

## The Supreme Secret<sup>1</sup>

**T**HE ESSENCE of the teaching and the Yoga has thus been given to the disciple on the field of his work and battle and the divine Teacher now proceeds to apply it to his action, but in a way that makes it applicable to all action. Attached to a crucial example, spoken to the protagonist of Kurukshetra, the words bear a much wider significance and are a universal rule for all who are ready to ascend above the ordinary mentality and to live and act in the highest spiritual consciousness. To break out of ego and personal mind and see everything in the wideness of the self and spirit, to know God and adore him in his integral truth and in all his aspects, to surrender all oneself to the transcendent Soul of nature and existence, to possess and be possessed by the divine consciousness, to be one with the One in universality of love and delight and will and knowledge, one in him with all beings, to do works as an adoration and a sacrifice on the divine foundation of a world in which all is God and in the divine status of a liberated spirit, is the sense of the Gita's Yoga. It is a transition from the apparent to the supreme spiritual and real truth of our being, and one enters into it by putting off the many limitations of the separative consciousness and the mind's attachment to the passion and unrest and ignorance, the lesser light and knowledge, the sin and virtue, the dual law and standard of the lower nature. Therefore, says the Teacher, "devoting all thyself to me, giving up in thy conscious mind all thy actions into Me, resorting to Yoga of the will and intelligence be always one in heart and consciousness with Me. If thou art that at all times, then by my grace thou shalt pass safe through all difficult and perilous passages; but if from egoism thou hear not, thou shalt fall into perdition. Vain is this thy resolve, that

<sup>1</sup> Gita, XVIII. 57-66, 73.

in thy egoism thou thinkest, saying 'I will not fight'; thy nature shall appoint thee to thy work. What from delusion thou desirest not to do, that helplessly thou shalt do bound by thy own work born of thy swabhava. The Lord is stationed in the heart of all existences, O Arjuna, and turns them all round and round mounted on a machine by his Maya. In him take refuge in every way of thy being and by his grace thou shalt come to the supreme peace and the eternal status."

These are lines that carry in them the innermost heart of this Yoga and lead to its crowning experience and we must understand them in their innermost spirit and the whole vastness of that high summit of experience. The words express the most complete, intimate and living relation possible between God and man; they are instinct with the concentrated force of religious feeling that springs from the human being's absolute adoration, his upward surrender of his whole existence, his unreserved and perfect self-giving to the transcendent and universal Divinity from whom he comes and in whom he lives. This stress of feeling is in entire consonance with the high and enduring place that the Gita assigns to bhakti, to the love of God, to the adoration of the Highest, as the inmost spirit and motive of the supreme action and the crown and core of the supreme knowledge. The phrases used and the spiritual emotion with which they vibrate seem to give the most intense prominence possible and an utmost importance to the personal truth and presence of the Godhead. It is no abstract Absolute of the philosopher, no indifferent impersonal Presence or ineffable Silence intolerant of all relations to whom this complete surrender of all our works can be made and this closeness and intimacy of oneness with him in all the parts of our conscious existence imposed as the condition and law of our perfection or of whom this divine intervention and protection and deliverance are the promise. It is a Master of our works, a Friend and Lover of our soul, an intimate Spirit of our life, an indwelling and overdwelling Lord of all our personal and impersonal self and nature who alone can utter to us this near and moving message. And yet this is not the common relation established by the religions between man living in his sattwic or

other ego-mind and some personal form and aspect of the Deity, *iṣṭa-deva*, constructed by that mind or offered to it to satisfy its limited ideal, aspiration or desire. That is the ordinary sense and actual character of the normal mental being's religious devotion; but here there is something wider that passes beyond the mind and its limits and its dharmas. It is something deeper than the mind that offers and something greater than the Ishta-deva that receives the surrender.

That which surrenders here is the Jiva, the essential soul, the original central and spiritual being of man, the individual Purusha. It is the Jiva delivered from the limiting and ignorant ego-sense who knows himself not as a separate personality but as an eternal portion and power and soul-becoming of the Divine, *aṁśa sanātana*, the Jiva released and uplifted by the passing away of ignorance and established in the light and freedom of his own true and supreme nature which is one with that of the Eternal. 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 continent and governing Self and Power of our existence. And he who receives our surrender is no limited Deity but the Purushottama, the one eternal Godhead, the one supreme Soul of all that is and of all Nature, the original transcendent Spirit of existence. An immutable impersonal self-existence is his first obvious spiritual self-presentation to the experience of our liberated knowledge, the first sign of his presence, the first touch and impression of his substance. A universal and transcendent infinite Person or Purusha is the mysterious hidden secret of his very being, unthinkable in form of mind, *acintya-rūpa*, but very near and present to the powers of our consciousness, emotion, will and knowledge when they are lifted out of themselves, out of their blind and petty forms into a luminous spiritual, an immeasurable supramental Ananda and power and gnosis. It is He, ineffable Absolute but also Friend and Lord and Enlightener and Lover, who is the object of this most complete devotion and approach and this most intimate inner becoming and surrender. This union, this relation is a thing lifted beyond the forms and laws of the limiting mind, too high for all these inferior dharmas;

it is a truth of our self and spirit. And yet or rather therefore, because it is the truth of our self and spirit, the truth of its oneness with that Spirit from which all comes and by it and as its derivations and suggestions all exists and travails, it is not a negation but a fulfilment of all that mind and life point to and bear in them as their secret and unaccomplished significance. Thus it is not by a nirvana, an exclusion and negating extinction of all that we are here, but by a nirvana, an exclusion and negating extinction of ignorance and ego and a consequent ineffable fulfilment of our knowledge and will and heart's aspiration, an uplifted and limitless living of them in the Divine, in the Eternal, *nivasiṣyasi mayyeva*, a transfiguration and transference of all our consciousness to a greater inner status that there comes this supreme perfection and release in the spirit.

The crux of the spiritual problem, the character of this transition of which it is so difficult for the normal mind of man to get a true apprehension, turns altogether upon the capital distinction between the ignorant life of the ego in the lower nature and the large and luminous existence of the liberated Jiva in his own true spiritual nature. The renunciation of the first must be complete, the transition to the second absolute. This is the distinction on which the Gita dwells here with all possible emphasis. On the one side is this poor, trepidant, braggart egoistic condition of consciousness, *ahankṛta bhāva*, the crippling narrowness of this little helpless separative personality according to whose view-point we ordinarily think and act, feel and respond to the touches of existence. On the other are the vast spiritual reaches of immortal fullness, bliss and knowledge into which we are admitted through union with the divine Being, of whom we are then a manifestation and expression in the eternal light and no longer a disguise in the darkness of the ego-nature. It is the completeness of this union which is indicated by the Gita's *satatam mac-cittaḥ*. The life of the ego is founded on a construction of the apparent mental, vital and physical truth of existence, on a nexus of pragmatic relations between the individual soul and Nature, on an intellectual, emotional and sensational interpretation of things used by the little limited I in

us to maintain and satisfy the ideas and desires of its bounded separate personality amid the vast action of the universe. All our dharmas, all the ordinary standards by which we determine our view of things and our knowledge and our action, proceed upon this narrow and limiting basis, and to follow them even in the widest wheelings round our ego centre does not carry us out of this petty circle. It is a circle in which the soul is a contented or struggling prisoner, for ever subject to the mixed compulsions of Nature.

For Purusha veils himself in this round, veils his divine and immortal being in ignorance and is subject to the law of an insistent limiting Prakriti. That law is the compelling rule of the three gunas. It is a triple stair that stumbles upward towards the divine light but cannot reach it. At its base is the law or dharma of inertia: the tamasic man inertly obeys in a customary mechanical action the suggestions and impulses, the round of will of his material and his half-intellectualised vital and sensational nature. In the middle intervenes the kinetic law or dharma; the rajasic man, vital, dynamic, active, attempts to impose himself on his world and environment, but only increases the wounding weight and tyrant yoke of his turbulent passions, desires and egoisms, the burden of his restless self-will, the yoke of his rajasic nature. At the top presses down upon life the harmonic regulative law or dharma; the sattwic man attempts to erect and follow his limited personal standards of reasoning knowledge, enlightened utility or mechanised virtue, his religions and philosophies and ethical formulas, mental systems and constructions, fixed channels of idea and conduct which do not agree with the totality of the meaning of life and are constantly being broken in the movement of the wider universal purpose. The dharma of the sattwic man is the highest in the circle of the gunas; but that too is a limited view and a dwarfed standard. Its imperfect indications lead to a petty and relative perfection; temporarily satisfying to the enlightened personal ego, it is not founded either on the whole truth of the self or on the whole truth of Nature.

And in fact the actual life of man is not at any time one

of these things alone, neither a mechanical routine execution of the first crude law of Nature, nor the struggle of a kinetic soul of action, nor a victorious emergence of conscious light and reason and good and knowledge. There is a mixture of all these dharmas out of which our will and intelligence make a more or less arbitrary construction to be realised as best it can, but never in fact realised except by compromise with other compelling things in the universal Prakriti. The sattwic ideals of our enlightened will and reason are either themselves compromises, at best progressive compromises, subject to a constant imperfection and flux of change, or if absolute in their character, they can be followed only as a counsel of perfection ignored for the most part in practice or successful only as a partial influence. And if sometimes we imagine we have completely realised them, it is because we ignore in ourselves the subconscious or half-conscious mixture of other powers and motives that are usually as much or more than our ideals the real force in our action. That self-ignorance constitutes the whole vanity of human reason and self-righteousness; it is the dark secret lining behind the spotless white outsides of human sainthood and alone makes possible the specious egoisms of knowledge and virtue. The best human knowledge is a half knowledge and the highest human virtue a thing of mixed quality and, even when most sincerely absolute in standard, sufficiently relative in practice. As a general law of living the absolute sattwic ideals cannot prevail in conduct; indispensable as a power for the betterment and raising of personal aspiration and conduct, their insistence modifies life but cannot wholly change it, and their perfect fulfilment images itself only in a dream of the future or a world of heavenly nature free from the mixed strain of our terrestrial existence. It cannot be otherwise because neither the nature of this world nor the nature of man is or can be one single piece made of the pure stuff of sattwa.

The first door of escape we see out of this limitation of our possibilities, out of this confused mixture of dharmas is in a certain high trend towards impersonality, a movement inwards towards something large and universal and calm and free and

right and pure hidden now by the limiting mind of ego. The difficulty is that while we can feel a positive release into this impersonality in moments of the quiet and silence of our being, an impersonal activity is by no means so easy to realise. The pursuit of an impersonal truth or an impersonal will in our conduct is vitiated so long as we live at all in our normal mind by that which is natural and inevitable to that mind, the law of our personality, the subtle urge of our vital nature, the colour of ego. The pursuit of impersonal truth is turned by these influences into an unsuspected cloak for a system of intellectual preferences supported by our mind's limiting insistence; the pursuit of a disinterested impersonal action is converted into a greater authority and apparent high sanction for our personal will's interested selections and blind arbitrary persistences. On the other hand an absolute impersonality would seem to impose an equally absolute quietism, and this would mean that all action is bound to the machinery of the ego and the three gunas and to recede from life and its works the only way out of the circle. This impersonal silence however is not the last word of wisdom in the matter, because it is not the only way and crown or not all the way and the last crown of self-realisation open to our endeavour. There is a mightier fuller more positive spiritual experience in which the circle of our egoistic personality and the round of the mind's limitations vanish in the unwall'd infinity of a greatest self and spirit and yet life and its works not only remain still acceptable and possible but reach up and out to their widest spiritual completeness and assume a grand ascending significance.

There have been different gradations in this movement to bridge the gulf between an absolute impersonality and the dynamic possibilities of our nature. The thought and practice of the Mahayana approached this difficult reconciliation through the experience of a deep desirelessness and a large dissolving freedom from mental and vital attachment and sanskaras and on the positive side a universal altruism, a fathomless compassion for the world and its creatures which became as it were the flood and outpouring of the high Nirvanic state on life and action.

---

That reconciliation was equally the sense of yet another spiritual experience, more conscious of a world significance, more profound, kindling, richly comprehensive on the side of action, a step nearer to the thought of the Gita: this experience we find or can at least read behind the utterances of the Taoist thinkers. There there seems to be an impersonal ineffable Eternal who is spirit and at the same time the one life of the universe: it supports and flows impartially in all things, *samam brahma*; it is a One that is nothing, *Asat*, because other than all that we perceive and yet the totality of all these existences. The fluid personality that forms like foam on this Infinite, the mobile ego with its attachments and repulsions, its likings and dislikings, its fixed mental distinctions, is an effective image that veils and deforms to us the one reality, *Tao*, the supreme All and Nothing. That can be touched only by losing personality and its little structural forms in the unseizable universal and eternal Presence and, this once achieved, we live in that a real life and have another greater consciousness which makes us penetrate all things, ourselves penetrable to all eternal influences. Here, as in the Gita, the highest way would seem to be a complete openness and self-surrender to the Eternal. "Your body is not your own," says the Taoist thinker, "it is the delegated image of God: your life is not your own, it is the delegated harmony of God: your individuality is not your own, it is the delegated adaptability of God." And here too a vast perfection and liberated action are the dynamic result of the soul's surrender. The works of ego personality are a separative running counter to the bias of universal nature. This false movement must be replaced by a wise and still passivity in the hands of the universal and eternal Power, a passivity that makes us adaptable to the infinite action, in harmony with its truth, plastic to the shaping breath of the Spirit. The man who has this harmony may be motionless within and absorbed in silence, but his Self will appear free from disguises, the divine Influence will be at work in him and while he abides in tranquillity and an inward inaction, *naiṣkarmya*, yet he will act with an irresistible power and myriads of things and beings will move and gather under his influence. The impersonal force of the Self

takes up his works, movements no longer deformed by ego, and sovereignly acts through him for the keeping together and control of the world and its peoples, *loka-saṅgrahārthāya*.

There is little difference between these experiences and the first impersonal activity inculcated by the Gita. The Gita also demands of us renunciation of desire, attachment and ego, transcendence of the lower nature and the breaking up of our personality and its little formations. The Gita also demands of us to live in the Self and Spirit, to see the Self and Spirit in all and all in the Self and Spirit and all as the Self and Spirit. It demands of us like the Taoist thinker to renounce our natural personality and its works into the Self, the Spirit, the Eternal, the Brahman, *ātmani samnyasya, brahmaṇi*. And there is this coincidence because that is always man's highest and freest possible experience of a quietistic inner largeness and silence reconciled with an outer dynamic active living, the two coexistent or fused together in the impersonal infinite reality and illimitable action of the one immortal Power and sole eternal Existence. But the Gita adds a phrase of immense import that alters everything, *ātmani atho mayi*. The demand is to see all things in the self and then in "Me" the Ishwara, to renounce all action into the Self, Spirit, Brahman and thence into the supreme Person, the Purushottama. There is here a still greater and profounder complex of spiritual experience, a larger transmutation of the significance of human life, a more mystic and heart-felt sweep of the return of the stream to the ocean, the restoration of personal works and the cosmic action to the Eternal Worker. The stress on pure impersonality has this difficulty and incompleteness for us that it reduces the inner person, the spiritual individual, that persistent miracle of our inmost being, to a temporary, illusive and mutable formation in the Infinite. The Infinite alone exists and except in a passing play has no true regard on the soul of the living creature. There can be no real and permanent relation between the soul in man and the Eternal, if that soul is even as the always renewable body no more than a transient phenomenon in the Infinite.

It is true that the ego and its limited personality are even such a temporary and mutable formation of Nature and therefore it

must be broken and we must feel ourselves one with all and infinite. But the ego is not the real person; when it has been dissolved there still remains the spiritual individual, there is still the eternal Jiva. The ego limitation disappears and the soul lives in a profound unity with the One and feels its universal unity with all things. And yet it is still our own soul that enjoys this expanse and oneness. The universal action, even when it is felt as the action of one and the same energy in all, even when it is experienced as the initiation and movement of the Ishwara, still takes different forms in different souls of men, *amśah sanātanaḥ*, and a different turn in their nature. The light of spiritual knowledge, the manifold universal Shakti, the eternal delight of being stream into us and around us, concentrate in the soul and flow out on the surrounding world from each as from a centre of living spiritual consciousness whose circumference is lost in the infinite. More, the spiritual individual remains as a little universe of divine existence at once independent and inseparable from the whole infinite universe of the divine self-manifestation of which we see a petty portion around us. A portion of the Transcendent, creative, he creates his own world around him even while he retains this cosmic consciousness in which are all others. If it be objected that this is an illusion which must disappear when he retreats into the transcendent Absolute, there is after all no very certain certainty in that matter. For it is still the soul in man that is the enjoyer of this release, as it was the living spiritual centre of the divine action and manifestation; there is something more than the mere self-breaking of an illusory shell of individuality in the Infinite. This mystery of our existence signifies that what we are is not only a temporary name and form of the One, but as we may say, a soul and spirit of the Divine Oneness. Our spiritual individuality of which the ego is only a misleading shadow and projection in the ignorance has or is a truth that persists beyond the ignorance; there is something of us that dwells for ever in the supreme nature of the Purushottama, *nivasiṣyasi mayi*. This is the profound comprehensiveness of the teaching of the Gita that while it recognises the truth of the universalised impersonality into which we enter by the extinction of ego, *brahma-nirvāṇa*,

— for indeed without it there can be no liberation or at least no absolute release, — it recognises too the persistent spiritual truth of our personality as a factor of the highest experience. Not this natural but that divine and central being in us is the eternal Jiva. It is the Ishwara, Vasudeva who is all things, that takes up our mind and life and body for the enjoyment of the lower Prakriti; it is the supreme Prakriti, the original spiritual nature of the supreme Purusha that holds together the universe and appears in it as the Jiva. This Jiva then is a portion of the Purushottama's original divine spiritual being, a living power of the living Eternal. He is not merely a temporary form of lower Nature, but an eternal portion of the Highest in his supreme Prakriti, an eternal conscious ray of the divine existence and as everlasting as that supernal Prakriti. One side of the highest perfection and status of our liberated consciousness must then be to assume the true place of the Jiva in a supreme spiritual Nature, there to dwell in the glory of the supreme Purusha and there to have the joy of the eternal spiritual oneness.

This mystery of our being implies necessarily a similar supreme mystery of the being of the Purushottama, *rahasyam uttamam*. It is not an exclusive impersonality of the Absolute that is the highest secret. This highest secret is the miracle of a supreme Person and apparent vast Impersonal that are one, an immutable transcendent Self of all things and a Spirit that manifests itself here at the very foundation of cosmos as an infinite and multiple personality acting everywhere, — a Self and Spirit revealed to our last, closest, profoundest experience as an illimitable Being who accepts us and takes us to him, not into a blank of featureless existence, but most positively, deeply, wonderfully into all Himself and in all the ways of his and our conscious existence. This highest experience and this largest way of seeing open a profound, moving and endless significance to our parts of nature, our knowledge, will, heart's love and adoration, which is lost or diminished if we put an exclusive stress on the impersonal, because that stress suppresses or minimises or does not allow of the intensest fulfilment of movements and powers that are a portion of our deepest nature, intensities and

luminosities that are attached to the closest essential fibres of our self-experience. It is not the austerity of knowledge alone that can help us; there is room and infinite room for the heart's love and aspiration illumined and uplifted by knowledge, a more mystically clear, a greater calmly passionate knowledge. It is by the perpetual unified closeness of our heart-consciousness, mind-consciousness, all consciousness, *satatam maccittah*, that we get the widest, the deepest, the most integral experience of our oneness with the Eternal. A nearest oneness in all the being, profoundly individual in a divine passion even in the midst of universality, even at the top of transcendence is here enjoined on the human soul as its way to reach the Highest and its way to possess the perfection and the divine consciousness to which it is called by its nature as a spirit. The intelligence and will have to turn the whole existence in all its parts to the Ishwara, to the divine Self and Master of that whole existence, *buddhi-yogam upāśritya*. The heart has to cast all other emotion into the delight of oneness with him and the love of Him in all creatures. The sense spiritualised has to see and hear and feel him everywhere. The life has to be utterly his life in the Jiva. All the actions have to proceed from his sole power and sole initiation in the will, knowledge, organs of action, senses, vital parts, body. This way is deeply impersonal because the separateness of ego is abolished for the soul universalised and restored to transcendence. And yet it is intimately personal because it soars to a transcendent passion and power of indwelling and oneness. A featureless extinction may be a rigorous demand of the mind's logic of self-annulment; it is not the last word of the supreme mystery, *rahasyam uttamam*.

The refusal of Arjuna to persevere in his divinely appointed work proceeded from the ego sense in him, *ahāṅkāra*. Behind it was a mixture and confusion and tangled error of ideas and impulses of the sattwic, rajasic, tamasic ego, the vital nature's fear of sin and its personal consequences, the heart's recoil from individual grief and suffering, the clouded reason's covering of egoistic impulses by self-deceptive specious pleas of right and virtue, our nature's ignorant shrinking from the ways of God

because they seem other than the ways of man and impose things terrible and unpleasant on his nervous and emotional parts and his intelligence. The spiritual consequences will be infinitely worse now than before, now that a higher truth and a greater way and spirit of action have been revealed to him, if yet persisting in his egoism he perseveres in a vain and impossible refusal. For it is a vain resolution, a futile recoil, since it springs only from a temporary failure of strength, a strong but passing deviation from the principle of energy of his inmost character, and is not the true will and way of his nature. If now he casts down his arms, he will yet be compelled by that nature to resume them when he sees the battle and slaughter go on without him, his abstention a defeat of all for which he has lived, the cause for whose service he was born weakened and bewildered by the absence or inactivity of its protagonist, vanquished and afflicted by the cynical and unscrupulous strength of the champions of a self-regarding unrighteousness and injustice. And in this return there will be no spiritual virtue. It was a confusion of the ideas and feelings of the ego mind that impelled his refusal; it will be his nature working through a restoration of the characteristic ideas and feelings of the ego mind that will compel him to annul his refusal. But whatever the direction, this continued subjection to the ego will mean a worse, a more fatal spiritual refusal, a perdition, *vinasṭi*; for it will be a definite falling away from a greater truth of his being than that which he has followed in the ignorance of the lower nature. He has been admitted to a higher consciousness, a new self-realisation, he has been shown the possibility of a divine instead of an egoistic action; the gates have been opened before him of a divine and spiritual in place of a merely intellectual, emotional, sensuous and vital life. He is called to be no longer a great blind instrument, but a conscious soul and an enlightened power and vessel of the Godhead.

For there is this possibility within us: there is open to us even at our human highest this consummation and transcendence. The ordinary mind and life of man is a half-enlightened and mostly an ignorant development and a partial uncompleted manifestation of something concealed within him. There is a

---

godhead there concealed from himself, subliminal to his consciousness, immobilised behind the obscure veil of a working that is not wholly his own and the secret of which he has not yet mastered. He finds himself in the world thinking and willing and feeling and acting and he takes himself instinctively or intellectually conceives of himself or at least conducts his life as a separate self-existent being who has the freedom of his thought and will and feeling and action. He bears the burden of his sin and error and suffering and takes the responsibility and merit of his knowledge and virtue; he claims the right to satisfy his sattwic, rajasic or tamasic ego and arrogates the power to shape his own destiny and to turn the world to his own uses. It is this idea of himself through which Nature works in him, and she deals with him according to his own conception, but fulfils all the time the will of the greater Spirit within her. The error of this self-view of man is like most of his errors the distortion of a truth, a distortion that creates a whole system of erroneous and yet effective values. What is true of his spirit he attributes to his ego-personality and gives it a false application, a false form and a mass of ignorant consequences. The ignorance lies in this fundamental deficiency of his surface consciousness that he identifies himself only with the outward mechanical part of him which is a convenience of Nature and with so much only of the soul as reflects and is reflected in these workings. He misses the greater inner spirit within which gives to all his mind and life and creation and action an unfulfilled promise and a hidden significance. A universal Nature here obeys the power of the Spirit who is the master of the universe, shapes each creature and determines its action according to the law of its own nature, Swabhava, shapes man too and determines his action according to the general law of nature of his kind, the law of a mental being emmeshed and ignorant in the life and the body, shapes too each man and determines his individual action according to the law of his own distinct type and the variations of his own original swabhava. It is this universal Nature that forms and directs the mechanical workings of the body and the instinctive operations of our vital and nervous parts; and there our subjection to her

is very obvious. And she has formed and directs the action too, hardly less mechanical as things now are, of our sense-mind and will and intelligence. Only, while in the animal the mind workings are a wholly mechanical obedience to Prakriti, man has this distinction that he embodies a conscious development in which the soul more actively participates, and that gives to his outward mentality the sense, useful to him, indispensable, but very largely a misleading sense, of a certain freedom and increasing mastery of his instrumental nature. And it is especially misleading because it blinds him to the hard fact of his bondage and his false idea of freedom prevents him from finding a true liberty and lordship. For the freedom and mastery of man over his nature are hardly even real and cannot be complete until he becomes aware of the Divinity within him and is in possession of his own real self and spirit other than the ego, *ātmavān*. It is that which Nature is labouring to express in mind and life and body; it is that which imposes on her this or that law of being and working, Swabhava; it is that which shapes the outward destiny and the evolution of the soul within us. It is therefore only when he is in possession of his real self and spirit that his nature can become a conscious instrument and enlightened power of the godhead.

For then, when we enter into that inmost self of our existence, we come to know that in us and in all is the one Spirit and Godhead whom all Nature serves and manifests and we ourselves are soul of this Soul, spirit of this Spirit, our body his delegated image, our life a movement of the rhythm of his life, our mind a sheath of his consciousness, our senses his instruments, our emotions and sensations the seekings of his delight of being, our actions a means of his purpose, our freedom only a shadow, suggestion or glimpse while we are ignorant, but when we know him and ourselves a prolongation and effective channel of his immortal freedom. Our masteries are a reflection of his power at work, our best knowledge a partial light of his knowledge, the highest most potent will of our spirit a projection and delegation of the will of this Spirit in all things who is the Master and Soul of the universe. It is the Lord seated in the heart

of every creature who has been turning us in all our inner and outer action during the ignorance as if mounted on a machine on the wheel of this Maya of the lower Nature. And whether obscure in the Ignorance or luminous in the Knowledge, it is for him in us and him in the world that we have our existence. To live consciously and integrally in this knowledge and this truth is to escape from ego and break out of Maya. All other highest dharmas are only a preparation for this Dharma, and all Yoga is only a means by which we can come first to some kind of union and finally, if we have the full light, to an integral union with the Master and supreme Soul and Self of our existence. The greatest Yoga is to take refuge from all the perplexities and difficulties of our nature with this indwelling Lord of all Nature, to turn to him with our whole being, with the life and body and sense and mind and heart and understanding, with our whole dedicated knowledge and will and action, *sarva-bhāvena*, in every way of our conscious self and our instrumental nature. And when we can at all times and entirely do this, then the divine Light and Love and Power takes hold of us, fills both self and instruments and leads us safe through all the doubts and difficulties and perplexities and perils that beset our soul and our life, leads us to a supreme peace and the spiritual freedom of our immortal and eternal status, *parām śāntim, sthānam śāśvatam*.

For after giving out all the laws, the dharmas, and the deepest essence of its Yoga, after saying that beyond all the first secrets revealed to the mind of man by the transforming light of spiritual knowledge, *guhyaṭ*, this is a still deeper more secret truth, *guhyaṭaram*, the Gita suddenly declares that there is yet a supreme word that it has to speak, *paramam vacaḥ*, and a most secret truth of all, *sarva-guhyatamam*. This secret of secrets the Teacher will tell to Arjuna as his highest good because he is the chosen and beloved soul, *iṣṭa*. For evidently, as had already been declared by the Upanishad, it is only the rare soul chosen by the Spirit for the revelation of his very body, *tanum svām*, who can be admitted to this mystery, because he alone is near enough in heart and mind and life to the Godhead to respond truly to it in all his being and to make it a living practice. The last, the

closing supreme word of the Gita expressing the highest mystery is spoken in two brief, direct and simple slokas and these are left without farther comment or enlargement to sink into the mind and reveal their own fullness of meaning in the soul's experience. For it is alone this inner incessantly extending experience that can make evident the infinite deal of meaning with which are for ever pregnant these words in themselves apparently so slight and simple. And we feel, as they are being uttered, that it was this for which the soul of the disciple was being prepared all the time and the rest was only an enlightening and enabling discipline and doctrine. Thus runs this secret of secrets, the highest most direct message of the Ishwara. "Become my-minded, my lover and adorer, a sacrificer to me, bow thyself to me, to me thou shalt come, this is my pledge and promise to thee, for dear art thou to me. Abandon all dharmas and take refuge in me alone. I will deliver thee from all sin and evil, do not grieve."

The Gita throughout has been insisting on a great and well-built discipline of Yoga, a large and clearly traced philosophical system, on the Swabhava and the Swadharma, on the sattwic law of life as leading out of itself by a self-exceeding exaltation to a free spiritual dharma of immortal existence utterly wide in its spaces and high-lifted beyond the limitation of even this highest guna, on many rules and means and injunctions and conditions of perfection, and now suddenly it seems to break out of its own structure and says to the human soul, "Abandon all dharmas, give thyself to the Divine alone, to the supreme Godhead above and around and within thee: that is all that thou needest, that is the truest and greatest way, that is the real deliverance." The Master of the worlds in the form of the divine Charioteer and Teacher of Kurukshetra has revealed to man the magnificent realities of God and Self and Spirit and the nature of the complex world and the relation of man's mind and life and heart and senses to the Spirit and the victorious means by which through his own spiritual self-discipline and effort he can rise out of mortality into immortality and out of his limited mental into his infinite spiritual existence. And now speaking as the Spirit and Godhead in man and in all things he says to him,

---

“All this personal effort and self-discipline will not in the end be needed, all following and limitation of rule and dharma can at last be thrown away as hampering encumbrances if thou canst make a complete surrender to Me, depend alone on the Spirit and Godhead within thee and all things and trust to his sole guidance. Turn all thy mind to me and fill it with the thought of me and my presence. Turn all thy heart to me, make thy every action, whatever it be, a sacrifice and offering to me. That done, leave me to do my will with thy life and soul and action; do not be grieved or perplexed by my dealings with thy mind and heart and life and works or troubled because they do not seem to follow the laws and dharmas man imposes on himself to guide his limited will and intelligence. My ways are the ways of a perfect wisdom and power and love that knows all things and combines all its movements in view of a perfect eventual result; for it is refining and weaving together the many threads of an integral perfection. I am here with thee in thy chariot of battle revealed as the Master of Existence within and without thee and I repeat the absolute assurance, the infallible promise that I will lead thee to myself through and beyond all sorrow and evil. Whatever difficulties and perplexities arise, be sure of this that I am leading thee to a complete divine life in the universal and an immortal existence in the transcendent Spirit.”

The secret thing, *guhya*m, that all deep spiritual knowledge reveals to us, mirrored in various teachings and justified in the soul's experience, is for the Gita the secret of the spiritual self hidden within us of which mind and external Nature are only manifestations or figures. It is the secret of the constant relations between soul and Nature, Purusha and Prakriti, the secret of an indwelling Godhead who is the lord of all existence and veiled from us in its forms and movements. These are the truths taught in many ways by Vedanta and Sankhya and Yoga and synthesised in the earlier chapters of the Gita. And amidst all their apparent distinctions they are one truth and all the different ways of Yoga are various means of spiritual self-discipline by which our unquiet mind and blinded life are stilled and turned towards this many-aspected One and the secret truth of self and God made

so real to us and intimate that we can either consciously live and dwell in it or lose our separate selves in the Eternal and no longer be compelled at all by the mental Ignorance.

The more secret thing, *guhvataram*, developed by the Gita is the profound reconciling truth of the divine Purushottama, at once self and Purusha, supreme Brahman and a sole, intimate, mysterious, ineffable Godhead. That gives to the thought a larger and more deeply understanding foundation for an ultimate knowledge and to the spiritual experience a greater and more fully comprehending and comprehensive Yoga. This deeper mystery is founded on the secret of the supreme spiritual Prakriti and of the Jiva, an eternal portion of the Divine in that eternal and this manifested Nature and of one spirit and essence with him in his immutable self-existence. This profounder knowledge escapes from the elementary distinction of spiritual experience between the Beyond and what is here. For the Transcendent beyond the worlds is at the same time Vasudeva who is all things in all worlds; he is the Lord standing in the heart of every creature and the self of all existences and the origin and supernal meaning of everything that he has put forth in his Prakriti. He is manifested in his Vibhuti and he is the Spirit in Time who compels the action of the world and the Sun of all knowledge and the Lover and Beloved of the soul and the Master of all works and sacrifice. The result of an inmost opening to this deeper, truer, more secret mystery is the Gita's Yoga of integral knowledge, integral works and integral bhakti. It is the simultaneous experience of spiritual universality and a free and perfected spiritual individuality, of an entire union with God and an entire dwelling in him as at once the frame of the soul's immortality and the support and power of our liberated action in the world and the body.

And now there comes the supreme word and most secret thing of all, *guhvataram*, that the Spirit and Godhead is an Infinite free from all dharmas and though he conducts the world according to fixed laws and leads man through his dharmas of ignorance and knowledge, sin and virtue, right and wrong, liking and disliking and indifference, pleasure and pain, joy and

sorrow and the rejection of these opposites, through his physical and vital, intellectual, emotional, ethical and spiritual forms and rules and standards, yet the Spirit and Godhead transcends all these things, and if we too can cast away all dependence on dharmas, surrender ourselves to this free and eternal Spirit and, taking care only to keep ourselves absolutely and exclusively open to him, trust to the light and power and delight of the Divine in us and, unafraid and ungrieving, accept only his guidance, then that is the truest, the greatest release and that brings the absolute and inevitable perfection of our self and nature. This is the way offered to the chosen of the Spirit, — to those only in whom he takes the greatest delight because they are nearest to him and most capable of oneness and of being even as he, freely consenting and concordant with Nature in her highest power and movement, universal in soul consciousness, transcendent in the spirit.

For a time comes in spiritual development when we become aware that all our effort and action are only our mental and vital reactions to the silent and secret insistence of a greater Presence in and around us. It is borne in upon us that all our Yoga, our aspiration and our endeavour are imperfect or narrow forms, because disfigured or at least limited by the mind's associations, demands, prejudgments, predilections, mistranslations or half translations of a vaster truth. Our ideas and experiences and efforts are mental images only of greatest things which would be done more perfectly, directly, freely, largely, more in harmony with the universal and eternal will by that Power itself in us if we could only put ourselves passively as instruments in the hands of a supreme and absolute strength and wisdom. That Power is not separate from us; it is our own self one with the self of all others and at the same time a transcendent Being and an immanent Person. Our existence, our action taken up into this greatest Existence would be no longer, as it seems to us now, individually our own in a mental separation. It would be the vast movement of an Infinity and an intimate ineffable Presence; it would be the constant spontaneity of formation and expression in us of this deep universal self and this transcendent Spirit. The Gita

indicates that in order that that may wholly be, the surrender must be without reservations; our Yoga, our life, our state of inner being must be determined freely by this living Infinite, not predetermined by our mind's insistence on this or that dharma or any dharma. The divine Master of the Yoga, *yogeśvaraḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*, will then himself take up our Yoga and raise us to our utmost possible perfection, not the perfection of any external or mental standard or limiting rule, but vast and comprehensive, to the mind incalculable. It will be a perfection developed by an all-seeing Wisdom according to the whole truth, first indeed of our human swabhava, but afterwards of a greater thing into which it will open, a spirit and power illimitable, immortal, free and all-transmuting, the light and splendour of a divine and infinite nature.

All must be given as material of that transmutation. An omniscient consciousness will take up our knowledge and our ignorance, our truth and our error, cast away their forms of insufficiency, *sarva-dharmān parityajya*, and transform all into its infinite light. An almighty Power will take up our virtue and sin, our right and wrong, our strength and our weakness, cast away their tangled figures, *sarva-dharmān parityajya*, and transform all into its transcendent purity and universal good and infallible force. An ineffable Ananda will take up our petty joy and sorrow, our struggling pleasure and pain, cast away their discordances and imperfect rhythms, *sarva-dharmān parityajya*, and transform all into its transcendent and universal unimaginable delight. All that all the Yogas can do will be done and more; but it will be done in a greater seeing way, with a greater wisdom and truth than any human teacher, saint or sage can give us. The inner spiritual state to which this supreme Yoga will take us, will be above all that is here and yet comprehensive of all things in this and other worlds, but with a spiritual transformation of all, without limitation, without bondage, *sarva-dharmān parityajya*. The infinite existence, consciousness and delight of the Godhead in its calm silence and bright boundless activity will be there, will be its essential, fundamental, universal stuff, mould and character. And in that mould of infinity the Divine made manifest

will overtly dwell, no longer concealed by his Yogamaya, and whenever and as he wills build in us whatever shapes of the Infinite, translucent forms of knowledge, thought, love, spiritual joy, power and action according to his self-fulfilling will and immortal pleasure. And there will be no binding effect on the free soul and the unaffected nature, no unescapable crystallising into this or that inferior formula. For all the action will be executed by the power of the Spirit in a divine freedom, *sarva-dharmān parityajya*. An unfallen abiding in the transcendent Spirit, *param dhāma*, will be the foundation and the assurance of this spiritual state. An intimate understanding oneness with universal being and all creatures, released from the evil and suffering of the separative mind but wisely regardful of true distinctions, will be the conditioning power. A constant delight, oneness and harmony of the eternal individual here with the Divine and all that he is will be the effect of this integral liberation. The baffling problems of our human existence of which Arjuna's difficulty stands as an acute example, are created by our separative personality in the Ignorance. This Yoga because it puts the soul of man into its right relation with God and world-existence and makes our action God's, the knowledge and will shaping and moving it his and our life the harmony of a divine self-expression, is the way to their total disappearance.

The whole Yoga is revealed, the great word of the teaching is given, and Arjuna the chosen human soul is once more turned, no longer in his egoistic mind but in this greatest self-knowledge, to the divine action. The Vibhuti is ready for the divine life in the human, his conscious spirit for the works of the liberated soul, *muktasya karma*. Destroyed is the illusion of the mind; the soul's memory of its self and its truth concealed so long by the misleading shows and forms of our life has returned to it and become its normal consciousness: all doubt and perplexity gone, it can turn to the execution of the command and do faithfully whatever work for God and the world may be appointed and apportioned to it by the Master of our being, the Spirit and Godhead self-fulfilled in Time and universe.