"Intellectuality is not the highest good, Morality and Spirituality are the things for which we strive".

- Swami Vivekananda
1. NATURE OF SPIRIT

Sri Aurobindo means by Spirit a "Self-existent" being with an 'infinite' power of consciousness with unconditioned delight in its being.¹ This characterisation of Spirit does not distinguish it from Saccidānanda. It stands for the philosophical absolute according to Sri Aurobindo. It is the same as Saccidānanda.

Although in its true nature it is pure and perfect, in its conditioned existence it takes the poise of its being with which it is associated. In mind-nature, it becomes the mental being; in life-nature, it becomes the vital being; in nature of Matter, it becomes the physical being; in Supermind, it becomes the being of knowledge; and in the supreme spiritual status, it becomes Saccidānanda.²

Sri Aurobindo makes a clear cut distinction between Spirit and Mind. Mind according to him is an instrument whose function is to think and perceive whereas the Spirit standing for consciousness does not need to think or perceive either in the mental or in the sensory way because whatever knowledge it has is not something which is got from outside but intrinsic to it (Svayam Prakāśa). Mind and senses do not constitute the essential instruments for the knowledge of the Spirit in its intrinsic nature. The Spirit needs them only in its conditional existence.

2. MEANING & IMPORTANCE OF SPIRITUALITY

The word spiritual can be looked at from different points of view. From the point of view of Religion, whoever believes in God, worships Him and aspires for His abode is considered spiritual. From the ethical point of view whoever lives according to code of good conduct, ethical values is considered spiritual. Spiritual is also understood sometimes in opposition to the material - the former of the essence of consciousness and the later the inert incapable of generating consciousness. This spiritual is also often equated with the Absolute, the first cause or principle on which matter depends.

1. Letters on Yoga, p.322.
Most of the religions in the world have an abiding faith in the ultimacy of Spiritual power. They reduce matter and everything other than spirit to the dependence on Spirit. Spirit is considered to be the highest truth, the unmoved mover, the master of matter, the being in the midst of becoming, the substance behind the show, the essential in the midst of accidental, the source of everything in the universe and that which deserves to be realised.

There is a divine spark in every man but in some it is conspicuous, illuminating his path. But in some it is eclipsed and obscured under the heavy heap of what we may call coal, we need to fan to make the spark ignite the coal and illumine our path.

Sri Aurobindo, a revolutionary philosopher who established new tradition in the present century, has clearly pointed out the need for spiritual life in the contemporary world. He distinguished between an outer and inner self - which he calls the double soul in his philosophy. A man who realises his inner self is considered to be spiritual. Hence his concept of double soul has to be understood first because it is vitally connected with his concept of spirituality.
3. IMPORTANCE OF DOUBLE SOUL

According to Sri Aurobindo, we have double soul in us. They are surface desired-soul and subliminal psychic entity. The first one works in our vital cravings, emotions, aesthetic faculty and mental seeking for power, knowledge and happiness. The second one is the soul behind the outer form of psychic existence. The external one is the basis for egoistic self while the subliminal constitutes our larger true individuality. In the subliminal, the man comes in direct contact with the universal. Our external soul is shut off in egoistic walls, where the cosmic delight is dwarfed, distorted or masked. It is here we misinterpret the pure essential joy of being in terms of pleasure, pain and indifference.

The real soul according to Sri Aurobindo is the 'Psychic being'. It is also called 'Chaitya Purusha'. At first, it is covered with body, life and mind but as it grows, it becomes capable of coming forward and dominating them.

Like Vedanta, Sri Aurobindo maintains that the real self is beyond time and space, without name and form. It is featureless, relationless, blissful pure conscious existence, self-sufficient and eternally satisfied with pure
being. He says that the deeper self is unmodified whereas the outer self is constantly changing. It is by concentration on the outer self in abstraction of the inner reality, Buddhists, pragmatists and the Sceptics reached their conclusions. On the other hand the Advaitins negated the outer self.

Sri Aurobindo criticised both the extremes of the negation of the self and the negation of the nature. According to him "The self has two aspects and the results of realising it correspond to these two aspects. One is statis, a condition of wide peace, freedom, silence; the silent is uneffected by any action or experience. It impartially supports them but does not seem to originate them at all, rather to stand back detached or unconcerned, Udasina. The other aspect is dynamic and that experienced as a cosmic self or a spirit which not only supports but originates and contains the whole cosmic action - not only that part of it which concerns our physical selves but also all that is beyond it - this world and all other world, the supra-physical as well as physical ranges of the universe. Moreover we feel it as one in all but also we feel it as above all, transcendent, surpassing all individual birth or cosmic existence." Thus the integral knowledge of the self is the knowledge of both these aspects.

1. Sri Aurobindo Lights on Yoga, pp.56-57.
4. SPIRITUALITY IN SRI AUROBINDO'S VIEW

In Sri Aurobindo's philosophy we meet with such terms as 'Spiritual', 'Spiritual urge', 'Spirituality', 'Spiritual aspiration', 'Spiritual sage', 'Spiritual formation' of the being, 'Spiritual knowledge', 'Spiritual life' and 'Spiritual man'. They are used in contrast to physicality (Materialism); vitality and mentality (Mind).

Spirituality is used in the sense of supramaterial, supravital (life force) and supramental reality. It pervades matter, life and mind and at the same time transcends them. The difference of spirit to the rest namely, matter, life and mind is not in degree but in kind, not in quantity but in quality.

Sri Aurobindo cautions us that we should not mistake what he calls 'altruistic eagerness' for spirituality. For man to become divine in consciousness and act and to live inwardly and outwardly the divine life is Spirituality.

1. The Life Divine, p.841.
2. Ibid., p.882.
3. Ibid., p.842.
4. Ibid., p.857.
Sri Aurobindo says any meaning given to the word 'spirituality' other than the above said are inadequate fumblings or impostures.

Sri Aurobindo observes that spirituality is not a high intellectuality. To be religious or to be ethical is not necessarily to be spiritual. Religious life and ethical conduct are aids to attain spirituality. It is for this reason that Sri Aurobindo observes that "Spirituality is not a high intellectuality. It is not an idealism or not an ethical turn of mind. It is also neither a moral purity and austerity nor religiosity. It is not even a compound of all these excellent things."1

The above things are of considerable value to the mind and life. They have a value to the spiritual evolution of man as preparatory movements which gives a suitable form to the nature. But they still belong to the mental evolution. They are only instruments of spiritual realisation. Hence Sri Aurobindo says "Spirituality is in its essence an awakening to the inner reality of our being, to a spirit, self, soul which is other than our mind, life and body, an inner aspiration to know, to feel, to be that, to enter into contact with the greater reality beyond and pervading the universe...."2

2. Ibid., p.857.
Spirituality involves a 'conversion', a 'transformation' of our whole being; walking into a new becoming or new being or a new self, or a new nature.

Man becomes spiritual when he becomes aware of consciousness other than ego and begin to live in it or under its influence more and more. When spiritual light enters in man, a slow change starts. Sri Aurobindo distinguishes between the ordinary thought and the "Spiritualised turn of thought". The ordinary feeling and the "Spiritualised turn of the emotional feeling"\(^1\), 'the ordinary conduct' or 'action' and 'spiritualised' conduct.

Mind in its ordinary thought centres round the formation of mental ideas, emotional feelings and action to satisfy his mental, vital and physical interests but in the spiritual turn it keeps itself aloof from such mundane pursuits and aims at realising the ultimate under its illumination. This creates at first a certain kind of religiosity which is not the pure spiritual temperament. In this stage man is mostly pre-occupied with the utilisation of such contacts to construct his moral ideals and religious feelings.

\(^1\) The Life Divine, p.881
The true turn to some spiritual change has not yet come. The first true formations take the shape of a spiritualisation of our natural activities. It has an influence over the tendencies of mind or life. A spiritualised thought emerges with uplifting illuminations. A spiritualised ethical formation takes place in the character. A spiritualised urge in life-action and also dynamic vital movement of the nature results. An awareness comes from an inner light of a guidance or a communion of a greater control than the mind and will.¹

These intuitions and illuminations grow slowly and make a strong inner formation and claim to govern the whole life and take over the nature. This brings the spiritual formation of the being. From this a saint, a devotee, a spiritual sage or a seer, a prophet emerges. The sage or seer lives in 'spiritual mind'. Their thought or vision is governed and moulded by an inner or a greater divine light of knowledge.

Sri Aurobindo points out that this is not the final stage for man. Spirituality has yet to affirm itself in its own complete right and sovereignty. This stage helps man to release the spirit from mind and for the enlargement of the

¹. The Life Divine, p.882.
being in a spiritualised mind and heart but not yet sufficiently. It is because the spirit, even at this stage, is not free from the mind's limitations and from the mental instrumentation.

Spirituality however great it is, it is working still in the realm of the mental. We have to transcend the state of spirituality also. This cannot be done by mental effort. The only way is to work hard to liberate our consciousness from the influence of the mental. But Sri Aurobindo points out "This cannot be so long as the spiritual-mental being has not risen fully to supermind and brought down its powers into terrestrial existence, for the gulf between mind and supermind has to be bridged, the closed passages opened and roads of ascent and descent created where there is now a void and silence. This can be done only by the triple transformation...."1

We need, therefore, to know what the 'spiritual knowledge', 'spiritual existence' and 'spiritual man' are and how the soul passes through the triple transformation.

5. SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE

By knowledge Sri Aurobindo means in Yoga "Not thought or ideas about spiritual things but psychic understanding

within and spiritual illumination from above.\textsuperscript{1} Sri Aurobindo is, therefore, using the term knowledge not in its ordinary sense, as sense knowledge or intellectual knowledge but as saving knowledge that culminates in realisation of the Absolute.

Broadly we can distinguish between two kinds of knowledge, namely, knowledge that comes from without, knowledge that comes from within. The first kind of knowledge requires pramāṇas' like perception, inference, upamāna etc. The second kind of knowledge does not need such external means. It has to be known by a different method. What is this knowledge that Sri Aurobindo speaks of? If knowledge from without refers to knowledge of external world such as trees, mountains, rivers and stars and the like, the knowledge from within refers to the different levels of our existence, namely, the physical, the vital, the mental, the supramental, etc.

By spiritual knowledge Sri Aurobindo does not mean intellectual knowledge or knowledge through concepts. On the other hand it is knowledge through illumination. It is knowledge of the self luminous truth through illuminations. Spiritual awareness, though a developmental stage for man,

\textsuperscript{1} Letters on Yoga, Part IV, p.1113.
is a natural character of a self. The Being, the self-existent sees all existence in its own existence. It contains them all and knows them as being of its being, consciousness of its own consciousness, power of its power, and bliss of its bliss.¹

Knowledge here is not an act but a state pure, perpetual and inherent. Spiritual knowledge is nothing more than this identity which knows of all as itself. Sri Aurobindo says "the spirit regards itself, it becomes the knower and the known, in a way the subject and object - or rather the subject-object in one of its own self knowledge."² Hence the spiritual knowledge is the knowledge by identity.

There is a spiritual intimate vision, a spiritual penetration, a spiritual feeling emerges in this knowledge. This helps to see all as oneself, feel all as oneself and contact all as oneself. There is a power of spiritual perception of the object. It is an enveloping and pervading identity.

This identity constitutes the spiritual perception. Here Sri Aurobindo's concept of spiritual knowledge does not

¹ The Life Divine, p.546.
² Ibid., p.546.
refer to subject-object knowledge. It is not knowledge of consciousness of something which is not conscious (object). It refers to knowledge of 'spirit' by the 'spirit'. Knowledge of consciousness by the consciousness. In other words, it refers to internal knowledge and not to an external knowledge. It is not relational knowledge, but a non-relational one. Here the relation between the seeker and the sought, the knower and the known disappears totally. It is one of identity because there is no difference between the two in this kind of knowledge.¹

There is also a spiritual conception of thought. It discovers the unknown but brings out the intrinsically known and places 'Self awareness' as an object of conceptual self-knowledge. There is a spiritual emotion, a spiritual sense of being with being, of consciousness with consciousness, of delight of being with delight of being. There is a joy of intimate separateness in identity. There is a relation of love joined with love in a supreme unity. Sri Aurobindo points out "All the play of the Becoming in the Beings finds its self-expression upon these powers of the consciousness of the spirit."²

¹. The Upanisads, p.182.
². The Life Divine, p.547.
All these powers in its spiritual origin are essential, not instrumental. They are the luminous self-aware substance of the spiritual identical made active on itself and in itself. The spirit's infinite self-experience moves between sheer identity and a multiple identity.

Spiritual awareness is slowly brought out and manifested into a growing separative consciousness. First there emerges a crude sense which develops into precise sensations aided by concealed intuition.¹ Then a life-mind perception manifests and at its back an obscure consciousness-sight and feeling of this develops. Emotion vibrates and seeks an interchange with others. Last arisen the surface conception, thought, reason, comprehending and apprehending the object, combining its data of knowledge.² Even then it is incomplete.

It is still maintained by the separative ignorance and obscuring inconscience. All are dependent on outward means. Sri Aurobindo points out that "It is only by our awakening to our innermost soul or super-conscious self that there can be a beginning of the spiritual knowledge with identity as its basis."³

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1. The Life Divine, p.552.
2. Ibid., p.552.
3. Ibid., p.552.
In the spiritual knowledge of self there are three steps of its self-achievement. They are at the same time three parts of one knowledge. The first is the discovery of the soul. This is not the out soul of thought, emotion and desire but the secret psychic entity, the divine elements within us. When the psychic entity becomes dominant over the nature, when we are consciously the soul and when mind, life and body take their true place (the good, the true delight and beauty of existence) then it leads our life and being towards spiritual completeness. Even within the obscure working of the ignorance, we witness a living light that illumines, a will that refuses to be misled and separates the minds truth from its error, the heart's intimate response to its call.¹ This is the first step of self-realisation to enthrone the soul, in the place of ego.

The second step is to become aware of the eternal self in us unborn and one with the self of all-beings. This realisation liberates and universalises. Even if our action proceeds in the dynamics of the ignorance, it no longer misleads because our inner being is seated in the light of self knowledge.

¹. The Life Divine, p.631.
The third step is to know the Divine being. Our individual soul is a spark which is growing into an eternal fire from which it was lit. Evil is the fruit of a spiritual ignorance and it will disappear by the growth of a spiritual consciousness and the light of spiritual knowledge.

Thus Sri Aurobindo says "The essence of spiritual knowledge is an intrinsic self-existent consciousness, all its action of knowledge, indeed all its action of any kind, must be that consciousness formulating itself." ¹

6. SPIRITUAL EXISTENCE (LIFE)

Sri Aurobindo believes that "All spiritual life is in its principle a growth into Divine living." ² It is very difficult to fix the frontier where the mental ceases and the Divine life begins. It is because the two project into each other and there is a long space of their intermingled existence. Unless the spiritual urge does not turn away from earth or world altogether, it cannot be seen clearly.

Spiritual life is not only an inner experience of the divinity, but a remoulding of both the inner and outer existence by its power. Spiritual life stands for the total

1. The Life Divine, p.1024.
2. Ibid., p.1018.
transformation of the whole being, mind, life and body. It stands not only for an inner experience of the divinity but also for the shaping of both the inner and outer existence by its power.

The mind, life and body are illumined with the light of the spirit leading to illumination of the whole existence unified in the full light and power of the spiritual principle. The inner life has a supreme spiritual importance and the outer has a value only in so far as it is expressive of the inner status.

Without this inner life, the spiritual origination or divine life is not possible. "In our present life of nature", Sri Aurobindo says, "it is the world that seems to create us; but in the turn to the spiritual life it is we who must create ourselves and our world." In this new formula of creation, the inner life becomes of the first importance and the rest can be only its expression and outcome.

However the man of spiritual realisation lives, acts and behaves in always of his being and acting dwelling in the divinity as is said in the Gita "He lives and moves in me." Sri Aurobindo says that spiritual life must be an

1. The Life Divine, p.1020.
ascetic life, rejecting all that is not absolutely needed for the bare maintenance of the body.

In this way it reflects "a life of withdrawal from life"\(^1\), in the sense it is a life of "extreme simplicity, because all else would be a life of vital desire and physical self indulgence."\(^2\) From wider standpoint this is only a mental standard based on the law of ignorance of which the desire is the motive. To overcome this, a total rejection not only of desire but of all things must be the basic principle.

7. SPIRITUAL MAN

The Nature inspires, Sri Aurobindo believes, man to cross mental limitations and reach spiritual existence. The spiritual man is nature's supreme super normal effort of human creation. Nature has already evolved the mental creator, thinker, sage and a prophet of an ideal.

He is self-controlled, self-disciplined and a harmonised mental being. Now nature wants to go higher and deeper within. She called the inner being and also the forces of the spiritual mind from above. Under their light she is trying to evolve a spiritual sage, seer, a prophet or a yogin.

1. The Life Divine, p.1066.
2. Ibid., p.1066.
Sri Aurobindo says that as long as we live in matter, it is impossible to go higher. The vital man, the mental man have had an immense effect upon the earth life. They have carried humanity forward from the mere human animal to what it is now. But it is only within the bounds of already established evolutionary formula of the human being. They can enlarge the human circle but not change or transform the principle of consciousness.

The spiritual man is the sign of the new evolution. But this evolution differs from the past processes in two respects. It is conducted by a conscious effort of human mind. It is not confined to a conscious progression of the surface nature but is an attempt to break the walls of ignorance.

It also helps to extend ourselves inward into the secret principle of our present being and outward into cosmic being as well as upward towards a higher principle. Uptil now what is attempted in spiritual endeavour is to abolish the ignorance and to discover the inner soul which unites in consciousness with God and with all existence. This is the final aim of mental stage of evolutionary nature in man. The spiritual change beings by an influence of the inner being and the higher realm.
Thus the spiritual man lives always within. He always guards his inner life against the intrusion and influence of the darker forces of ignorance. He is out of the world as well as within it. If he acts, it is from the fortress of his inner spiritual being where he is one with supreme existence. The gnostic life will be an inner life in which the antimony of the inner and outer, the self and the world will have been cured and exceeded. Sri Aurobindo says "The Gnostic being will have indeed an inmost existence in which he is alone with God, one with the eternal; self-plunged into the depths of the infinite, in communion with its heights and its luminous abysses of secrecy."¹ Nothing will be able to disturb him from this stage or bring him down from summits.

This is the transcendence aspect of spiritual life and it is necessary for the freedom of spirit. Sri Aurobindo points out "The spiritual man is one who has discovered his soul; he has found his Self and lives in that, is conscious of it; has the joy of it; he needs nothing external for his completeness of existence."² Thus the man of spiritual realisation lives and acts and behaves in always of his being and acting as Gita said "he lives and moves in me";

2. Ibid., p.981.
he dwells in the divine, he has realised the spiritual existence."\(^1\)

It is important to note that what we call spiritual or spiritual man is not the highest state that a man should aspire for. It is undoubtedly different from physical, vital and mental states of consciousness but it is not the ultimate. Spirituality is the most conducive medium into which the supermind can descend. Neither matter nor life nor mind in all its stages is conducive for the supermind to descend. It is consciousnesses which are spiritually in nature such as those of sages and saints that serves as suitable media for the supramental consciousness to descend.

Sri Aurobindo distinguishes between a spiritual man and supramental being. He says "the spiritual man is evolved but not the supramental being, who shall thence forward to be the leader of that nature."\(^2\)

Spiritualisation consists in our realisation that all is merged in the divine in the cosmic consciousness. In other words it consists in our realisation that the same divinity (Saccidananda) pervades the entire cosmos.

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2. Ibid., p.890.
Sri Aurobindo points out "The cosmic consciousness is that in which the limits of ego, personal mind and body disappear and one becomes aware of a cosmic witness which is filled by a cosmic spirit and aware also of the direct play of cosmic forces, universal mind forces, universal life forces, universal energies of matter, universal overmind forces." 1

The point here is inspite of this realisation there is a cleavage between the individual and the divine. When the individual becoming the divine, or finding non-difference between himself and the divine is what Sri Aurobindo calls as supramentalisation, the ultimate ideal of all creation, supramentalisation is possible only through triple transformation.

8. THE TRIPLE TRANSFORMATION

Before elucidating Sri Aurobindo's doctrine of triple transformation, let us understand the word 'transformation'.

Transformation, according to Sri Aurobindo, stands for the process of higher conscious being brought down into the body, life and mind and taking the place of the lower. Sri Aurobindo observes "By transformation I do not mean some

change of the nature, I do not mean for instance sainthood or ethical perfection or yogic siddis or a transcendental 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 strong step forward in the spiritual evolution of being of a greater and higher kind and of a larger sweep and completeness than what took place mentalised being in a vital and material animal world.¹

Further Sri Aurobindo observes "purification of the nature by the influence of the spirit is now what I mean by transformation; purification is only a part of the psychic change or a psycho-spiritual change; the word besides has many senses and is very often given a moral or ethical meaning which is foreign to my purpose."² Transformation therefore cannot be used according to Sri Aurobindo when physical being evolves into a vital being and a vital being into a mental being. Just as matter has evolved and manifested life and life has evolved and manifested mind, mind should evolve and manifest a consciousness free from the imperfections and limitations of our mental existence.

1. Letters on Yoga, Part I, p.98
2. Ibid., pp.115 & 116.
The evolution of matter in the direction of life and life in the direction of mind are slow and tardy but the transformation of mind into supermind or truth-consciousness is totally unlike the process of evolution of matter into life and life into mind. When the supramental transformation is achieved, body, life and mind get totally transformed so as to constitute the conducive medium for the manifestation of the truth-consciousness. It alone can bear the Omniscient-light or Omniscient-force of the truth-consciousness.

Sri Aurobindo observes that all may not open to the fullness of its light and power, but whatever does open must to that extent undergo the change. Thus he points out that the word 'transformation' should be used only in a special sense. Now let us analyse his triple transformation in detail.

The spiritual man, who has evolved into this status, further tries to transform himself into a supramental being. This transformation, Sri Aurobindo calls, the triple transformation. He says "there must first be the psychic change the conversion of our whole present nature into a soul instrumentation; on that or along with that there must be a spiritual change, the descent of the higher light,

knowledge, power, force, bliss, purity into the whole being, even into the lowest recesses of the life and body, even into the darkness of our sub-conscious; last there must be supervene the supramental transmutation – there must take place as crowning movement the ascent into the supermind and the transforming descent of the supramental consciousness into our entire being and nature.¹

(A) PSYCHIC TRANSFORMATION

The soul or the psychic being is the highest and most central representative of the self in our being. It is an entirely veild part of us. It helps to persist ourselves as individual beings in nature. It contains all essential possibilities of our manifestation but is not constituted by them. It is not limited by what it manifests. It is the permanent being in us which employs mind, life and body as its instruments. But it remains unaffected by their operations.

Psychic being is an ever pure flame of the divinity in things. So it is immediately, intimately, directly aware of truth of being and truth of nature. If the psychic being is unveil from the beginning, there would not have been human evolution. But it is not the case. Hence the first step in

transforming the human individual is to remove veil which hides the psychic being from the divine light which is already there. What is wanted is a full development of this psychic being, so that it may lead to a transformation of mind, life and matter. "Our psychic being", says Prof. Maitra, "is not born in us, like Minerva fully armed, it evolves slowly and is at first very weak and indistinct." ¹

As there is a greater emergence of the soul in nature, there is a further development of our psychic being. Its development will be very slow if it is left to its own unaided action. It can only be rapid, when man feels a need to bring the soul to the front and allow it to master his life, mind and body. This is the first essential step for a psychic transformation of our being.

Psychicisation means psychic change of the lower nature, bringing right vision into the mind, right impulse and feeling into the vital, right movement and habit into the physical. All turned towards the Divine, all based on love, devotion and adoration and finally the true vision and sense of the dynamic Divine everywhere in the world and as well as in the heart. It is this coming forward of the psychic which can put the Sadhaka on the path which leads to integral realisation.

¹ S.K. Maitra, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, p.75.
There are three essential conditions for this psychic transformation. First there must be a sufficient preparation of the surface being, a tranquilising purification of the external nature. For a spiritual preparation, it is necessary that a contact should be secured in it with the spiritual reality. It may be through the mind, or through the heart or through the practical will or through all these avenues. Secondly, the psychic entity cannot come forward and control the nature until it is sufficiently developed. The psychic personality should be so developed that the soul can effectively impose itself through it and change the whole rhythm and pattern of living.

Thirdly, in order to complete psychic transformation, there must be a cracking of the crust of outer nature, a breaking down of the walls of inner separation, a joining of the depths of our being to the surface. It is not sufficient to stand outside and following the intimations of our inner being. The consciousness has to shift its centre, its dynamic poise, from the surface to the inner being and create there the foundation of our thought, life and action.

(B) SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

Man is both a unique person and also a multi person. He will never become a master of himself until he governs
his multipersonality. This rule of different selves applies only at the stage of the development of human personality. All these stages are only transitional and finally he has to locate his real centre. Therefore, for the soul's complete emergence a direct contact with the spiritual reality should be established. Transformation of the thinking mind and all the physical and vital parts of consciousness, shift of the surface being to the inner being are necessary conditions.

Awakening of the soul in us and the development of our psychic being will not alone lead to the total transformation of our terrestrial existence which is the purpose of evolution. The psychic entity is only the representative within the evolving nature of the unchanging self above. Therefore, it is essential that the psychic movement inward to the inmost psychic entity should be supplemented by an opening upward to a supreme spiritual status, or a higher existence.

According to Sri Aurobindo, this is the beginning of spiritualisation. Thus for the second transformation, we require the transformation by the spiritual consciousness. In the words of Haridas Chaudhury, "where psychicisation means the joining of the depths of being to the surface, spiritualisation means the uniting of the manifest existence with what is above it."¹

¹ Sri Aurobindo - The Prophet of Life Divine, P.92.
The spiritual change is the established descent of the peace, light, knowledge, power, bliss from the above, the awareness of the self and the divine and of a higher cosmic consciousness and the change of the whole consciousness to that.

The initial requirement of spiritual transformation is an upward movement of the mind to the higher ranges of super conscience. The lower nature of man is transformed with the light, power and bliss descending from above. This is called spiritualisation. Such transformation brings to us abiding spiritual sense and awareness of the infinite and eternal.

The close presence of the Divine Being; his rule of the world and of ourself; his force working in us and everywhere, the peace of infinite, the joy of the infinite are now concrete and constant in the being. The joy or adoration of the heart, the embrace of all existence, the unity of the spirit are abiding realities. But this spiritual change will not lead to man's attaining the highest level of which he is capable. This is possible only through the third transformation i.e., supramental transformation. Supermind will help in this transformation. At this stage we can see a spiritual man, who still aspires for further evolution.
Sri Aurobindo says that spiritual change is not the ultimate goal of man. In his words "As the psychic change has to call in the spiritual to complete it, so the first spiritual change has to call in the supramental transformation to complete it."¹ Spiritual change gives an unfettered vision of the truth of things above. It succeeds in bringing down into play in our terrestrial existence, the self luminous instrumentation of the transcendent self. But this is inadequate for complete realisation. Man is satisfied only when he achieves supramental realisation.

(C) SUPRAMENTAL TRANSFORMATION

Supramental change is possible only when the supermind descends into our being. The description of it is not possible through our language. It is the sovereign dynamism of supermind which can accomplish the integral and flawless divine transfiguration of the entire lower being.

Supermind alone can bring complete harmony of the integral knowledge. There are certain preliminary conditions which must be fulfilled for supramental descent. When Sri Aurobindo claims that when man reaches the stage of spiritualization in this triple transformation, it is yet not perfect so as to constitute a fit instrument for

supramental consciousness to descend into it. It has to still be purged of its imperfections and limitations. It needs to be further refined, improve so as to constitute a locus for the supermind to descend.

The medium of spiritual consciousness should be freed from all layers or forms of obstruction for the gushing of the spiritual light from above. All its limitations, all its defilements, all its shortcomings must be totally abolished and the lower consciousness should be totally surrendered. It should be totally free from its old habits of working through thought processes and a desistance from the will to act according to the old laws governing the thought process. To quote Sri Aurobindo "for a real transformation there must be a direct and unveiled intervention from above, there would be necessary too a total submission and surrender of the lower consciousness, a cessation of its insistence, a will in it for its separate law of action to be completely annulled by transformation and lose all rights over our being." This does not mean that we can by our efforts force the supermind to descend. Infact, the whole of the process, i.e., gradual psychiscisation of our being, the slow spiritualisation of our nature are preliminary conditions for the descent of supermind.

As a result of the descent of the supermind, there will be real transformation. The individual would be the master of his own self. The universal energy would work through him. It is this crowning phase of supramentalisation that unveils the manifestation of the spirit in the material universe. Nature becomes transformed to supernature and human being into Gnostic being. Now let us focus our enquiry into the nature of Gnostic being in the following chapter.