
UNIT1 THEORIES OF EXISTENCE

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the unit is to provide a detailed account of the theories of existence in the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo. This unit shall bring to light the conceptual structure of Aurobindo's Metaphysics. This unit shall include the following sections:

- Introduction
- The Ultimate Reality
- Consciousness-Force
- Evolution of Consciousness
- The Structure and Organization of Being

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Aurobindo's theories of existence echo the teachings of the ancient sages of India in stating that behind the appearances of the Universe there is the reality of a Being and Consciousness, a Self of all things, one and eternal. All beings are united in that One Self and Spirit but divided by a certain separativity of consciousness, an ignorance of their true Self and Reality in the mind, life and body. It is possible by a certain psychological discipline to remove this veil of separative consciousness and become aware of the true Self, the Divinity within us. This One Being and Consciousness is involved in Matter. Evolution is the method by which it liberates itself; consciousness appears in what seems to be inconscient, and once having appeared is self-impelled to grow higher and higher and at the same time to enlarge and develop towards a greater and greater perfection. Life is the first step of this release of consciousness; mind is the second; but the evolution does not finish with mind, it awaits a release into something greater, a consciousness which is spiritual and supramental. The next step of the evolution must be towards the development of Supermind and Spirit as the dominant power in the conscious being. For only then will the involved Divinity in things release itself entirely and it become possible for life to manifest perfection.

While the first steps in evolution were taken by Nature without a conscious will in the plant and animal life, in man, Nature evolves by a conscious will in the instrument. A conversion has to be made, a turning of the consciousness by which mind changes into the higher principle. This method is found in the ancient psychological discipline and practice of Yoga. In the past, it has been attempted by a drawing away from the world and a disappearance into the height of the Self or Spirit. Aurobindo teaches that a descent of the higher principle is possible which will not merely release the spiritual Self out of the world, but release it in the world, replace the mind's ignorance or its very limited knowledge by a supramental Truth-Consciousness which will be a sufficient instrument of the inner Self and make it possible for the human being to find himself dynamically as well as inwardly and grow out of his animal humanity into a divine race. The psychological discipline of Yoga can be used to that end by opening all the parts of the being to a conversion or transformation through the descent and working of the higher still concealed supramental principle.

1.2 THE ULTIMATE REALITY

The metaphysical position of Aurobindo is described as Integral Non-Dualism. In tune with the declarations of the Vedas and the Upanisads, Aurobindo identifies consciousness with the ultimate reality, the sachchidananda; infinite existence, consciousness and bliss. The three are not a trinity but a unity. Aurobindo says that Sachchidananda is the One with a triple aspect. In the Supreme the three are not three but one - existence is consciousness, consciousness is bliss, and they are thus inseparable, not only inseparable but so much each other that they are not distinct at all. Sacchidananda is the unity of the many-sidedness of manifested things, the eternal harmony of all their variations and oppositions, the infinite perfection which justifies their limitations and is the goal of their imperfections. Aurobindo defines Brahman as the reality of things which fills and supports their idea and form. It is an eternal in all stabilities, truth behind all appearances and a constant which supports all mutations but itself does not undergo any change either in terms of increase or decrease. The Brahman is the highest and this highest is the all; there is none beyond or none other than it. To know it is to know all. In relation to the universe, the Brahman is not only the spiritual, material and conscious substance of all the ideas and forces and forms of the universe, but their origin, support and possessor. Just as we are the play and form, the mental, vital, psychic and physical expression of a supreme Self unconditioned by the mind, life and body, the universe too is the play and form and cosmic soul expression of a supreme existence. This existence is unconditioned by force and matter, idea, name and form and the distinction between puruṣa and prakṛti. Our supreme Self and the the supreme existence which has become the universe are one spirit, one Self and one existence. The individual is also an expression of the universal being, an emanation from the transcendence. Aurobindo here draws our attention to the fact that one's true Self is not the natural personality, the created individuality which we are aware of, but is a universal being in its relations with others and with nature. It is the living front of a supreme transcendental spirit.

Aurobindo gives equal ontological status to the transcendental as well as the divine in the form of creation. Aurobindo uses the term Brahman to denote an Absolute which takes all relativities in its embrace. To substantiate his position,

he draws our attention to the Upaniṣads that affirm that all is Brahman, Mind is Brahman, Life is Brahman, Matter is Brahman; addressing vayu, the Lord of air and of life it is said “O Vayu, thou art the manifest Brahman”. Again pointing to man, beast, birds and insects, each is separately identified with the Brahman – “O Brahman, thou art this old man and boy and girl, this bird, this insect. “ Aurobindo further identifies Brahman with the Consciousness that knows itself in all that exists. It is the force that sustains the gods, titan and even demons. It is the force that acts in man and other animals and forms and energies of nature. It is Ânanda, the secret bliss of existence without which no being can survive. Brahman is the inner soul in all, taking a form corresponding to each created form which it inhabits. It is that which is conscious not only in the conscious being but also in inconscient things. He is the timeless and Time; he is space and all that is in space; he is causality and the cause and the effect. All realities and all aspects and all semblances are the Brahman. According to Aurobindo, the impersonal divine, Nirguṇa Brahman and the personal divine, Saguna Brahman are equal and co-existent parts of the Divine.³¹ They are the two essential modes, the fundamental aspects, the two poles of the eternal being. The Transcendent divine reality exceeds both these modes. These two modes practically correspond to the silent and active Brahman.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

1) Explain the Integral- Non-dualism of Aurobindo.

2) How does Aurobindo define the Brahman?

1.3 CONSCIOUSNESS-FORCE

Aurobindo asserts that however we explain the concept of consciousness, taking Nature to be an inert impulse or a conscious principle, it is certainly force. According to him the basic principle of things is a formative movement of energies. All forms are born of the meeting and mutual adaptation of unshaped forces. All actions and sensations arise as a response to some previous occurrence and manifest in the form of forces. Thus, even if the entire world is conceived essentially as an act of consciousness, an act is implied in it and in the act, a

movement of force and a play of energy. This is the fundamental nature of the world as experienced within us. All our activities are the play of triple forces, namely, knowledge-force, desire-force and action-force. All the three are really three streams of one original and identical power called âdyâ úakti. Even the states of rest are but an equilibrium in the play of forces. Represented by the two forms of Shiva and Kali, Brahman and Shakti are two inseparable aspects of the same existence. This force may be at rest or in motion. Even when it is at rest it exists and is never abolished, diminished or essentially altered. Force by its very nature exists in the two alternative states of self-concentration and self-diffusion. Aurobindo argues that this being accepted, the question as to how the movement of force originates, does not arise, as movement has been accepted as one of the states of force. The potentiality of force must translate itself as an alternative rhythm of of rest and movement succeeding each other in time or else as an eternal self-concentration of force in immutable existence with a superficial play of movement, change and formation like the rising and falling of waves on the surface of ocean. Consciousness Force has three characteristics. They are:

- 1) Infinite self-variation
- 2) Infinite self-limitation
- 3) Infinite self-absorption

The Consciousness Force is not restricted to one particular state of consciousness or to one law of action. The individual consciousness can see itself as a limited and phenomenal being; it can also put off its apparent limitations and see itself as a universal and a transcendent Being. The underlying consciousness being one and the same, there is no essential difficulty in passing from one status to another. The one being can thus experience or realize itself triply from any of these three statuses.

The second characteristic of consciousness force is its power of self-limitation. It is the subordinate movement of the infinite consciousness determining itself within the bounds of space and time. The power of self-limitation expresses itself in two forms – individual self-limitation and cosmic self-limitation. Though all spiritual individuals are, in essence, the same, they have their individual differentiations. This individual self-limitation is not a fundamental characteristic but only an individual specialisation of a common universality or totality. The spiritual individual acts from his own locus of Truth and in accordance with his nature, but on a common basis and not being blind to other selves and the nature around him.

Apart from the individual self-limitation, there is also the cosmic self-limitation of the infinite consciousness, which is the power responsible for the existence and working of the universe. The Infinite Consciousness supports the universe with only a certain part of itself and holds back all that is not needed for the cosmic movement. The self-determination of the mind, life and matter take place according to the same principle. Aurobindo says that though such a self-limitation of consciousness seems contradictory to our normal reason, it is one of the powers of the infinite which the logic of the infinite alone can reveal.

Self-absorption is the third characteristic of the infinite that takes place in two ways: that of superconscience and inconscience. In the state of superconscience, the infinite consciousness takes a plunge into itself, which is a state of pure self-

awareness of Being. This state is devoid of both the universal as well as the individual consciousness. It transcends both and is a state of absorption in the ineffable One. The Infinite consciousness again takes a plunge into the inconscient which is a state of utter darkness. This state, though it appears as one of non-being, is really one of Being where the Being is in a state of perfect self-oblivion. The inconscient also possesses intrinsically both consciousness and force. Here the infinite consciousness is hidden, blinded and works automatically. The states of the superconscient and the inconscient are that of total self-absorption of the infinite consciousness. Mind, life and matter are states where the infinite consciousness is partially self-absorbed. Aurobindo cites these powers of self-absorption of Brahman as the factors responsible for the simultaneous existence of the Nirguna and Saguna aspects of Brahman.

1.4 EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Biologically, evolution is a progressive self-manifestation of nature in and through all entities including human beings. The biological evolution continues in man but transcends its own boundaries and gives way to an evolution that is spiritual. All evolution is indeed a heightening of consciousness in the manifest being. In human beings both the physical and spiritual evolution are operative. The process of repeated births facilitates it. Each evolved form of the body houses an evolved power of consciousness maintained and kept in continuity by the process of heredity. The evolution of the soul which is more of an invisible process starts from the level of mind and proceeds further. Mind itself can never be the final destination of evolution, argues Aurobindo, since it is only a principle of ignorance and division seeking for knowledge. Only the supramental Truth-Consciousness can bring to light the true and complete self-knowledge and world knowledge. Only such an integral knowledge can be the consummation of all evolution. According to Aurobindo, before there could be any evolution, there must be an involution of the divine. But for this involution there would only be a successive creation of new things not contained in their antecedents. Instead of inevitable consequences and processes in a sequence, we will have arbitrarily willed or miraculously conceived processes that happen by an inexplicable chance. The progressive self-manifestation of Nature, usually termed as evolution, necessarily depends upon three successive elements. There is that which is already evolved, that which is persistently in the stage of conscious evolution, and that which is to be evolved. The march of Nature according to Aurobindo is not set to a regular and mechanical forward stepping. There are attempts to go beyond herself leading sometimes to subsequent deplorable retreats. She often rushes; has splendid and mighty outbursts and immense realizations.

Nature has evolved for us the bodily life and the combination and harmony of Matter and Life, both of which are fundamentally necessary elements for all action and progress upon earth. Matter is the foundation and first condition of all energies and realizations and life-energy is the basis of our means of existence in a material body and the basis of all mental and spiritual activities. The material movement in Nature has attained a certain maturity and stability whereby it can act as the perfect instrument for the progressive manifestation of divinity in humanity. Once the bodily life has evolved sufficiently to house the spirit, evolution proceeds to the mental which is a subtler and finer instrument for divine manifestation. Once nature frees herself from the trammels of physical

and vital, it surges onto the mental for higher realizations. The human mind is not a unified structure but a plural one constitutive of many gradations. These include the material and nervous mind, the pure intellectual mind which frees itself from the illusions of the body and senses, and a divine mind above the intellect which in turn liberates itself from the imperfect modes of the logically discriminative and imaginative reason. Mind in human beings is first enmeshed in the life of the body. In plants it is completely involved and in animals it is imprisoned. In human beings however, the bodily life is only a base or first condition for further evolution. In keeping with the ancient idea that human beings are thinking beings (hence called 'manu'), Aurobindo says that true human existence begins only when the intellectual mentality emerges out of the material and frees itself from the clutches of the nervous and physical. Freedom is the mark of the ascent in the process of evolution. However the mental life is not completed evolution of Nature; it is not yet firmly founded in the human animal. Civilized man has yet to establish an equilibrium between the fully active mind and the body; he does not yet normally possess it. The increasing effort towards a more intense mental life seems to create an increasing disequilibrium of the human elements. A rare phenomenon like a genius is not a freak, an inexplicable phenomenon. It is only a natural next step in the right line of Nature's evolution. Nature has harmonised the bodily life with the material mind, and now she is attempting a harmony of it with the play of intellectual mentality. Though this does lead to a depression of the full animal and vital vigour, it does not produce any active disturbances. Mind is not the last term of evolution nor is it the ultimate aim to which evolution strives, but is like the body, an instrument. In tune with the Indian tradition, Aurobindo asserts that that which is to be manifested is not a new term in human experience, but has been developed before and has even governed humanity in certain periods of development. And if since then, Nature has sunk back from her achievement, the reason must always be found in some unrealised harmony or some insufficiency of the intellectual and material basis to which she has now returned, some over-specialisation of the higher to the detriment of the lower existence. Yoga recognises besides the physical and vital being that constitutes the gross body of food-sheath (annamayakoûa) and the vital vehicle (prânamayakoûa), the mental being composed of the mind-sheath or mental vehicle (manomayakoûa) termed the subtle body. There is also a supramental being called the causal body that is constituted of a knowledge (vijñânamayakoûa) and bliss sheaths (ânandamayakoûa). The knowledge in the knowledge sheath is not a systematised result of mental questioning and reasonings, neither is it a temporary arrangement of conclusions and opinions in terms of the highest probability, but a pure self-existent and self-luminous truth. The bliss here is not a supreme pleasure of the heart and sensations, with the experience of pain and sorrow as its background. There is also a delight, self-existent and independent of objects and particular experiences, a self-delight which is the very nature, the very stuff as it were of a transcendent and infinite existence.

Behind the manifold of the everchanging evanescent appearances of the universe, there is an abiding reality which has been expressed in the fundamental triune of Sat – Cit – Ânanda (Existence-Consciousness-Bliss). All things and creatures are united in the One Reality, though they appear to be separate and divided owing to the mental consciousness which is an ignorance-consciousness. Through a process of involution, the one existence and consciousness is plunged in the

universe into its opposite called the inconscient, which is seemingly a total absence of consciousness. Evolution is the process by which the supreme consciousness liberates itself from inconscience, resulting in the manifestation of progressively higher levels of consciousness. According to Aurobindo, the scientific theory of physical evolution deals with only the outward and visible machinery of a process which is fundamentally a spiritual evolution, an evolution of consciousness. Matter is the first emergent from the inconscience. Matter is not an inert substance as it appears to be, but a form of consciousness which is closest to inconscience. Life or vital consciousness is the second emergence in the evolutionary process. Mind is the highest level of consciousness that has developed in the human race collectively and is the third step of release from the inconscience. However evolution has not come to an end with the appearance of mind; it awaits a release into the higher, spiritual levels of consciousness of which there are many gradations, ranging from the higher mind through illumined mind, intuition and overmind up to Supermind. The present human race according to Aurobindo is a preparation for the leap into the next step of evolution, into the supramental consciousness. The urge towards growth and evolution, inherent in the whole universe, is the inner driving of the consciousness-force, the progressive manifestation of the spirit being the innate intention behind evolution. In order to fulfill the evolutionary intent, the spiritual growth needs to be a double movement of ascent and descent. The individual consciousness must ascend to progressively higher levels of consciousness and then must bring down the dynamism of the higher levels into the mental, vital and physical consciousness so as to transform the lower levels. Liberation is indeed an indispensable step and the initial goal of spiritual development, but the further goal of evolution according to Aurobindo is transformation.

At each stage evolution takes place by the double process of the upsurging of the Consciousness-Force from its involution in the inconscience and a descent of the Consciousness-Force pressing from the planes of consciousness above, seeking for manifestation. It is the pressure of the Consciousness-Force from the plane of life above the material universe that assisted the emergence of life from Matter in which life already lay involved. It is a pressure from the mind that helped the emergence of mind which was already there involved in life and matter. Again it is the pressure of the spiritual worlds above mind, which are now preparing for the manifestation of the spirit now slumbering in mind, life and matter. The growing urge towards spiritual growth in humanity today is, according to Aurobindo, the push of the Consciousness-Force towards the next higher rung of evolution.

1.5 THE STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION OF BEING

In a normal state of consciousness one feels oneself to be a unitary entity, a single being partially conscious of his psychological make-up and barely in a position to distinguish between its different aspects, physical, emotional and mental. In a heightened state of consciousness, obtained as a result of the practice of a spiritual discipline, one discovers that one's psychological nature is complex and made up of different distinguishable parts of the being.

Sri Aurobindo distinguishes two systems that are simultaneously active in the organization of the being and its parts. One system is concentric, like a series of rings or sheaths and the other is vertical like a flight of steps. The concentric system consists of the outer or surface being, the inner being and the inmost being or the psychic. The outer being and the inner being have three corresponding parts – mental, vital and physical. The vertical system consists of various levels or gradations of consciousness below and above mental consciousness. The Inconscient, the Subconscient, the Physical, the Vital, Mind, Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuition, Overmind, Supermind and Satcitananda constitute the chief levels of consciousness in the vertical system.

The three major divisions in the outer being consists of the mind (the mental), the life-self (the vital) and the body (the physical). Each of these parts has its own distinct type of consciousness, though in our ordinary awareness, they are all mixed up. Though separate, the three principal parts of the outer being – the mental, the vital and the physical - are intermixed and interact on one another, giving rise to distinguishable subdivisions within each part of the being. Thus, besides the mind proper (the thinking mind), there is a part of the mind which is intermixed with the vital, called the vital mind. There is also a part of the mind which is interfused with the physical, called the physical mind. Similar subdivisions exist within the vital and the physical. Two of these subdivisions which generally play a prominent role in most human beings are the vital mind and the physical mind.

The vital mind is the part of the mind which is intermixed and dominated by impulses, desires and feelings of the vital nature. The reasoning of the vital mind is a pseudo-reasoning as is well illustrated by the common act of rationalization by which the mind, usurped by the vital, provides plausible rational explanations and justifications for impulses and desires of the vital.

The physical mind is the part of the mind which is intermingled with and partakes of the characteristics of the physical consciousness. Some of the chief characteristics of the physical namely inertia, obscurity, mechanical repetitiveness, automatism, constriction and chaotic activity are reflected in the physical mind in the form of mental torpor, doubt, mechanical reactions to things, habitual modes of thinking and confusion. The part of the mind which is closest to the physical is referred to as the mechanical mind; it is like a machine that goes on turning round and round whatever thoughts occur in it.

The Inner Being (The Subliminal)

Behind the outer being is the inner being, also called the subliminal self. Whereas the outer being receives consciously only the outer touches and knows things indirectly through the outer mind and the senses, the inner being is directly aware of the universal consciousness and the universal forces that play through us and around us. The inner mind is directly in touch with the universal mind, just as the inner vital is in direct touch with the universal life forces and the inner physical with the universal physical forces around us.

Environmental Consciousness (The Circumconscient)

The subliminal has a formation of consciousness which projects itself beyond the body and forms a circumconscient, an environing part of itself, through which it receives the contacts of the world and can become aware of them and deal

with them before they enter. This environmental consciousness surrounding the body is that part of the individual being through which the individual is in inner contact with other beings and with universal forces.

The Inmost Being – The Psychic

Supporting mind, life and body is the inmost being, called by Sri Aurobindo the psychic being the term being derived from a Greek root (*psukhe*) which means the soul. The soul in its essence, called the psyche, is described by Sri Aurobindo as a spark and an eternal portion of the divine present in all things and beings in the universe. Whereas the Universal Self or Atman stands above the evolutionary process and is unaffected by it, the psyche is the element that develops in the evolution and grows into an individual self called the psychic being. It is to be noted that a distinction must be made also between the true soul (psychic being) and the desire soul (the vital being) which is often mistaken for the real soul.

Purusha and Prakrti

Developing the concepts of Sankhya philosophy, Sri Aurobindo distinguishes between the soul or spirit side of the Being called Purusha (person or conscious being), which is the essential or true being, and the Nature side of Being called Prakrti (Nature), which is the phenomenal or instrumental Being. Both the outer Being and the inner Being belong to Prakrti. Behind the outer mind and the inner mind, the outer vital and the inner vital, the outer physical and the inner physical, lies the true being, the Purusha, in the form of an inmost mental, vital, physical, more specifically called the true mind, the true vital, the true physical consciousness. The psychic being behind the outer being and the inner being and supporting them both is a Purusha. In our ordinary consciousness we are unable to distinguish our true self, the Purusha, from the Nature side of our being, Prakrti, because Purusha is identified with Prakrti. In the state of identification, the Self is bound and governed by its instrumental nature – body, life and mind. The experience of the separation of Purusha from Prakrti may take place on any plane of the being. The true being may be realized in one or both of two aspects - the individual soul (psychic being) or the Universal Self (Atman).

The Individual and Universal Being

Being or Consciousness is all embracing and includes the Universe as well as the Individual. Universe is a diffusion of the Divine All in infinite space and time, the individual its concentration within limits of space and time. It is the ego that creates a wall and sense of separation between the individual being and the universal being. Thus each part of the individual being corresponds to a plane of the universal being. In our normal consciousness, we are not conscious of our true being, we are aware only of our outer being – body, life and mind – with which we identify our self. This identification of the true being with the outer being gives rise to an ego – physical, vital and mental - which gives the sense of I-ness, an individuality separate from the rest of the universe.

The Subconscious and the Inconscious

The subliminal or the inner being is behind the outer being of mind, life and body. The subconscious and the inconscient constitute the nether being below the physical consciousness. Everything on earth is based on the inconscient which is not really devoid of consciousness, but is the nethermost level of the involution

of consciousness from which the evolution of consciousness starts. The subconscious is the antechamber of the inconscient and lies between the inconscient and the conscious mind, life and body. During the waking state the mind lives largely in impressions rising up from the subconscious. In ordinary sleep most dreams are formations made from subconscious impressions. In most human beings, the outer self of mind, life and body is to a great extent an instrument of the upsurging irrational, mechanical and repetitive movements of the subconscious during both waking and sleep.

The Superconscious

Just as the subconscious is what lies below the physical consciousness from which things come up into the physical, the vital and the mental parts of the being, so the superconscious, consisting of higher levels of consciousness, lies above normal mind, and from these higher ranges, things descend into the lower parts of the being. Whereas the subconscious is the basis of our material being and supports all that comes up in the physical nature, the superconscious supports all our spiritual possibilities and nature. Sri Aurobindo distinguishes various distinct levels of consciousness among the higher planes of being which lie above the ordinary mind. There are many layers in each of the main gradations between mind and supermind, and each of these layers can be regarded as a gradation in itself.

The Higher Mind

The first in the ladder of minds from the mind to the supermind is the higher mind. The higher mind has its origin the supermind and its special character is that its activity is dominated by thought. Aurobindo uses terms like 'luminous thought-mind' and 'a mind of spirit born conceptual knowledge' to denote it. The higher mind is far more powerful than reason or logical intelligence. Unlike knowledge in the mental level, which is a system of conclusions drawn from premises, knowledge in the higher mind is a self-revelation of eternal wisdom and not a knowledge acquired from extraneous sources.

The Illumined Mind

The illumined mind is a region of spiritual light. The clarity of the spiritual intelligence characteristic of the higher mind gives place to an intense luster, a splendor and illumination of spirit. This light is primarily a spiritual manifestation of the divine reality that is at once illuminative and creative. The illumined mind also witnesses the arrival of a dynamic inner force and power that replaces the comparatively slow and deliberative process of the higher mind.

The Intuitive Mind

The intuitive mind or intuitive reason is a higher form of the intellect which can do the work of the reason with a higher power by utilizing its intuitions, inspirations, its swift revelatory vision and its luminous insight and discrimination. The intuitive mind, just like the illumined mind does not proceed by thoughts but by visional concepts. It is a kind of truth-vision, truth hearing, truth memory and direct truth discernment.

The Overmind

Sri Aurobindo defines the overmind as a delegate of the supermind consciousness to the ignorance. The supermind transmits to the overmind all its realities and allows it to formulate it into a movement and according to an awareness of things which is still a vision of truth and yet at the same time a first parent of the ignorance. A line divides the supermind and overmind and it permits a free transmission and allows the lower power to derive from the higher power all that it holds or sees, but automatically compels a transitional change in the passage.

The Supermind

The Supermind is in its essence a truth-consciousness, a consciousness always free from ignorance which is the foundation of our present natural or evolutionary existence and from which nature in us is trying to arrive at self-knowledge and world-knowledge. It is a principle of active will and knowledge superior to the mind and is the creatrix of the world. It is not the ineffable Brahman but an intermediary power and a state of being between self-possession of the ineffable reality and the flux of the many. It is completely free from all forms of ignorance. It does not need to acquire knowledge from outside; it possesses all knowledge by its own right.

Beyond the supermind is the Sat-Cit-Ananda(Existence-Consciousness-Bliss), the supracosmic reality, the Divine, the supreme being who manifests himself as infinite existence of which the essentiality is consciousness, bliss and self-delight.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

1) How does Aurobindo distinguish between Purusha and Prakrti?

2) Give a detailed account of the higher levels of consciousness beyond the ordinary mind, as explained by Aurobindo.

1.6 LET US SUM UP

The unit has given a brief description of the theory of existence from the Aurobindo’s system of philosophical thinking.

1.7 KEY WORDS

Atman-brahman: Unity of empirical and absolute spirit.

1.8 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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