

Editor's Preface

Sri Aurobindo has been described by Ken Wilber as “India’s greatest modern philosopher-sage” and also as “the greatest of all Vedantic philosophers”. The aim of this book is to highlight another aspect of Sri Aurobindo, not that of a philosopher but of a mystic, for whom the ultimate Reality — popularly called God or Spirit — is not an abstract or philosophical concept but a concrete experience, “more concrete than anything sensed by ear or eye or touch in the world of Matter”(p. 190). The aim of the book is to present Sri Aurobindo as an Enlightened One whose view of the human being is based not on speculative theory nor on statistical inference but on self-realization. The aim is to present Sri Aurobindo as a Seer whose delineation of the future of the human being and of human society is not an ideative dream of what ought to be, but a spiritual pre-vision of what is already in the process of becoming.

It is significant that Wilber, whom an author has described as “the most comprehensive philosophical thinker of our times”, bases his integral vision on the core model of the spectrum of consciousness, a model which underlies Sri Aurobindo’s map of Reality.

Two features of Sri Aurobindo’s psychological thought which have appealed to me most, and which I have tried to bring out in particular in this book, are its experiential basis and its integral nature.

Sri Aurobindo is among those few mystics who, based on a direct experience of the ultimate Reality, have given a systematic philosophical formulation of the nature of Reality founded on their experience. The mystical experience, states Sri Aurobindo, pertains to “a greater consciousness beyond Mind” (p. 182), and is therefore supra-intellectual. The mystic speaks about the supra-intellectual in philosophical or intellectual terms in order