do it in a hurry as if a ship were waiting to take them away.”\textsuperscript{138} In history few enterprises of an importance equal to Indian Independence have been dealt with as precisely as this.
Another most significant prediction is about the India to be reunited into a so called true or real India. Even today on the Ashram wall there hangs a map of India what according to the Mother is the true material body of India – inclusive of Pakistan, Bangladesh, Srilanka and Part of Burma. The map was made after the partition. The Mother wrote; “It is the map of True India inspite of all passing appearances and it will always remain the map of true India, whatever people may think about it”.\textsuperscript{139} Sri Aurobindo has said that by whatever means, in whatever way the division must go. He said “India will be reunited. I see it clearly. “About this vision he has envisaged very clearly in his message to the Nation on the occasion of the Independence on August 15\textsuperscript{th} 1947.\textsuperscript{140} The Mother has even predicted how that would come to pass. Pakistan divided into provinces on the lines of its ethnic population, will fall apart and the separate regimes will seek a confederation with India, which itself, as a solution to its internal problems, will become a still more confederate state than it is at the moment”.\textsuperscript{141}

In his message for the day of India’s Independence, the Sri Aurobindo wrote about the division of the body of Mother India into India and Pakistan “The old communal division into Hindus and Muslims seems now to have hardened into a permanent political division of the country. It is to be hoped that this settled fact will not be accepted for ever or anything more than a temporary expedient. For if it lasts India may be seriously weaken, even crippled; civil strife may remain always possible, possible even a new invasion and foreign conquest. India’s internal development and prosperity may be impeded, her position among the nations weekend, her destiny impaired or even frustrated. This must not be, the partition must go. Let us hope that may come about naturally. But by whatever means, in whatever way, the division must go; unity must at will be achieved, for it is necessary for the greatness of India’s future.”\textsuperscript{142}
Similarly the predictions of Sri Aurobindo about the descent of the Power of Supramental and subsequent transformation of the human nature into a Divine Nature and eventual transmutation of the human species into a Diviners species and the goal of achieving a larger unity of the mankind on this Divinised earth is also to be firmly believed to be realized in the future. As to both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother with all their profoundest knowledge, effort, sadhana and Tapasya for several decades it is an inevitable certainty and also equally we have no reason to disbelieve these two greatest prophets of our time.