

This is a marvel, because we are in the midst of incredible diversity, and the evolutionary process implies inequality. Nothing in manifestation is like anything else. This is an absolute fact in nature. When we think two things are alike, it is because they bear some resemblance to each other, not because they are identical. In a remarkable book, *Human Destiny* (by Pierre Lecomte du Noüy [New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1947], the scientist author outlined as the aims of evolution: harmony, freedom, and individuality. He argued that as evolution progresses, there is a greater and greater revelation of uniqueness. When we think of perfection, we may make the mistake of imagining that all beings who are perfect must be alike. It is not so. They are all perfect, but each in his or her own unique way. That uniqueness exists throughout nature at every level, not a single leaf of a tree being an exact replica of another.

Inequality is inherent in evolution. In some creatures, consciousness is more awake and in some it is less awake. Consciousness is many things, such as mental activity, intelligence, and sympathy. Some creatures have those qualities in large measure; others are apparently duller. Some are clever, they have developed skills and capabilities, others have not. The consciousness of animals and plants is less developed. So we think that they have less importance than human beings and that we have a right to suppress them.

So there are these two things in nature: inequality and diversity. Each being is at its own level on the evolutionary ladder, and everything is different from everything else. Yet, underlying everything is one being, one essence. It is a paradox: one essence, one life, one consciousness in the midst of an incredible diversity that reveals a supreme creative energy. And although there is no equality, from the outer point of view, concealed within is a supreme value which is the same in everything, because everything is a unit of the same universal being, a drop in the same ocean of consciousness. Perhaps it is a drop at the bottom of the ocean, or one that moves on the surface, but all are part of the ocean of life. This is the meaning of the sacred syllable *Om*, which symbolizes different planes, different stages of diversity, integrated into a wholeness or unity. There is an essential equality in all manifested individual existences for they are all part of one sacred life.

The realization of brotherhood is an awareness of something