GOD AS MOTHER[1]

There has always been a tendency to treat God as more nearly resembling a mother than father, though the claim for motherhood has been firstly made in favour of our Earth, The reason for this predilection is not far to seek, for we are more surely born of the earth and are sustained by the products of the earth and are sustained by the products of the earth, rather than by any other entity, even as our human mother had brought us out of her womb and has

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[1] Cf. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*: vol.p147 writes about the Divine spirit or mother goddess in the Mediterranean: “In regard to the Aegean Divine Spirit itself, personified in the iconic age as a goddess and a young God, the student of comparative religion finds himself on very familiar ground. A goddess with a young subordinate God is known in early times, in every coast of the Mediterranean which looked towards Create. In Puni8c Africa she is Tanit with her son; in Egypt, Isis with Horus; in Phoenicia, Ashtaroth with Tammuz (Adonis); in Asia Minor Cybele with Attis; in Greece (and especially in Greek Crete itself). Rhea with the young Zeus, Everywhere she is a virgin i.e. unwed, but made the mother first of her companion by immaculate conception, and then of the gods and all life by the embrace of there own son. In memory of these original facts the cult (especially the most esoteric mysteries of it) is marked by various practices and observances symbolic of the negation of true marriage and obliteration of sex…”

But this Śakti worship was not followed by Sumerians and Aryans, Babylonians and the Assyrians: “Ishtar the most prominent female deity in the Babytlonian pantheon, corresponding to Ashtarte (Astarte) of Ashtoreth of the other semites, occupied a subordinate place as compared to Anu, the Heave God, Enlil, the Earth God, Eas, the Water God, Sin, the Moon God, and Shamash, the Sun-God”. (*The Indo-Aryan Races:* Chanda.pp.150). The Semites

seem to have passed through the matriarchic stage of society before their separation. (*Ency. Rel. & Ethics* Vol.II.p.115)

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nourished us with her milk and provided us with all the protections from changes. Thus from ancient times the earth-has been worshipped as goddess in various forms, and the so-called pastoral and other goddesses are linked up with the earth goddess. After all, the mother is the self-sacrificing nourisher of the child inside and outside the womb, and the child owes its first love and loyalty to the mother.

But there has always been another tendency, also traceable to the anthropomorphic analogy which made God the father, who was the real seed-giver, and therefore more fully to be known as the source of our life, whereas the mother is the self-sacrificing nourisher of the child inside and outside the womb, and the child owes its first love and loyalty to the mother.

But there has always been another tendency, also traceable to the anthropomorphic analogy which made God the father, who was the real seed-giver, and therefore more fully to be know as the source of our life, whereas the mother was the bearer and nourisher of the seed. Thus man had known tow sources of his life and birth, the father and the mother, Earth and God, the Spirit, Primeval Male. That is the reasoṇ why the progenitor and cause of the universe was known as Dyāva-Pṛthvī̃ in Ṛg Veda. This twin-ddivinity has been always the religious idea of God, though it was at certain periods considered that there was One deity with both the functions of Nature and Deity, the womb and the granter of the Seed[1].

Some thinkers indeed claim that the idea of God involved the idea of first cause, and as such it would be more appropriate speak of God as the *bhūta-yoni*, as feminine rather than as masculine, for no male has been as such a creator or

[1] Cf. *Life Divine*: Vol.II.p.31ff. Brahman-Māyā, Puruṣa-Prakṛit, and Īśavara-śakti are the triple unity corresponding to the Cosmic, individual and universal modes of the Saccidānanda.

producer of another creature. As we have stated, some others do not think it inappropriate to speak of God and His Nature or spouse, who conjointly might be said to do the creation-business. This view got philosophical sanction in Sāmkhya where Puruṣa and Prakṛit together in some manner start the process of evolution. Some theorists by a wise distribution of functions it may be said granted to God intelligence, consciousness and transcendence, whereas they granted to His power śakti, considered as female, the ability to manifest the universe. Inappropriately enough some of those belonging to this school by reason of that invetereate habit of rational thoguth to speak in dichotomous terms argued that Consciousness is absolute passivity wheas the power of consciousness is dynamic but ignorant (unconscious). This delimitation of functions of the supreme Deity to omniscience without omnipotence, and of His power to omnipotence without any consciousness in the world-creations, whilst it may appear to be an easy solution, is by no means easy of acceptance, for it makes God wait on His power which was a personified subordinate deity. But a more understandable solution was also mooted, it was to make God one only, having both the qualities of consciousness and power, who by the one ideated and by the other executed that ideation. Btu here arises a third question: why indeed should God create the creatures if He was perfect in Himself and create such impoverished creatures? This is a question that we shall have always to bear in mind as the sorest point of all theologies and philosophies of absolute perfection or the Absolute.

But then the Mother-idea is not fully expressed by the mere fact of origination. Vedānta holds the view that Brahman is to be considered as the Source of all birth and others (Janmād yasya yataḥ:I.1.1), and under the word

’ādi’ was included such other functions and as ‘sustention’ ‘destruction’. It was only the theistic school which included under this also the other function of ‘redemption,’ which however was held by some to be included under the word ‘sustention’. The fact of love for the created is indeed held to be included under the general notion of ‘sustention’. God loves His creates, else He would not have created them. He therefore nourshes them leads them by the right path away from the wrong path, incarnates constantly into His creation for enjoying the company of His creatures, uplifts and redeems and establishes the law for His creatures. Granting freedom to them He even instructs them in the arts of utilizing that freedom for the great Freedom of the Universal life that is Himself alone, This paternal instinct for the creatures born of Him is, it was deemed, more fully realised in the mothering-parent than in the fathering-parent, since the father is more a ruler and sovereign than the mother who is considered to be more approachable too[1]. That such a position is possible and is available in our

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[1] We know from certain important studies in Psychoanalysis in modern times especially by Sigmund Freud and his school that the child is jealous, of course unconsciously, of its father and this is due to sexual unconsciousness)for we should not use the word consciousness in this context). It is because of rivalry the made child will hate the father, whereas the female child will hate the mother. But such a view does not explain the growth of the idea of Fatherhood nor the Motherhood of God as such. the father is undoubtedly the master of the house in certain matters whereas the mother is equally the master of the house in others, though the relative externality in social contact pertains to the father, and relative internality regarding home affairs pertains to the mother. The concept

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social life, as in the lives of lower animals, where the caretaking of young ones falls on the mother, is clearly proof of this contention. Whether from the point of view of religion, we do need to worship the Divine in this tow-fold manner through love for the mother-hood of God so as to attain the free-hood which is the Grace of God, the father, is an important question. We have shewn elsewhere that the

Divine God's Nature must be considered to be such that it enfolds all the manifold ways of approach and relationships that respond to the individual's manifold needs of being, and evolution and freedom.

At least this view seems to have played a distinguished role in the system of Hindu Philosophy called the Āgamas, Just as the goddesses, devī̃s, in the Ṛg Veda and literature, so also we have mention of śaktis or powers, the counter – parts of the deities, devas. It is however to be borne in mind that the Āgamas also claim to speak the voice of the Veda and in a more elaborate and 'intensive form' than has been preserved in the darśanas schools of Philosophy. The Purāṇas also lend colour to the view that tthey have attempted a kind of synthesis of the philosophical and practical (āgama) views.

II

The mother Idea in the veda must primarily be referred to the originative or 'wombal' nature of the Divine *bhūtayoni.* Agni is most closely associated with the processes of birth[1]

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[2] The Pañcāgni Vidyā is a clear enuciation of the principle of Fire creation.

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and growth in living beings, being the celestial fire as well as the inner fire. So too, in Tvaṣṭṛ the specific functioning of bringing about the transformation of the form of creature is expressed. It may be conceded that though all the beginning one does not conceive of the unity of the Creator and His filed or power, later on rational analysis revealed the two personalities, the creator and his power and filed, which are represented as husband and wife, who form on an inseparable Unity.

When we trace the history of the term Śakti (or Sacī̃) in Vedic literature[1], we come across the twin concepts of vivification and reproduction, both of which

belong to the idea of concept of motherhood. It is further seen that these tow purposes are served by the jṇā-goddesses such as Sarasvatī̃, Iḷā, Dhī̃ṣaṇī̃, Medhā and others. The development of these goddesses of knowledge[2] into diverse personalities along with the Degvī̃, Sacī̃, Indrāni, Agayī̃, Vāruṇī̃, Āramati, Puramdhī̃, Pṛthivī̃, Uṣas. Lakṣmī̃, reveals, according to certain writers, the emergence of abstract personalities represented by or corresponding to the functions or forces of the corresponding Gods.

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[1] Dyāvā-Pṛthvī̃ is the pair in Ṛg.V.I.364; V.84; AV.XII.1. Pṛthvī̃ in later literature becomes bhūdevi (*bhūmādevi*) the consort of *Viṣṇu Viṣṇuna visṇor pṛthvi pathḥ.* Of her: A.V.XII.1 writes. “She is great, shining, firm and quickens the earth by scattering rain from a cloud”.

[2] Jn̄ā goddesses give the clue to the equation made about Māyā being equivalent to *jn̄āna or vayunam,* for they act from a deep and fundamental superconsciousness that appears as ignorance or veiling power, but only so to the conscious mental being.

It is clear that the so-called abstract nature of the powers is a description that can be relative only to our analysis of the functions or otherwise, and no deity is abstract as such of He or She strands for a specific function. Metaphysically reproductive and vivificatory functions were felt to be different conceptually, because conceptualized, but as having a unitary ground in one substance. Thus we find the growth of multiplicity, whether we conceive this multiplicity as entirely feminine or masculine or masculine and feminine, by an arbitrary definition of sex[1]. But common though this practice might be, yet we have to keep our eye fixed on the essentials, and never forget that it is the One substance that is the ground of the many functions or qualities or powers, and these powers and qualities and functions reveal to us the substance, and it is only when we see them so related to the One Supreme Consciousness, that we pass beyond the illusion of the many.

The Brāhmaṇa literature lifts these śaktis from the position of mere powers, which was already passing into the notion of spouse, to the level of patnis who have equal places in the Sacrifice[2]. the metres Gāyatrī̃, Triṣṭubh, Anuṣṭhubh,

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[1] Ṛg V.I.164.16: “The told me those were males, though truly females He who hath eyes sees this, the blind discern not”.

[2] Jn̄ā: womenis a collective term for the consorts of gods. These are the several are female powers. Cf. It. Brāh.III.327; Kaus. Brāh.III.8 says that they are controllers of union (in full moon and new moon offering). Later Śat Brāh.VI.5.4.7. Jn̄āh:metres, Tait.Brāh.V.i.7.2 *Chandāmsī̃ vai jn̄āh:* But metres are living forces as well as special syllabic grouping in particular metres such as Gāyatri, Anuṣṭuby, Jagatī̃, which are definite measures.

Jagatī̃ are all considred to be powers. Gāyatri[-1] is *tejas,* Triṣṭubh is the specific energy of the senses. Anuṣṭhubh the potent principle of Sacrifice (Yajn̄ā). She contains in herself, force, *balam,* vī̃ryam. (*Tait. Sam.II.4.3.1*). Metre being measure, we can see here already that Māyā is also measure. Therefore later on we find that Māyā and metre and Śakti we all equated.

Dr. Das shows that the śakti or power of the metres and syllables is finally resolved into the concept of Vāk(Cow)[2]. Vāk

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[1] Gāyatrī̃ is the special measure of Agni, for like him it has the power to carry sacrifice to the Gods. Gāyatrī̃ is of 24 syllables etc, Ṛg V.III.62, 10; B.G. X, 35. Anuṣṭhub is Vī̃rya, Vajra with which the gods pierce the Night of the Asuras: *Tāndya Brāh*. IX.1.I. It has eight syllables to a quarter. Metres are produced from *Vāk* (Praṇava), cf. Sri Aurobindo’s exposition of the Kenopaniṣad (*Arya* II.p.90ff) where he shews that the mentioned in Kena 1.i.3.3 does not refer to mere speech but to Vāk’s word power, that creative power which is stated to be at the beginning.

[2] Ṛg.V.X.71 and 125 are entirely devoted to the hymning of the Vāk which is called the Cow: cf. Av. VIII. 10, 12-13, cf.Dr.Das (p25ff śakti). Weber considers Vāk to be a chaotic primordial principle. But whether it is a chaotic primordial principle because of being the Mother-principle. But whether it is a chotic primordial principle because of being the Mother-principle is not quite clear. In fact the Womb is the dark abode, indistinguished matrix of all eternally in and of that. That creation as the first projection or delivery of Vāk from the creator is clear from Śāt.Brāh.VI.1.9; Pañcavimśati Brāh, VI.1.3; X.2.1 where Vāk interrogated by Prajāpati replies to him saying that she was his own self. Saiva to Vāg ityabravit. Again P.B.XX.14.2 Vāk is stated to be the companion principle of Prajāpati in the matter of creation; Praāpati va idam eka asit Tasya Vāg eva svam āsi. Vāg dvitīya sa aikṣāt, idam evam vācam vyaṣṛjata sedam sarvam bibhvanty ait. Kāthaka S.XII.5.27.1 Prajāpati va idam āsit, Tasya vāg dvitīyāsīt, tam mithunam samabhavat, sa garbham ādhatta……

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is that which is finally the outcome of Prajāpati (creator) whose śakti she declares herself to be. She is stated to be the mother of Ṛk, Sāman and Yajus, She is the active power of Brtahman proceeding from him (Ṛg.V.X.125). She is speech which is the productive principle of energy. Indeed it is even stated in the Veda that without it the created beings cannot be free from blemish and sin. That is the reason why things are given names (Ṛg.V.X,1.5.6:Sat.Brāh.VI.1.3.9.10).

Vāk in the Ṛg Veda is already the supreme principle of manifestative power, the supreme female energy. She was first with Brahman, then with Bṛhaspati; and in the Brāhmanas we see her with the Creator-Ruler of creatures (Prajāpati). She is the ubiquitous princ9iple of being. She is Sarasvatị, BhīṣaṇI; and Varutri, Parameṣṭhīnī (A.V.XIX.9.3). Thus we find that the stage is set for the Motherhood of God in and through the power of Vāk who is stated to be as ubiquitous as Brahman Himself. She is the Śakti, and Brahman is the Śktimān. All male powers and female powers may be considered to be just fulgurations or spreadings or differentiations (conceptually considered even separated from one

another without losing that central unity in the Divine Brahman), and related as such in every manifestation. So much so the Śrī̃-Sūkta could say*: Īśvarī̃m sarva bhūtānām tam ihopahvaye śriyam.* (9), even as sthe Bhagavad Gī̃tā syas of the Brahman Puruṣottama '*Īśvaraḥ sarva bhūtānām hṛddẹe Arjuna tiṣṭhati*'. Indeed she appears as the Daivī̃ Māyāk or Prakṛit of the Gī̃tā.

The śrī̃-Sūkta appeals to the great Agni Jātavedas, the knower of all created beings or births, to leads the devotee to Her of supremest beatitude and even worldly fulfillment and wealth and children. The idea is that Śrī̃, Lakṣmi, is the auspicious giver of everything and without her there can only be *alakṣmi,* true and unmitigated sorrow. The appeal to Agni is because the true messenger is always the Outer fire of the altar, and the inner fire of consecrated and burnished will, aspiration, who is the knower of our inner being and growth and life and, as such is the first leader towards the true happiness from which all worldly wealth may also be got. The one important truth that must be grasped by any student of mystical consciousness is 'Knowing that one knows all, attaining That one attains all, enjoying that one enjoys all,' since His is the entire world of being and non-being (transcendent Being). Sri or Lakṣmi is the fulfillment of the aspiration, the goal of all striving and the peak of Good Life in God or Truth or Delight. That she is the indwelling being of all creatures and beings is also intimated by this Sūkta. Thus it prepares the way for the development env9isaged in the later āgamas, where she is stated to be seated in the heart of not only all creatures but also of God wherefore God is spo9oken of as Śrī̃-nivasa, the abode of Śrī̃ or śreyas. It is also to be noted that without her Grace final release can never happen; for as śreyas is the goal of all reality, without a descent of the Divine Grace or Śrī̃, there can never be any true and complete realisation. Btu this view is not yet visible in the Ṣkta where Agni Jātavedas is being invoked to lead the soul to her. It is only in later Vedānta of Rāmānuja that we find the Śrī̃ becoming the Agent, the *puruṣakāra,* who leads the soul the Divine. In other words, the duty of leading that belongs to Agni Jātavedas is referred to Śrī̃ herself. But it may also be construed that there are tow stages, the Agni Jātavedas leads up to Śrī̃, and Śrī̃

leads the soul to the Supreme Realization. This view is supported by the kenopaniṣad story of Umā Haimavati helping the great Indra to know who the Wonderful Being that appeared was, thus playing the role of the leader-teacher of the Gods.

Naced evam devo na khalu kuśalaḥ spanditum api
Atas tvām ārādhyām hariharavirincādibhir api
Praṇantum stotum vā katham akrṛṭapunyaḥ prabhavati

2 Pavitrī̃kartum naḥ paśupatiparādhī̃naḥṛdaye
Dyāmmitrair netair aruṇadhavala-śyama-rucibhiḥ
Nadśśano gangā tapanat1 T3.d2

contrary, it would appear that the most legitimate Yoga is the Yoga achieved by the irresistible Mother within who unites the individual soul and ht śiva in a perfect Unity. The process of awakening of this Kundalĩnĩ alone involves individual effort, and beyond this it does not go.

The Śakta view that the macrocosmic Mother (Umā Haimavati, Kali, Durga, Śakti) is identical with the ādhyātmically realised Kundalĩnĩ within the psychonic system of the individual, reveals in a large and profound understanding that the individual body is but a *kṣetra*, the filed, wherein the play of delight (lĩlā) between Śiva and His Will personified as Śakti takes place, wherein the witnesses are the devas and devĩs personalized as the super-organs of mystic experience and knowing and their powers and the individual soul. The micorcosmic representation of the God gradually begins to lose itself in the Absolute Universal and its continuity with all the infinite glory of that Absolute is thus established.

III

Now we turn to the Vaiṣṇava āgamas. There are tow schools of Vaiṣṇava āgama, the Vaikhānasa and the Pāñcarātra, and both of them claim a status equal to the Vedic literature. Vaikhānasa literature is brāhmana literature whereas the Pāṇcarātra, is a tantra said to be taught by Nārāyaṇa Himself. The Vaiṣṇava Āgamas accept the Motherhood of God along with the Fatherhood of God and of course as elsewhere the question of the status of these two forms of the One Divine has engaged much attention. It can be stated however that the Motherhood of God has always held a subordinate position to the Fatherhood of God: love always has been subordinated to Law and Sovereign Being. Power was always subordinated to Truth, though the precise ratio or rationale of subordination has remained undetermined. Yet it was well recognized also that the Mother was equally the creator and sustainer and uplifter of the creation, and

these processes more truly belonged to Viṣṇu and His power or Śakti or inspire Śrĩ, Lakṣmĩ, even when considered in the purāṇic manner.

Śrĩ or Lakṣmĩ is *Śreyas,* the True Good, as distinguished from *Preyas,* the worldly goods: though popular imagination had always made Śrĩ, the goddess of wealth and plenty, and inconstant and undiscriminating in her distributions of wealth. This later phase more truly belongs to the Earth or Bhū or BHūta Śakti, the 'Sudarśaṇa portion of Lakṣmĩ."

The place of Śrĩ is finely indicated by the four magnificent verses of Śrĩ Yāmunācārya (A.D.1000) called the Catuśśloki. He holds that Śrĩ is equal in every respect to the Lord being the co-enjoyer of the seat, vehicle, attendants, and whose veil (*yavanikā*) is Māyā, the world-deluder (Jaganmohini) whose incite nature is incomprehensible even to the Lord Puruṣottama. She is singly capable of performing all activities *svakĩyam viṣadhāriṇā sāmarthyam eva hi svadhā.* "Her special province is however Grace, dayā or karuṇa. for it is stated to be her grace (ĩsat tvat karunūā nirĩkṣanasudhā sandhukṣanāt ṛte ….). In every from of the Puruṣottama, as Transcendent Lord, as Creating Deity, as incarnating Avatār, as Indwelling Self of all, she too in an appropriate manner is incarnate. The vyūhas of the mother are thus closely related with vyūhas of the Puruṣottama, so much so, the relationship between the Mother and Puruṣottama has been described as aviinābhāva, inseparability, and comparable to the relationship that subsists between the mon and his rays, *candra candrikayoriva.* The Mother Śrĩ is thus the fullest consciousness-power of the Divine Puruṣuttama, and in Śrĩ Vaiṣṇava theology, She is approached as the Mother who leads us as the agent of our ascent to the Lord, which she fulfils through Her illimitable Grace and knowledge. In other words, She is the Teacher and the Way. Even the Vedic Agni is considered to be just leading us to the Mother alone.

The difference between the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava views consists in the fact that the Śakta – Śaiva vies grants to Śakti all the power of creativity and being

and making and sustaining by making Śiva just a Transcendent Sat, Witness. Thus truly in one sense they make"Her the All". The Śrĩ Vaiṣṇava view, whilst not denying such a possibility, regulates the idea of cosmic being and action by the original Grace and redemptive interference and Will. Further, whereas the former makes the Mother also veiler or the Ignorance that is the characteristic of the lower Prakṛit, Śrĩ Vaiṣṇava theology makes Śrĩ, the Parā-Prakṛit, the most illumined consort of the Self, the inward love, the Heart of the Divine in and through and above manifestation. Her's is the reign of purity, illumination, the *devayāna*, the true and permanent wealth, the love that elevates, transforms and divinizes our natures.

The truth is that whatever may be the actual possibility of postulating infinte number of devatās and even when we could achieve a plausible explanation of the several manifestations belonging to the several planes of being, such as the *bhū, bhuvaḥ*¸ and svar, and their subdivisions which may account for seven planes above and seven planes below, we know that just as we arrive at a cosmic Puruṣottama, the One Deva who contains and manifests innumeragle forms His eternal Being, called the several devas and devis, even so, we must finally arrive at one primordinal Mother –power who manifests Herself in manifold ways. We have to note that Śaktaism was meaphysically postulating that the One primal Śakti descended into the lower strands of the ignorant world of inconscient matter or rather made for the possibility of the infinite incorruptible Śiva, the One Saccidānanda Being appearing as if ignorant and inconscient, bond and miserable. Whatever may be the explanation, whether we hold that the transcendent Mother-power, had, on the one had, preserved Her sovereign Cidānanda and remained the higher Mother, and on the other, projected a portion of Herself into the Ignorance for play and thus appears in the form of Nature, the Prakṛit of the Sāmkhyas, the Māyā of the Māyāvādins, in our estimate it is necessary to hold that there are tow primal splits, one descending movement seen as the Māyā, Prakrti, Avidyā which whilst being innately pure consciousness is appearing as Ignorance, limitat9ion, and bondage, *pāś,* whilst

mortal man's highest intuition. What even the highest human intellect or even awakened intuition knows are but three of her forms. The first in Mahālakṣmi, the Mother of Pose, Beauty, Harmony, Rhythm, Opulence and captivating Grace, the *sattva* Śrī̃, if we may so speak of the revelation of the Mother to vision and understanding. She can brook no impurity and stands no ill or evil and force. She can only be known and adored by worshippers of absolute Beauty. Nearer mother of Supramental strength, power, swiftness and world-quaking force, intolerant of vice, a very form of time's destructive power. The worshipers of arbitrary power attain her but hard is her rule and violent the catastrophe theat normally overtakes the egoistic worshiper of hers. She may be represented as the *rajas śakti.* The third form amenable to the purified vision of man in Mahāsarasvatī̃, who is the Supramental consciousness endowed with profound capacity for intimate knowledge, flawless work, quite and exact perfection in all thing and is patience. She forges ahead amidst the vilest and the most exalted men, These are all all Supramental being and are called the four supernal, the Mother of Four personalities projected out of Her Infinite and Descending Grace working integrally on the four planes of awakened intelligence and dedicated being. MahākātḷI is the Supramental omniscient will Mahālakṣmī̃ is Omnipotent Knowledge, whereas Mahāsarasvatī̃ works in and through the three lower planes of Ignorance namely the mental, the vital and the physicaal[1].

"The four aspect of the Mother, four of her leading

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[1] They correspond to the Vedic Gāyatrī̃ Sāvitrī̃ and Sarasvatī̃, the Turya being the Maheśvarī̃. Cf. *Sāndilya.Up.I*

Powers and Personalities have stood in her guidance of this Universe, Wisdom, Strength, Harmony. Perfections are their several attributes. To the four we give the foru great names: Maheśvarī̃, Mahākājī̃, Mahālakṣmī̃, Mahasarvasvatī̃" Says Sri Aurobindo[1]. Mother's powers are however not exhausted by these for personalities. There are infinites in Her that surpass all understanding. Mother is

the principle of the large evolution of a man, for it is indeed She who is descending into the creatures and grants them the wisdom to see the truth and elect to follow it, the will tomove, even alone to the great evolution and the power of frenzy, it is she who guides man by the delicate perception of the ideal of harmony, and beauty; and it is she again who makes him profoundly dissatisfied with mere truth, power or even beauty and leads to the realisation of Perfection which is Truth, Power, Beauty, and their fullest expression. The liberation which the Mother achieve for man is thus the liberation from Ignorance, liberation from restriction and limitation, liberation from disharmony and struggle and competition, and false rhythms and lastly liberation from the sense of incompleteness. This si the meaning of the ultimate transcendent destiny. Thus the Mother is the agent of our transformation, *puruśākara* to use the language of Śrī̃ Vaiṣṇavism and without Her descending grace nothing whatsoever can occur, Sri Aurbindo's exquisite representation of the multiplanal nature of Mother, as Mahāsarasvatī̃, Mahākāḷi, Mahālakṣmī̃ and Maheśvari, reveals the corresponding need for the aspiration of man to be truthful, faithful and loving and whole[2]. The tow things absolutely

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[1] *Mother Pp.48-50*

[2] cf. Introduction to Pāñcarātra*: O.Schraeder p.62 note 3.*

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needed in the Yoga of Divine Evolution are the aspiring integral offering of the soul and the descending integral Grace of the Mother, and integral offering and an integral acceptance and finally indwelling which leads to the divinization which may pass through the stages of gradual sublimation through the activities of the Mother's fourfold nature in the offered up transmuting work, and indeed She is the Philosopher's or rather the Mystic's or Purna –Yogin's Stone.

The importance of the Mother to our spiritual experience is to be gathered from the stress laid on the nature of Grace, Dayā or Karuṇa, much more than on

the other aspects of the nature of Deity. This at least is the importance in the earlier schools of theology, especially in the sri Vaiṣṇava and Tāntrika. But that is not the only reason for her greatness and the need in Sri Aurobindo's philosophy. The Mother works through the supermind, integrally making effective the triune qualities of the Absolute Sat, Cit and Ānanda and working out the integral unit of the Knowing Subject, known Object and knowledge[1]. It may be argued that when we can easily attain the Saccidānanda without this mediation of the Supermind we need not resort to this entity or power of the Saccidānanda. It is true also that some persons have been able to achieve this Absolute Saccidānanda Consciousness and they have once

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Māyā Śakti is called akti. Bhagavat Śakti, Mūla prakṛit, Śaśvavidyā or Vidyā, and also Mahālakṣmĩ, Maheśvarĩ, Bhadrakālĩ, we can see that unile as in Āgama (Lakṣmĩ Tantra), in Sri Aurobindo's philosophy these are powers of the Supermind.

[1] *Life* Dvine, Vol.*II.pp.31.ff.*.

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and for all time given up the manifestation. At least it appears[1] to be a Heaven from which we need not return at all, Identity having been achieved absolutely and finally. But htat is not the goal nor Evolution or is it utterly desirable. The Saccidānanda has a secret mystery in the creative action wherein it seeks to manifest its innate and supreme secret of multiplicity in test of its own large identity without throwing all these into the whirl of opposition or even contrariety. Sri Aurobindo senses that the power by which we can again this unity of multiplicity without compromise or contradiction lies only in the Supermind, the pure vehicle of the Mother, Cit-Śakti in its integral unity. It is the mother who can take up the entire lower form of manifestation, matter, life and mind and even the overmind and mould them in the pattern of the significant unity. In that or in Her all things become significantly real, for all these are but real-ideas projected from Her substance by Being. That is the reason why we call that Mother. But eve this

Mother can never be touched unless man abandons for ever the mind, the instrument of this present knowing, and passes into the Silence of the pure self, the *cāitaya-puruṣa* (the psychic Being). That is why Sri Aurobindo points out the necessity of a total surrender to the descending Supramental Power, four-fold in its downward movement, and capable of accepting the soul's surrenders and transforming or raising its consciousness and will and delight natures. Total surrender thus really is a

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[1] I believe that rebirth will be enforced on every being, ray or fulguration so long as it does not grasp the Saccidānanda I its limits and in its foundational tri-unity. And though one may achieve by a sheer jump or leap the Absolute identity, its own otherness will enforce a step down into experience of its multiplicity in its unity.

Stepping stone to the entry into the silence of the pure Self, and prepares for the action and therefore recognition and awareness of the Mother in the descending creative movement of the Supermind, Thus the Mother is not merely an agent of our transformation, not merely again the mere mediating eminence which leads us to the summit of Saccidānanda as such, from the mental and the overmental (intuitive) stages; she is indeed a different kig of Consciousness in every way from the mental. That is the reason why we should guard against the explanations normally given that the so called supermind is but a more intensive consciousness or a more wide awake skill in intellect 'born out of thinking hard' There is no shading off of the several levels into one another there, for the supermind itself, though interpenetrative in its unified vision and awareness, is yet not merely our consciousness, mental and overmental; it is too universal to be private, too fundamentally and integrally united and inseparably so united to be just a composing and synthesizing activity. This is the meaning of *avinābhāva,* and it is through the Mother alone we cannot merely understand that truth of

reality but also enter into the Joy of its manifestation which is unfortunately denied to us who are of the mental level, but is also denied to may who have lost themselves in the glamour of the Nirguṇa, which is but one aspect or side of the Absolute Divine. Mother grants not merely the awareness of the infinite determinations and processes and powers in their integral fusion and organic rhythm but also the awareness of the transcendence of the Absolute over all these in its illimitable puissance

Śrī̃ Rāmnānuja's analysis of the three form of the Mother reveals her action as consisting in supporting the physical leading to the Divine and granting the Divine to the soul. Sri Aurobindo's analysis shows her evolutionary action of super-metallisation of the organic.