

CHAPTER VII

THE SUPREME BEING :The nature of Supreme being:-

The finite mind is limited by the forms of thought, ideas, feelings, sensations and the sense of 'I'. But the infinite mind -the Supreme is beyond this limitation, we call Him God. From this infinite and eternal we have come into existence. In ancient India the question was asked 'what is God' ?

The answer we find in Brahma-Sutra:

"It is that from which all this has arisen, by which it is maintained in existence and into which it will ultimately disappear."⁽¹⁾

None can live without being sustained by this Infinite one. Though the Supreme person pervades the universe yet He is beyond all the mental and physical phenomena of the manifest universe.

How can we know the Supreme Being as the Soul of our souls ? We know it by rising above the level of consciousness of the finite.

This level of consciousness will never reveals the true nature of the Infinite Being, because it acts within the limitation of the senses and the mind, consequently it can not reach the Infinite which is above all limits.

If we wish to know God, we shall have to enter into the state of Super consciousness. The longings for more knowledge leads the soul into the Infinite wisdom. In that state the individual soul realizes the blissfulness which is beyond the reach of ordinary mortals and which can not be obtained by wealth, property or worldly prosperity.

According to some schools of thought the Supreme Being is static. The Gita's conception is that God is not only static, dynamic also. He (God) is the eternal process of this moving world. He is the Viswa Rupa, Purushottama and the Super-cosmic -the Transcendent Divine. Brahman- the Supreme Being and a Universal Being is such that no single person, group or class can claim Him as exclusively his or their own. A major theme of the Gita is that salvation is open to all and that Brahman accepts all. The Universal Being- Brahman manifests Himself in many ways.

The root of ^{idea} the of Supreme Being of the Gita is ~~in~~ in the Purusha-Sukta.

"The starting point of the Gita's theism may be traced as far back in the Purusha-Sukta,

where it is said that the one quarter of the Purusha has been spread out as the cosmic universe and its living beings, while other three quarters are in the ~~immortal~~ immortal heavens". (2)

This idea in a modified form appears in the Katha-Upanishad (2/3), where it is said that this universe is a pupil tree and Brahman is the root of this tree. This metaphor has been used in the Gita also. The Supreme Being is both immanent and transcendent. The immanent part forms the cosmic universe. The good and evil, the moral and immoral of this world comes from Him. and in Him. He is the basis of all manifestations. The transcendent part is itself the differenceless reality.

The Gita differs from the Upanishad on an important point i.e, its introduction of the idea that God takes birth on earth as a human being. ~~being~~ "This doctrine of the incarnation of the God though not dealt with in any of the ~~purities~~ purely speculative systems, yet forms the corner stone of most of the systems of religious philosophy and religion, and the Gita is probably the earliest work available to us in which this doctrine is found". (3)

In the Gita the Supreme Being is described as ultimate object of knowledge :

"Jñeyam yat tat pravaksyāmi
yaj jñātvā mrtam asnute
anādimat param brahma

na sat tan nā 'sad ucyate" ... 13/12

"I will describe that which is to be known and by knowing which life eternal is gained. It is the Supreme Brahman who is ~~knowing~~ beginningless and who is said to be neither existent nor non-existent".
He is without senses but illuminates all sense-qualities.
He is both knowledge and object of knowledge.

The Gita recognises two different kinds of avyakta. ~~The lower~~ It is the lower avyakta lower nature of God which has manifested itself as the universe. But there is a higher avyakta which is the basis of all and beyond lower avyakta. Though the Supreme Being is often identified only with the higher avyakta but the lower is also in Him. In the XVth chapter of the Gita the Lord announces that He is the Supreme Being :

"sarvesya cā 'ham hrdī sanniviṣṭo
 matteḥ smṛtir jñānam apohanam ca
 vedais ca sarvair aham eva vedyo
 vedāntakṛd vedavid eva cā 'ham" ... 15/15

"And I am lodged in the hearts of all; from Me are memory and knowledge as well as their loss. I am indeed He who is to be known by all the Vedas. I indeed (am) the author of the Vedānta and I too the knower of the Vedas".

"dvāv imau puruṣan loka
 kṣaras cā kṣara eva ca
 kṣaraḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni
 kūṭastha 'kṣara ucyate" ... 15/16

"There are two persons in this world, the perishable and the imperishable, the perishable is all these existences and the unchanging is the imperishable".

"uttamaḥ puruṣas tv anyāḥ
 paramātme 'ty udāhṛtaḥ
 yo lokatrayam āvisya
 bibharty avyaya īsvaraḥ" ... 15/17

"But other than these, the Highest Spirit called the Supreme Self who, as the Undying Lord, enters the three worlds and sustains them".

"yasmāt kṣaram atīto 'ham
 akṣarād api co 'ttamaḥ
 ato 'smi loke vede ca
 prathitaḥ puruṣottamaḥ" ... 15/18

"As I ~~surpass~~ surpass the perishable and am higher even than the imperishable, I am celebrated as the Supreme Person in the world and in the Veda".

According to Śrī Anukāṅkṣa the Gita this moving world is a creation of the Lord. He acts in it. From the cosmological point of view the Supreme is Iśvara, the Highest Person, Puruṣhattama -the Lord of the universe who dwells in the heart of every creature.

The conception of personal God is a combination of the timeless existence (Aksara) and the temporal beginning (Ksara). According to Rāmaṇuja above Ksara and Aksara there is the Supreme Person who transcends the universe and at the same time permeates it. He interprets the two Puruṣas as referring to the two natures, one higher- His own essential nature : Adhyatma; and the other is lower- Prakṛiti.

TILAK'S VIEW :

According to Tilak the Supreme Being is the real to be known (Jneya). He is beyond both matter and spirit, knowledge and knower. ~~Not only~~ It is not the Gita only but also all works on Vedanta philosophy have tendency to announce the glory of that Supreme spirit which pervades the entire cosmos and eternally maintains it. Supreme Being is one Imperceptible, Eternal and Immutable.

In describing the Purushottama which is beyond matter and spirit, the Bhagabad Gita has said that it has its two forms viz, the Vyakta and the Avyakta. The Vyakta form comprises the qualities (saguna). But we can not say that the Avyakta form is qualityless (nirguna). The word guna is here intended to mean and include all the qualities which can be perceived not only by the external organs but with the mind too.

Lord Krishna who is living incarnation of the Supreme Being has indicated Himself in the first person by referring to his perceptible form in various places in the Gita.

"s̄rvabhū'āni-kaunteya
 prakṛtiṁ yānti māmikāṁ
 kalpakṣaye punas tāni
 kalpādau visṛjāmy aham" ... 9/7

"All beings, O son of Kuntī (Arjuna), pass into nature which is My own at the end of the cycle; and at the beginning of the next cycle, I send them forth."

"mamai 'va 'mso jīvaloke
 jīvabhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ
 manaḥśaṣṭhāni 'ndriyāṇi
 prakṛtisthāni karṣati" ... 15/7

"A fragment (or fraction) of My own self, having become a living soul, eternal, in the world of life, draws to itself the senses of which the mind is the sixth, that rest in nature."

"aham ātmā guḍākese
 s̄rvabhūtāsāyesthitaḥ
 aham ādis ca madhyaṁ ca
 bhūtānām anta eva ca" ... 10/20

"I, O Guḍākese (Arjuna), am the self seated in the hearts of all creatures. I am the beginning, the middle and the very end of beings."

The world is living whole, a vast interconnectedness, a cosmic harmony inspired and sustained by the one Supreme.

The Lord showed His Cosmic Form (Viṣwarūpa) to Arjuna and advised that as it was easier to worship the perceptible form than the imperceptible form, Arjuna should put faith on Him.

"kleśo 'dhikataras teṣāṃ
avyaktāsaktacetāsāṃ
avyaktā hi gatir duḥkhaṃ
dehavadbhir avāpyate" ... 12/5

"The difficulty of those whose thoughts are set on the unmanifested is greater, for the goal of the unmanifested is hard to reach by the embodied beings".
When the Lord declares Himself as Brahman, He denotes His perceptible form.

"mayy eva mana ādhatsva
mayi buddhiṃ nivesaya
nivasisyasi mayy eva
ata ūrdhvaṃ na saṃsayaḥ" ... 12/8

On Me alone fix thy mind, let thy understanding dwell in Me. In Me alone shalt thou live thereafter. Of this there is no doubt".

"brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhā 'ham
amṛtasyā' vyayasya ca
sāsvatasya ca dharmasya
sukhasyai 'kāntikasya ca" ... 14/27

"For I am the abode of Brahman, the Immortal and the Imperishable, of eternal law and of absolute bliss".

Tilak concludes that the Gita from beginning to end describes only the perceptible form of the Supreme Being. But that does not mean only perceptible Paramesvara is considered to be ultimate object of attainment in the Gita. The Lord has stated that His imperceptible form, which is beyond that ~~is~~ perceptible form and which is not cognisable by the organs is His Principal Form.

"avyaktam vyaktim āpannam
manyante mām abuddhayaḥ
param bhāvam ajānanto
mama 'vyayam anuttamām" ... 7/24

"Men of no understanding think of Me the unmanifest, as having manifestation, not knowing My higher nature, changeless and supreme".

Due to our ignorance we impose Forms on the Formless. He is the one behind the ever changing many, who stands beyond all forms.

"In short, although the Blessed Lord ~~is~~ has attached importance to His perceptible form for purposes of worship, the doctrine laid down by the Gita, will be clearly seen to be that (one) the excellent and superior form of the Paramesvara is His imperceptible form, that is, the form which is not cognisable by

the organs; (two) that His changing from imperceptible to the perceptible is His Maya". (4)

Tilak lays stress on the ethical teaching of the Gita. He advocates the metaphysical or spiritual approach to ethics. The ethics of the Gita is based on the spiritual perception of the nature of reality. Tilak accepts the metaphysics of non-dualism, Supreme Being is one. He holds that the world is only an apparent phenomenal manifestation of the Supreme Being, and is not an actual causal evolution or transformation of that being. He accepts the Vedanta theory that Absolute or Sachchidananda is the Supreme Being from the stand point of Metaphysical philosophy. But that Supreme Being as seen from the stand point of theistic devotion, ^{is} God ~~is~~ as the personalised form of the Supreme Absolute. Tilak says when the Vedantins speak of the unreality of the world they have in mind the contrast ~~a~~ between the phenomenal and the noumenal worlds or in Kant's language the appearance and the thing-in-itself. Vedanta says that the soul of man or the microcosm is identical in nature with the soul of the universe or the macrocosm. (5)

The Immutable and qualityless Supreme Being appears in the form of the visible world in ~~ix~~ Time

and Space embodied in Name and Form. This is known in Vedanta philosophy as Maya and that includes Karma also. Tilak states - "Karma and Maya are synonymous; because unless some karma or action has been performed it is not possible for the Imperceptible to become perceptible, or for the qualityless to become qualityfull."⁽⁶⁾ Therefore the Blessed Lord has declared that He has taken birth in prakṛti by His Maya.

"ajo 'pi sann avyayātmā
bhūtānām Īsvaro 'pi san
prakṛtiṁ svām adhiṣṭhāya
sambhavāmy ātmāmāyayā" ... 4/6

"Though (I am) unborn, and Myself(is) imperishable, though (I am) the lord of all creatures, yet establishing Myself in My own nature, I come into (empiric) being through My power (maya)".

But in defining Māyā, Karma or action is not mentioned at all and Name and Form are included in Māyā. Yet when one has to consider Karma by itself, one has to say that the form of Karma is the same as the form of Maya. Māyā, Names and Forms and Karma are fundamentally the same in nature. This coverings of Māyā on one portion of the Supreme Being has been described in Sankhya philosophy as prakṛti.

SRI AUROBINDO'S VIEW :

The conception of Supreme Being in some schools of thought is that He is static. All activities are considered foreign to Him. But the Gita's conception is that He is not only static but surely dynamic. "He is the Viswarupa, He is the Purushottama, He is the Cosmic Purusha, He is the Super Cosmic- Transcendent Divine as Vasudeva, He is in the heart of every one". (7)

According to some people practical life and the Supreme Being are contradictory to each other. They say if we want to enjoy our life we must not think of the Supreme Being, and if we want to move towards Him it can only be done by denying the enjoyment of life. According to Sri Aurobindo the Gita teaches us that life and God are intimately connected. The Gita accepts life as a legitimate field for our spiritual growth. But life as it is does not aim at the Supreme Being, we have set before us this spiritual aim in our life. The Gita accepts life means- that life has a place in spiritual sphere. Spiritual aim of our life is to recognise something greater than mind and life, to become aware

of another consciousness than the ego, to live under its influence and to turn towards a transformation of our whole being. Desireless action can lead man to the Supreme Being.

"abhyāsajayuktama
cetasā nā 'nyagāminā
paramaṁ puruṣaṁ divyaṁ
yāti pārthā 'nucintayan" 8/8

"He who meditates on the Supreme person with his thought attuned by constant practice and not wandering after anything else, he, O Partha (Arjuna), reaches the Person, Supreme and Divine".

"kaviṁ ṣpurāṇam anusāsītāram
anor anīyāmsam anusmared yaḥ
sarvasya dhātāram acintyarūpam
ādityavarṇaṁ tamasah parastāt" ... 8/9

"He who meditates on the Seer, the ancient, the ruler, subtler than the subtle, the supporter of all, whose form is beyond ~~conception~~ conception who is suncoloured beyond the darkness".

"prayāṅkāle manasā calena
bhaktyā yukto yogabalena cai 'va
bhruvor madhīe praṇāṁ āvesya samyak
sa taṁ paraṁ puruṣam upaiti divyam" ..8/10

"He who does so, at the time of his departure, with a steady mind, devotion and strength of yoga and setting well his life force in the centre of the eyebrows, he attains to this Supreme Divine Person".

This is the first time we get the description of the Supreme Being- the Godhead who is even more greater than the immutable and to whom the Gita gives subsequently the name of Purushottama. He is Lord of all beings, master, controller of many who are in the hands of the nature. He is timeless in time, the omnipotent, the ruler of all, who by His conscious power manifests Himself in time. He is not merely a featureless existence. He is indiscernible only because He is subtler than the last subtlety of which the mind is aware and because the form of the Supreme Divine is beyond our thought. In other words the Supreme Being is not an entirely relationless Absolute aloof from our illusions. It is by knowing loving Him as the One and the All, (Vasudeva sarvamiti) that we ought by a union with Him of our whole conscious being in all things, all energies, all actions, we to seek the perfect perfection, the absolute release. To Him the heart can consecrate itself, approach Him as the Supreme Lord. He supports soul

in all its experiences and struggles till all sorrow and sufferings shall cease. He is ^{at} once personal and impersonal ~~him~~ in His self-revelation and touched upon the soul. He is personal because He is the conscious Divine. He is impersonal because He appears to us as an Infinite Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. (9)

The Supreme Being is the one unchanging imperishable self in all that is; therefore to the spiritual sense of this unchanging imperishable Self man has to awake to the Godhead within himself, to realise the Divinity, and to become united with this inmost Self of His Self. The personality of the Supreme Being is universal not individual. Whatever is in all creatures, character, idea, imagination, experience, sensation, motion is contained by Him as an object of spiritual enjoyment without limiting or determining Him. Such an universality is necessary to support and supply individual existence but it can not be the determining limit of individual existence.

Sri Aurobindo accepts that the Supreme Being reveals Himself as a human being, as an Avatars. This belief is flowing in India from ancient time. He is on the opinion "all existence is a manifes-

tation of God because He is the only existence and nothing can be except as either a real figuring or else a figment of that one reality. Therefore every conscious being is in part or in some way a descent of the Infinite into the apparent finiteness of name and form. But it is a veiled manifestation and there is a gradation between the Supreme Being (Parābhāva) of the Divine and the consciousness shrouded partly or wholly by ignorance of Self in the finite".⁽¹⁰⁾

The inner divinity of man is the sign of eternal Avatara. The Gita accepts the human Avatara. For Lord speaks of the repeated manifestation of the Divine in humanity. "When the Divine Consciousness and Power taking upon itself the human form and the human mode of action possesses it not only by powers and magnitudes, by degrees and ~~various~~ outward faces of itself but out of its eternal self-knowledge, when the Unborn knows itself and acts in the frame of the mental being and the appearance of birth, that is the highest of the conditioned manifestation; it is the full and conscious descent of the Godhead, it is the Avatara".⁽¹¹⁾

According to the Gita there are two aspects of the Divine Birth; one is descent- the birth of God as a human being, the other is an ascent- the birth of man into the Godhead, -man rises to the Divine nature and consciousness. The second aspect is the core of the teaching of the Gita.

The Gita says that the Supreme Being is a spirit which is not Ksara Purusha or Akhsara Purusha but Purushottama. This spirit is eternal. Always the same, never changes, and His manifestation does not distort His nature. This spirit is timeless though we see it in time, it is unextended in space, though we see it as if pervading space. He is Purushottama not only there but also here in the heart of every creature and is manifested in His countless Vibhutes.

The foundation of the metaphysical ~~outlook~~ outlook of Sri Aurobindo is Vedanta. The object of philosophy is to discover that Being through which all can be known. According to Shankara the basic reality is beyond all conflicting relative characters- subjective and objective, that it ^{is} an attributeless indeterminate Absolute- a Nirguna and Nirvisesha Brahman. In this conception the Supreme Being is beyond conflict and contradiction. But Sri Aurobindo raises a question that how can a pure unity devoid of all multiplicity give rise to the world of multiplicity? In this context he does not accept the endeavour of Shankara. Shankara tries to solve that problem by accepting the existence of Maya. He said that Brahman alone is real and the world is an illusion

produced by the Maya. The universe has appeared as something which is real (Satyam), eternally conscious ~~ksanam~~ (Jnanam) and infinite (Anantam Brahman). The universe is a variegated pattern and can not have originated from a cause which is not absolutely perfect and self caused. This uncaused cause viz, Brahman, Shankara says, expresses itself through an infinite number of things (Nāma-rūpa), all of which are appearances.

The word Maya has been used in different senses. In the Vedic Upanishadic literature it signifies untruth (Anṛta), in others uncertainty and sometimes power (Shakti). In Gaudapada's Vedānta the theory of Maya is firstly set explicitly to express that the practical universe is a mirage. Shankara adheres to the Upanishadic suggestion of the Maya-notion in its true spirit. He holds that the world is a shadow of the ontological reality. According to Sri Aurobindo the Māyavādin wants to establish his point of view or his experience by logical reasoning. He can not explain why the Maya come into existence. He can only arrange and organise his ideas like scientists explanation of nature. Sri Aurobindo raises the question- what is Maya ?

Is it really an illusory power ? The Absolute is an absolute truth free from *Māyā*, otherwise liberation is not possible. *Mayāvāda* ignores the world rather than explains it. But, however, he admits that the theory of *Mayāvāda* apart from its defects, serves a great spiritual end and is as a path very high. According to some writer Shankara was not so stern *Mayāvādīn* what he has represented. He accepted certain temporary reality of the world- shakti etc. (12)

Sri Aurobindo explains the Gita from his integral outlook. If the world is an illusion even then an illusion must have some reality as its ground. The cause, Brahman must have the effect, the world potentially in it. "Brahman the Supreme Reality is not only indeterminate and transcendent but also capable of gradual creative self-expression by α self-limitation and self-determination β . It is perfectly understandable that the Absolute is and must be indeterminate in the sense that it can not be limited by any determination, or π any sum of possible determinations, but not in the sense that it is incapable of self-determination." (13) Supreme Being is both immanent and transcendent. He can not exhaustibly be

defined by any particular quality or property. It does not mean that those properties do not belong to the Supreme Being, that he can not be fully conceived by those.

The Supreme Being is described by the Advaitins negatively because they deny all determinations. But Sri Aurobindo thinks that such negation makes Him limited by denying His self-expression. We can not accept the word of Advaita either in realistic sense or in illusionary sense. Sri Aurobindo admits Advaita in realistic sense. The special feature of Sri Aurobindo's integral Advaitism is that it establishes the oneness of the Absolute without denying the reality of the world. Advaitism can be maintained even while we admit the reality of the world. Sri Aurobindo looks at the Supreme Being from an Integral standpoint. In the light of the integral unifying reason we can conceive the ~~the~~ Supreme Being "as a harmonious unity indeterminate, immutable, infinite aspects and its immanent determinate, dynamic and finite aspects" (14) He is not a mere aggregate of different aspects. Sri Aurobindo expresses integral reason as a "greater reason in all the operations of the Infinite, but it is not a mental or intellectual, but it is, spiritual and Supramental reason". (15) A question may arise

why is this universe has been created at all ?

The most acceptable answer is this Supreme Reality has the infinite possibilities of self-expression and this universe is one of them.

Following the Vedas and the Upanishads Sri Aurobindo conceives seven ~~the~~ chief aspects of reality in different grades- Matter, Life, Mind, Supermind, Bliss, Consciousness-Force and Existence. The basic presupposition behind his theory of evolution is everything that emerges must preexist in the cause. It is the old Indian theory of Satkarya-vada and is like the Aristotelian theory of causation as the actualisation of potentiality. Matter can evolve towards God because God is involved in Matter. Sri Aurobindo is a personalist as he regards God as the Supreme Person (Purushottama). But there is a transcendent impersonal aspect of the Infinite Reality too.

It is true that Sri Aurobindo's integral view of Reality can not be said to be perfectly original. The transcendence and immanence of the Absolute or Brahman or Supreme Being has been advocated in the Upanishads and the different systems of the Vedanta. Sri Aurobindo hits at the very root of the Advaita system of Shankara by showing its inability to

determine the truths of Reality on account of its abstract and formal character. The chief merit of his view of the Absolute lies in its being integral in nature and its being based on the higher reason. Secondly, the creative-force or Chit-shakti is regarded by Sri Aurobindo as one with the Supreme Being. So there is no conflict between the Supreme Being and its creative force. In the Sankhya system opposition between Purusha and Prakṛti is very clear.

The conception of Super mind is the most important as well as fundamental contribution of Sri Aurobindo. It is the Supermind that gives us an integral view of the Absolute. It reconciles the apparent opposition between the Absolute, the Supreme Being and the world. Apart from creation the Supreme being in itself is a timeless and spaceless reality but the world is limited by time and space. The connecting link between the Supreme Being and the world is Supermind. Supermind is not different from the Supreme Being- Sachchidananda. It is the Absolute itself in its creative aspects. Sachchidananda is an undifferentiated unity. It exceeds all determinations and at the same time is the centre of all determinations. The Supreme Being does not suffer from ignorance and limitation. In the context of realisation of the

Supreme Divine, Supermind is the meeting point of the earthly and Divine. It is also the key-point of Sri Aurobindo's integral philosophy. In his own words "mind in its essence is a consciousness which measures, limits, cuts out forms of things from the indivisible whole".⁽¹⁶⁾ Limited mind treats things as if they are independent entities. Therefore we can not hope to attain the integral consciousness of the Supreme Person with our finite and divisive mind. The integral consciousness lies beyond our mind and can therefore be named as Supramental consciousness. The Supermind is the infinite Divine mind. "It conceives the idea of creation and expresses itself as apparently unconscious matter in order to enjoy the play of rising gradually again through matter to life, and life to mind and through mind back to itself".⁽¹⁷⁾

According to Sri Aurobindo the philosophy of the Life Divine is a philosophy of Advaita. The world is a manifestation of the real and therefore is itself real. The reality is infinite and eternal Divine, eternal Being, Consciousness-force and Bliss. This Divine by His power has created the world. He has hidden Himself in this world in Non-Being, Inconscience and Insentience.

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE VIEWS OF
B.G. TILAK & SRI AUROBINDO :

Tilak and Sri Aurobindo opine that the Supreme Being is real and to be known. But their respective attitude is different. Tilak holds that matter and spirit are wholly contradictory. He i.e., Purushottama is beyond both matter and spirit. But Sri Aurobindo views that these matter and spirit are the two extremes of the same scale. The difference is only in gradation but they do not differ in nature.

Tilak holds that though the Gita describes the perceptible form of God in frequent times but we must not think that the imperceptible form of God is ignored there. His changing from imperceptible to perceptible, is His Maya. When the Immutable Supreme Being is embodied in Name and Form, appears in the form of the visible ~~the~~ world. This is known in the Vedanta philosophy as Maya, and that includes Karma also. Karma and Maya is synonymous. Sri Aurobindo does not accept the theory of Maya propounded by Shankara like Tilak. He does not accept the view that this world with an infinite number of things is an appearance only. Mayavadins ignores the world rather than explain it. Sri Aurobindo explains the world

from his integral out-look. If the world is an illusion, then an illusion must have some reality as its basis. Though he does not accept the doctrine of *Maya* but he admits the importance of this doctrine. He says that Brahman is both immanent and transcendent. He does not describe the Supreme Being negatively. On the other hand he has accepted the oneness of the Absolute ~~without~~ without denying the reality of the world.

We see both Tilak and Sri Aurobindo accept the Advaita theory but not in the same sense. Tilak admits the same in illusory sense and Sri Aurobindo in realistic sense, that means- the world is a manifestation of the Real, so therefore this ^{is} also real. There is no contradiction between the ~~different~~ apparent opposite qualities of the Supreme Being. The Eternal Infinite Being has hidden Himself in what seem to be His opposites i.e, non-being, finitude etc. But really within Him all- Being and non-being, Infinitude and finitude are there.

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CONCLUSION :

In India commentators on the philosophical thought have often said that there is an unbridgeable gap between transcendentalism and practical life. The Indian consciousness has developed with an natural hostility towards worldliness with an aspiration for transcendence. The Gita for the first time perhaps, tries to build a bridge between earthly life and transcendental matters. The Gita has evolved the doctrine of a healthy combination of enjoyment with renunciation. Another synthetic approach of the Gita is that it has attempted for a reconciliation between the conventional ritualism and philosophical spiritualism. Here the world of matter is not stated as unreal, it is also one of the natures of the Lord. Sri Aurobindo and Tilak though have given us valuable interpretations of the Gita, their ~~senses~~ ~~senses~~ in this respect are not identical. They express the message of the Gita according to their own philosophical attitude, temperament and realisation.

On completion of the commentary on the Gita B.G. Tilak expresses his opinion in a letter like this- "Gita Rahasya is an independent and original book investigating the purpose of the Gita and showing how our religious philosophy is applied there into the solution of the ethical problem. For my view /of Gita is that it is a work on ~~ethics~~ ~~ethics-~~ nor intuitional, but transcendental". Apart from that Tilak expresses his belief in an interview with a representative of a Indian journal. He says that before Shankar and Ramanuja, the ~~now~~ great Southern philosophers wrote their commentaries, the Gita was understood in its natural sense. But from that time sectarian interpretations began and the element of Karma-Yoga in the Gita was ignored. His book is intended to restore this natural sense and central idea of ~~scripture~~ the famous scripture.

Tilak's claim of correctness of his interpretation on this point seems to be justified. Most probably he is the pioneer to emphasising the value on the ethical aspect of the Gita. Sri Aurobindo writes a review on Tilak's interpretation. there he says- "he discusses Vedanta and ethics of the Gita and compares the ethical philosophy of Western thinkers with that of Indian school of thought."

"It is a fresh sign of the tendency towards an increasingly liberal movement of religious opinion in orthodox India, the dissolution of the old habit of unquestioning deference to great authorities and the consequent rediscovery of the true catholic sense of the ancient scriptures."⁽¹⁾

Tilak's over emphasis on ethics in his interpretation is not beyond any question. In the 23 rd. chapter (The Core of the Gita's meaning) of the second series of Essays on the Gita, Sri Aurobindo expresses a view which is just opposite to this emphasis on ethics. There he says that an ethical rendering of spirituality has its value only as a law of conduct. The central point of the Gita's philosophy and yoga is its attempt to reconcile the inner spiritual truth and the outer actualities of man's life and action. That is a complete practical reconciliation of the whole truth of spirit with the whole truth of life. But this must be taken for granted that Tilak's interpretation has some merits as well.

The propounders of Vedanta such as Shankara and Ramanuja did not lay stress upon the path of Karma. The advent of Buddhism and Jainism also laid puritanical emphasis upon philosophical contemplation. Renunciation had been regarded as the essence of religious and moral life. As a result this emphasis on renunciation allowed growth of a indifferent attitude to social and political affairs. This is one of the vital

causes of India's political degradation. Tilak's Gita Rahasya captures the great spirit of dynamic selfless actionism of ancient time. He was the first in showing the divinity of the path of Karma-Yoga. Instead of textual disquisitions upon the Gita he asked people to concentrate on the message of the life of the speaker of the gospel. Tilak felt that there is a need for bringing a spiritual element to the politics of the country—and the Gita Rahasya is the result of this feeling.

In the context of ethics we say that Gita Rahasya attempts to build up an ethical system on the basis of the acceptance of a spiritual ultimate. Sometimes it is stated that the recognition of a sole spiritual being is tantamount to the neutralization of ethical distinctions. If the Supreme Real is super-ethical the insistent urge for moral action may be considerably minimised. Tilak argues that all though moral distinctions pertain to the realm of mundane phenomena, that does not neutralise their significance. The world itself is the creation of God and for its preservation He incarnates Himself in human form. Moral distinctions therefore have great spiritual significance.

Tilak discusses another important point, viz, what is the behaviour of a Sthitaprajña in the mundane life. He has provided a balanced philosophy of life, and integration of spiritual idealism and social realism. According to Tilak the spiritual balanced vision or sāmāyā-buddhi is the essence of Karma-Yoga. He says that the Gita pleads for the total purification of our mind and intellect. The basis of this purification is disinterested action based on the faith in the Supreme spirit. The Vyavasayatmika Buddhi is the highest moral demand of the Gita.

Sri Aurobindo was a renowned philosopher and Yogi. In his philosophy he used the modern concept of Spiral evolution (including both the processes of Ascent and Descent). Matter evolves into life, life into mind and mind of course has potentiality of evolving into something still higher (Overmind and Supermind). His system combines in it the best elements of the ancient and modern thought. It presents a meeting of different extremes. In it absolutism is reconciled on the one hand with theism and on the other hand with evolution. In the same way spirit is reconciled with matter, knowledge with devotion and action and renunciation with enjoyment. Sri Aurobind's first statement on the Gita after a great intuition was made in a speech he gave at Khulna on 25-th June, 1909. He said at the end of this speech- "The teaching of the Gita is the teaching for life, and not teaching for the life of a closet. It is teaching which means perfection of action. Sri Aurobindo says- "The teacher of the Gita is not only the God in man who moves our whole world of action, by and for whom all our humanity exists and struggles and labours, towards whom all human life travels and progresses. He is the secret Master of works and sacrifice and the Friend of human people."⁽²⁾ He holds that the argument of the Gita resolves itself into three great steps by which action rises out of the human into the Divine plane leaving the bondage of the lower for the liberty of the higher law. The steps are- Karma- Yoga, Jnana-Yoga and Bhakti-Yoga. The work greatest work of Sri Aurobindo is the 'Life Divine'. His 'Essays on the Gita' contains ideas which are elaborated in that book, without however any direct reference to the Gita.

According to Sri Aurobindo the Gita solves the dualism between the Supreme Being and its creative force by conceiving the latter as conscious in nature and as one with

it in its transcendent status. Though the phenomenal world according to the Gita is the creation of Apara (Higher) prakriti, yet the Apara prakriti is in his view not anything opposed to Para prakriti, but only its limited aspect. So the Apara prakriti can be reconclised and integrated with the Absolute without affecting its unity. Thus the Gita arrives at an integral monism by conceiving nature as not anything opposed to the Divine but only as a part of Him and one with Him in essence. Sri Aurobinde's integral advaitism is based on this conception of fundamental unity. His originality as a philosopher is reflected in the approach to the integration which he seeks to achieve. He supplements the Gita's conception of Para and Apara prakriti by his idea of evolution by which the Apara prakriti ultimately evolves into Para prakriti.

The characteristic of the teaching of the Gita is this that solution of the problem of Arjuna may be the solution of our problems and doubts of practical life also. Total surrender to God is the main teaching of the Gita. Sri Aurobinde lays full stress upon surrender. In his commentary he wants to prove that surrender is the key point to attain the Divinity. Unless we surrender to Him we can not possess the Divine consciousness. Surrender means to give oneself to the Divine, to give everything to the Divine and regard nothing as one's own, to obey only the Divine will, to live for the Divine. The core of inner surrender is trust and confidence in the Divine. The surrender must be total and seize all the parts of the being. There must not be any part of the being, even the most external, anything that makes a reserve, anything that hides behind doubts, confusions, anything that revolts or refuses.

To surrender the mind, the vital, the physical consciousness one after the other, to give up their own way and to accept the way of the Divine fulfil our aspiration to touch the 'Supramental' reality. But a question may arise why should we follow this path of surrender to attain the Divinity ?

The ^{root} ~~source~~ of surrender is inherent in our nature. We the common people have an inveterate tendency to surrender, have an urge for total perfection and liberation. Primarily we desire perfection, wholeness. But unfortunately we become unable to attain that completeness within ourselves as because of the reason we do not want it from our inner-monitor. So are always attempting to be perfect, to achieve that completeness from outside. Secondly, we want liberation from ignorance, rage, fear, anxiety, delusion, jealousy, envy, and so on. So to attain that perfection and liberation usually we surrender to some person or speculative ideals, or to some habits or feelings or some of our weakness. The result of this wrong, partial surrender is only sufferings and disappointments. But if the object of the total surrender is the Supreme Spirit, who belongs to our mind as our inner-monitor then we will be able to attain the perfection and liberation in true sense.

The path of surrender has also one disadvantage. Surrender may be reduced into inactiveness or cowardice if this is not followed in a right or proper way. Total surrender and cowardice are not compatible in nature. ↑ true surrender does not lead us to any imperfection.

Sri Aurobindo accepted the view of Taittiriya Upanishad that matter is Brahman (Annam Brahma). Here Annam means matter. We have to discover God within this world. Matter also includes Divinity in its nature. So spiritualism and materialism are not too opposite poles. They are the

gradations in the same scale. To realise the Supreme Reality ~~we~~ need not suppress our natural feelings, on the other hand what we need that is the transformation of the feelings. Sri Aurobindo holds about surrender "that which surrenders here is the Jiva, the essential soul, the original central and spiritual being of man, the individual Purusha. It is this central spiritual being in us who thus enters into a perfect and closely real relation of delight and union with the origin and contin^{ent} and governing Self and Power of our existence. And he who receives our surrender is ~~no~~ limited Deity but the Purushottama, the one eternal of Godhead, the one supreme soul of all that is and ^{of} all Nature, the original transcendent Spirit of existence." (3)

Sri Aurobindo calls the Absolute unknowable. It means Absolute can not be known by our finite and limited sense experience and thought. The term 'unknowable' does not mean that the Absolute is altogether unknown and unknowable by human being. In this respect Sri Aurobindo's view entirely differs from that of Kant, Spencer and other Agnostics. Because they hold that Absolute can not be realised by sense intellect and reason, so it must always remain unknown and unknowable. In the view of Sri Aurobindo Absolute can be realised by intuition and Supramental consciousness. In this context he agrees with the view of the Upanishadic sages and with the view of Shankara, Ramanuja and other Vedantins. They recognised intuition as the highest source of knowing reality.

To ~~sum~~ up the general philosophical position of Sri Aurobindo we see that so many diverse currents of thought of the East and the west meet in him, it is difficult to place him under any particular school. We may call him an intuitionist. Highest consciousness is not like

human consciousness, it is self-enjoing, self-aware, self-active, integral existence, and is also ineffable, being not completely describable. He holds that intuition is basically the self-awareness of the spirit, so he may be marked as an intuitionist. His metaphysics is not a mere transcendent variety, unrelated to life. For him spirituality is not foreign to life. It has a close relation with the practical affairs of life. He holds that spirituality has a pragmatic value, it is not a theory only. It evolves a better world and leads to perfection. So we can call him as a spiritual pragmatist. (%)

Sri Aurobindo may be regarded as an existentialist in two senses. Firstly he regarded existence as an Ultimate Category. And secondly, the intuitive self-awareness is inherent in existence as the basic source of knowledge, we can call him a humanist, not for any humanitarian or philanthropic attitude but for his effort to uplift the consciousness of whole human race. He expected that ~~one~~ ^{Come} a day will when world-unity is there. Any type of unity or collective integration pre-supposes individual integration, that means integration between our body, life, mind and soul. Nature is always putting pressure to us, so that we may break our shell of ego and attain integrity. This is the message of Sri Aurobindo left for the humanity.

Sri Aurobindo chooses as his foundation of philosophical theories, the Vedanta- out of which the different schools developed. His interpretation of the Vedas and the Upanishads is synthetic in character which is reflected from the Ishavasya Upanishad and the Bhagavad Gita. His commentary on the Gita elaborates the synthetic view in respect of God, nature, man and between social duties and his supreme spiri-

(%) Taken from the lecture delivered by- M.P. Pandit on January 20, 1987 at a Seminar of North Bengal University, Darjeeling (W.B.)

tual endeavour.

Sri Aurobindo develops his integral out look in his commentary on the Gita. Brahman, the Supreme Reality is not only indeterminate and transcendent, but also capable of being self-expressed by self-limitation and self-determination. Absolute is indeterminate in the sense only that it can not be limited by any determination but not in the sense that it is incapable of self-determination. The Absolute can not be defined with any quality, property and power; not because they do not belong to it, but because it can not be fully conceived and expressed by these. It is all these, and yet much more than these. It is immanent as well as transcendent.

Sri Aurobindo holds that according to the Gita the spirit and Godhead is the infinite, free from all dharmas. The Godhead conducts the world according to laws and leads man through his dharmas of ignorance and knowledge, sin and virtue, right and wrong, liking and disliking, pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow and the rejection of these opposites. Man advances through his physical, vital, intellectual, emotional, ethical and spiritual forms and rules and standards. The spirit and Godhead transcends all these things and we have to surrender ourselves to this free and eternal spirit and keep ourselves absolutely open to Him. We should trust the light and power and delight of the Divine within us and, be unafraid and ungrieving, accept only His guidance. That is the truest, the greatest, release and that brings the inevitable perfection of ourselves. By this path only man can attain greatest delight and bliss.

The Gita accepts all the conflicting ideas of that time and also goes boldly beyond all these positions.

It extends and remoulds the truth of the Upanishads. Its call is to the individual who can be capable of a complete spiritual existence. It is not a fact that the entire philosophy of Sri Aurobindo is based upon the Gita, on the other hand it acts as a basis of his philosophy. The ultimate aim of the Gita seems to admit the cessation of birth in the world. It did not explain the idea of spiritual evolution, Supramental Truth Consciousness and complete transformation of earthly life.

In the context of transformation and synthesis, I think that there is a close relation between the views of Sri Aurobindo on the Gita and the Tantric system. The root of the idea of the transformation is available in the Tantric theory of upliftment. There is the upliftment from Pashu-bhava (animality) to Bira-bhava (heroic attitude) and Bira-bhava to Divya-bhava (Divinity). In the Gita there is also the ideal of upliftment from Aparā Prakṛti to Parā Prakṛti, from rationality to spirituality. In the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo there is upliftment from mind to Supermind through Overmind and Illumined-mind.

Tantric discipline in its nature aims at a synthesis between liberation (Mukti) and a cosmic enjoyment (Bhukti). Sri Aurobindo holds that we find a healthy combination of enjoyment and renunciation in the Gita. In the Tantric system liberation is 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". (*)

Tantric system also possesses both the processes Ascent and Descent with which we are acquainted in the Integral Yoga. In the Ascent there is the opening of the centres and of the planes i.e, mental, vital and physical. There is also Descent as a main key of the spiritual transformation. Tantra deals not only with the principles and essentials of the Divine Knowledge, but also with forms, processes and organised powers.

Despite of some similarities there is also a fundamental difference between Tantric system and the Integral view of Sri Aurobindo. In it there is an addition of a vital point- the spirit in man is an universal being has the capability to be one with the Divine in all souls and Nature. The first object of the Yoga is the

(*) M.P.PANDIT : Sri Aurobindo On The Tantra.

chap- 'The Tantra and the Integral
Yoga' page...45

individual liberation of human soul and enjoyment of union with the Divine. Another object of the Integral Yoga is the effectuation of Divine Unity with all beings in the Gita Lord Krishna fully supports this view.

"sarvabhūtastham ātmānam
sarvabhūtāni cā 'tmani
īkṣate yogayuktātma
sarvatra samādarsanaḥ" v..... 6/29

"He whose self is harmonized by yoga ^{seeth} ~~with~~ the Self abiding in all beings and all beings in the Self; everywhere he sees the same".

According to Sri Aurobindo's interpretation the idea of the Supermind and the truth consciousness is there in the Rig. Veda, and in Upanishad. In the Rig. Veda also the idea is in a inchoate form and has not been developed. As compared with the Hindu tradition here lies the novelty of Sri Aurobindo's message that the world is not either a creation of Māya or only a play-Lila of the Divine, but a field of manifestation. He says "progressive evolution of the soul and the nature in Matter, from Matter through Life and Mind to what is beyond Mind till it reaches the complete revelation of Sachchidananda in life".⁽⁴⁾ Sri Aurobindo holds that the language of the Gita is contradictory in many places because it admits two opposite truths apparently and tries to reconcile them. It is true that there is an apparent contradiction between many slokas. For example:

"mayā tatam idam sarvam
 jagad avyaktamūrtinā
 matsthāni sarvabhūtāni
 na cā'ham tesv avasthitah" 9/4

"By Me all this universe is pervaded through My unmanifested form. All beings abide in Me but I do not abide in them!"

"na ca matsthāni bhūtāni
 paśya me yogam aisvaram
 bhūtabhūn na ca bhūtas ho
 mamam tma bhūtabhavaṇah" 9/5.

"And (yet) the beings do not dwell in Me ; behold My divine mystery. My spirit which is the source of all beings sustains the beings but does not abide in them."

In the ^{fourth} ~~fourth~~ sloka it has been expressed that all existences are situated in Him, not He is in them. But in the fifth sloka Sri Krishna says that all existences are not situated in Him. Apparently both the slokas are contradictory but the inner meaning of the second sloka is that this phenomenal creation is only spiritual and not material. So existences are not situated in Him.

Sri Aurobindo admits that Karma-Yoga is not a ~~new~~ new but a very old Yoga. This Yoga existed before the Gita. It is not the case that the Gita compels us to admit Karma-Yoga on the ground that it is unavoidable. If the mere unavoidability of Karma-Yoga were the message of the Gita then it would not be marked as a great scripture of the world. Regarding the essence of Karma-Yoga Sri Aurobindo says "it is not the form of the work itself or mere activity but the consciousness and Godward will behind it that are the essence of Karma-Yoga; the work is only the necessary instrumentation for the union with the Master of works, the transit to the pure will and power of light from the will and power of ignorance." (5)

Another novelty of his interpretation in this respect is his theory of proper restoration of energy. If any work is done in a disinterested manner then it does not result loss of energy. So one has to learn how to use the life energy properly and keep balance within. (*)

The theory of Superman is ^{one} of a original ideas of Sri Aurobindo. His Superman is not a glorified edition of the ordinary man. The vitalist thinker Nietzsche's Superman and Sri Aurobindo's Superman are not identical in nature. The Superman of Sri Aurobindo "is one who has cultivated and perfected in ~~in~~ their fullest amplitude and height the essential powers of his being on all its ranges of body, life, mind and soul at the same time has purged himself of all deformations of ego and ignorance and passed into Godhead. He is risen above the reign of nature and enthroned himself in the freedom of the soul from here he governs his activities. He is the master of his own being." (6) Sri Aurobindo explains all the characteristics of Sthitapranja- the perfect person of the Gita, in the light of his theory of 'Superman'. Sthitapranja or the perfect person of the Gita and the Superman are not same. Sri Aurobindo's Superman is something more than Sthitapranja. Superman will appear on the earth as the inevitable result of nature's evolution. The Superman is not only a purified moralised man but more than that. The Superman being delivered of ignorance and living in perfect knowledge, has a different nature and outlook. The principal difference between a Superman and a Sthitapranja is that a Superman exists in the stage of Supermind and not only that he also helps the Supermind to descent in the earth consciousness. The Supermind is between the Sachchidananda and the

(*) taken from the lecture delivered by- M.P.Pandit on January 20, 1987 in a Seminar of North Bengal University, Darjeeling (W.B.)

lower creation. The Supr mind is in its very essence a truth consciousness, a consciousness is always free from ignorance. Supermind is the grade of existence beyond mind, life and matter. And as mind life and matter have manifested on the earth, so therefore Supermind also must manifest in this world of matter in general, in many individuals. So the manifestation of * Supermind is inevitable. This manifestation has two aspects- a descent from above and an ascent from below. The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo contains some new elements apart from the Gita. It aims not at a departure from the world and life into Nirvana, but the Divine fulfilment of life which can be attained through spiritual transformation. It is seen that Sri Aurobindo stated spiritual transformation is the key-point of the manifestation of the Divine in our life. Regarding spiritual transformation he says "what I mean by the spiritual transformation is something dynamic (not merely liberation of the Self or realisation of the One which can very well be attained without any descent). It is a putting on of the spiritual consciousness dynamic as well as static in every part of the being down to the subconscious. That can not be done by the influence of the Self leaving the consciousness fundamentally as it is with only purification, enlightenment of the mind and heart and quiescence of the vital. It means a bringing down of the Divine Consciousness, static and dynamic into all these parts and the entire replacement of the present consciousness by that."⁽⁷⁾

According to Indian sages there are three types of liberations (Mukti)- Sālokya, Sādharma and Sādśya. Sālokya means- mutual presence. Sālokya-mukti is the liberation by conscious existence in one world of being with the Divine, dwelling of the soul in the Divine.

Sādharmya-mukti means liberation by the acquisition of Divine nature, by the transformation of lower being into the human image of the Divine. Lastly Sādrśya-mukti means liberation by likeness to the Divine soul's liberated nature becomes identical with that of the Divine nature. Sālokya-mukti can be attained through Bhakti, Sādharmya-mukti can be attained through Karma and Sādrśya-mukti through Jnana.

Tilak and Sri Aurobindo both of them discussed about Karma-Yoga. But their mode of discussion are different. It is to be bear in mind that both of them were politically extremists in their own ways. What we find Tilak wrote his commentary in that extremist phase. But Sri Aurobindo was found in a different course- the path of Yoga, when he was engaged in writing the commentary. His commentary is not only an interpretation, but bears the marks of an original work. He admitted that the Gita includes both the paths- Karma-sannyasa and Karma-yoga. "Although the Gita prefers action to inaction, it does not rule out the renunciation of works, but accepts ^{that} it as one of the ways to the Divine."⁽⁸⁾ Even then he says, the Gita is undoubtedly a Gospel of works which culminates in knowledge and total surrender to God through devotion, is the fundamental basis of these works. He lays stress that the Gita is not the book of ethics but a book of the spiritual life. He writes "therefore it is a mistake to interpret the Gita from the stand point of the mentality of today and force it to teach us the disinterested performance of duties as the highest and all-sufficient law. A little consideration of the situation with which the Gita deals will show us that this could not be its meaning."⁽⁹⁾

The Gita does not teach us to perform only the disinterested works, but to follow the Divine life, abandoning all dharmas (sarvadharmān paritajya) to take refuge in the Supreme alone where Tilak lays stress on the importance of humanitarianism activism and philanthropic Seva, Sri Aurobindo holds that these things are part of the Divine Will, they are good needed at the present day. In his opinion God will be the Master of our all works. The Gita does not teach us to live in humanity only but to live in God.

Sri Aurobindo finds that Tilak lays stress only upon the first three or four chapters of the Gita and specially on the sloka- "karmany evā dhikāras te/ mā phalesu kadācana" (G. 2/47). So Karma-Yoga becomes the only path and according to his commentary the Gita becomes the book of ethics only. According to Sri Aurobindo Karma-Yoga is the first step. The second step is Jñāna-Yoga, path of Karma has not been denied here ; Karma is illumined with Jñāna. Because without the knowledge (Jñāna) of the difference between the pleasant (preya-karma) and the excellent (shreya-karma), one can not properly does disinterested works. The last step is Bhakti-Yoga. In this step also the Jñāna and Karma do not keep in abeyance. The double path (Karma-Yoga and Jñāna-Yoga) of Tilak becomes the triune way of Knowledge, Works and Devotion in the commentary of Sri Aurobindo.

Tilak equates Kant's pure and practical reason with Vyavasayatmika and Vasanatmika Buddhi. But this type of identification is a mistake. (8)

(8) The point has been discussed elaborately in the chapter- 'METAPHYSICAL THEORIES' page.. 104, 143

Tilak's interpretation of Bhakti is not satisfactory. He says Bhakti leads to dualism, so it can not be a Nisthā like Jñāna and Karma. It is only auxiliary to Karma-Yoga. But Bhakti is both means and the end of spiritual life. It is not inferior in any way. He solves many metaphysical problems in his own way of Karma-Yoga. As a result it appears before me that his conclusion is pre-determined, not developed gradually. As it were he fixes his conclusion from the very beginning and the commentary is directed to-wards substantiating that conclusion. This pre-destined conclusion hampers the natural flow of his commentary. What I think this over-emphasis on ethics serves as a constraint in his commentary.

We are to admit that this type of interpretation was very much essential on that particular period from the political view point. The Indian ascetics did not admit the supremacy of the way of action. So all the devotees and the worshippers of God turned away from action. As a result, common people also became indifferent to social and political affairs. This is one of the main causes for India's political down-fall and subjugation. Tilak wanted to awaken a heroic attitude in the minds of the people. He hoped that the proclaiming of Karma-Yoga could save our country from political inertia and slavery. To some extent his thinking attained success. At that time the Gita became unseparable with the lives of revolutionaries in their every activities.

The commentary of Sri Aurobindo is found excellent, yet it seems to be highly loaded. The subject matter is complex and the style of expression is high-flown.

So the commentary becomes complex to the common people who want to understand this by their discursive reason.

It is observed that Sri Aurobindo was writing simultaneously 'Life Divine' and 'Essays on the Gita'. Many concepts which are appropriately discussed in the Life Divine, appear very unfamiliar in the commentary on the Gita and ~~the~~ makes the work unclear and difficult. However his idea of synthesis between Jnana, ~~and~~ Bhakti and Karma is something original and gives a quite new direction to humanity in its striving to-wards perfection. His interpretation has an unlimited and universal message which is not confined to any particular period or region.

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