CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION
come all of a sudden from heaven; it was through the gradual efforts of the plural thinking that motivated Indian English Poetry to exist with its concrete steps. Literary history demonstrates that the temptation to disown one's predecessors is a universal phenomenon. The new poets are standing on the firm base which was prepared to them by their predecessors. Amidst the growth of the poetry, it is Sri Aurobindo who, like a great pioneer, has broken new grounds in the development of Indian English Poetry. He has raised high hopes and shown to humanity the way to transcend itself and transform its future. He has created and cleared the ground for fresh efforts and inspired new faith. He has worked as the spear-head of the human evolutionary urge and laid humanity under a permanent obligation to him.

Chapter II, *His Poetic Theory*, analyses in the text of the thesis about the theoretic norms that Sri Aurobindo has made an application to his poetry. The principles of Indian Poetics such as *Kavya-Swarupa* (the nature of poetry), *Sabda-Shakti* (the power of the word), *Dhvani* (suggestion), *Rasa* (the poetic expression) and *Alankara* (the figure of speech) pervade the contents of Sri Aurobindo's poetry. Thus, it is difficult to come to the single point in defining the range of poetry according to Indian Poetics. However, Sri Aurobindo in the text of his short and long poems has given the prominent place to the theory of *rasa* and its *asvad*, which can be defined as the range of Indian Aesthetics. To
Sri Aurobindo, the word is not poetry, but it is the happy fusion of word and sound (*dhvani*) which stands for the essence of poetry. According to Sri Aurobindo, it is the happy fusion of sound and sense which promotes poetic delight in the mind of Sahrdaya (the responsive reader).

Sri Aurobindo in his poetic theory makes an application to aesthetics which is dominated by the concentric form of *rasa*:

Rasa ..... awakes a vital enjoyment of the taste (Bhoga) and this can again awaken us, awaken even the soul in us to something yet deeper and more fundamental than mere pleasure and enjoyment to some form of the spirit's delight of existence, *Ananda*. Poetry serves the seeking for these things, *Aesthesis, Rasa, Bhoga, Ananda*; it brings us a Rasa of word and sound and thought a mental or vital or sometimes the spiritual image of their form, quality, impact upon us or even if the poet is strong enough of their world essence, their cosmic reality - the very soul of them, the spirit that resides in them as it resides in all things.¹

Sri Aurobindo brings two facts in his theoretical points: that words and meanings in the poetical work; and the suggestion that emanates from the association of the word and its
meaning. In the *Rgveda*, it is said that great poets select their words, "Removing away the chaff from the grain", and only man of equal scholarship and literary taste (*Rasa*) can fully appreciate their poems. Sri Aurobindo in his literary theory does not deny the existence of fixed literal meanings for words and sentences. But they believe that over and above all these, there is the suggested meaning or the socio-cultural meaning. Sri Aurobindo in his poetic theory distinguishes poetic language from ordinary language. He points out "the two functions of the languages of poetry - *bhavakatva* and *bhojakatva* - in addition to the primary function abidha which includes laksana too. *Bhavakatva* is the power of universalization (*sadharnikarana*) which strips the *vibhavas* and *sthayibhavas*. They generalize themselves in the mind of the spectators who are having the power of imagination. And *bhojakatva* is the power by which the sthayibhava reaches its climax and is enjoyed by the spectators."² To Sri Aurobindo in all speech activity there are three things to be observed: expression, suppression and impression. Expression is given by the speaker and suppression is his reluctance to give; and the impression is what the hearer receives from the suggested contents.

Even in his early poetry Sri Aurobindo practices the literary principles of Indian Poetics. The skill, according to Sri Aurobindo, lies in his successful application of the suggestive pattern. As a matter of fact, *dhavani* (suggestion) is a dominating
element while *alankara, guna* and *vrtti* are its various parts. In his view *alankaras* are those, which embellish both of them just as the bracelet and the earrings embellish the body. They are concerned with the exterior form of poetry. Therefore, dhvani or suggestion which is essentially an internal element can not be incorporated into them. As is the case in Indian Poetics the suggestive element in the work of art can be made applicable of using the myths and symbols in order to universalize the inner secrets of the higher or spiritual life.

Sri Aurobindo raises the question of "form" or "formless" about the presence of God. Infact, Sri Aurobindo materializes the myth, legend and symbolic representation of human life in his *magnum opus, Savitri*. As a theoretician of poetics, Sri Aurobindo believes that love and beauty are the source of joy (Ananda), as the light and knowledge are the joys of consciousness. Poetry, in Sri Aurobindo's opinion should aim at bringing the spiritual delight. The poet discovers within himself a profoundly spiritual vision; he thus writes about the Celestial Joy according to the norms of Indian Poetics. In Sri Aurobindo's poetic theory, one finds a balanced fusion between the spiritual and the material world. Sri Aurobindo thinks of the inseparability between the transcendent and the aesthetic joy. The Matter and the Spirit are wedded together; and therefore there lies a close and a secret bond between the body and soul. Thus, the great poetry,
according to Sri Aurobindo, is the Energy of the Transcendent. He regards it as the rhythmic voice of life and the inner beauty of being. There are many similar points between the poet and the spiritualist. Outworldly, they seem entirely different from each other, but imaginatively they are associated together.

Sri Aurobindo regards the art of poetry as the highest expression of the form of human speech. He sees the infinite meanings in the suggestive meanings of the words. The art of poetry expresses not only the life-soul of man as did the primitive word, not only the ideas of intelligence but the experience also in the form of cognitive mode. Making them real to our life-soul as well as present to our intellect poetry opens to us by the word the doors of the spirit.

The most important aspect of Sri Aurobindo's poetic theory lies in its form of mysticism. The mystic poetry hardly leaves a scope for any kind of argumentation. The mystic poetry works on the threads of alien and strange language that can also be defined as the language of suggestivity. This kind of poetic language can also be found in his early creative process, but it takes its vital form in his magnum opus, Savitri. Wherein one finds the evolutionary theory writ large. As opposed to the older assumption Sri Aurobindo in his poetic theory accepts the reality of the world. The poet, according to Sri Aurobindo, thinks of bringing the evolution in man's mind and even the description of
the worldly attainments can really be called the right theoretician of poetry. As a theoretician Sri Aurobindo teaches truth not to serve any ethical doctrine, but to have a life of its own and to embody beauty and to give delight. Sri Aurobindo comes near to Indian Poetics in his poetic theory. In Indian Poetics, the poet experiences aesthetic pleasure while composing the poetry. When the poet reads his own poetry, he finds the aesthetic delight of a Sahrdaya. When a poet does not feel aesthetic pleasure due to some reason, he is neither a poet nor a reader, but an ordinary man. However, the aesthetic delight and the spiritual transformation are the chief functions of poetry.

Chapter III, *Philosophical Revelation* in His Poetry, has been interlinked with the second one for analysing the philosophical motifs of Sri Aurobindo. Poetry as a matter of fact is the medium through which the blissful experience of the poet is transplanted into the mind of the poet. Sri Aurobindo is a man of multi-dimensional paradigm. He has been regarded as the prophet of Indian culture and religion. The chapter has analysed the various philosophical norms/principles in his poetry. The early poems of Sri Aurobindo such as *Songs to Myrtilla* has revealed his skilful craftsmanship in verse and works out his unique contribution as a poet. His early poems bring into being as the later one the spiritual glow of his mind set. However, some earlier poems of Sri Aurobindo appear as the primitive man's desire to establish contact
with the awe-inspiring forces of Nature and to please them for his own benefit.

In the philosophical order of Sri Aurobindo, the evolutionary process proceeds by a slow unfolding for each new principle that evolves its powers. Nature affirms at first a vague urge and tendency which is a sign of the push of the occult. There are four main lines which nature has followed in her attempt to open up the inner being: religion, occultism, spiritual thought and an inner spiritual realization and experience. The first three are approaches; the last is the decisive avenue of entry. All these four powers have worked by a simultaneous action more or less connected with one another.

Sri Aurobindo follows the Vedic principles in the composition of his mantric poetry. It is through the association of Sabda and Artha, the total essence of the speech takes place. But this relationship between signifier (word) and the signified (meaning) alone does not constitute poetry. It is the suggestive meaning that emanates from the association of sabda and artha form the real essence of poetry. Sri Aurobindo has the intention to work out the theme of liberation in his philosophical revelations. The poems in Urvasie, Love and Death, Savitri and other poems deal with the philosophical perspectives of Sri Aurobindo. The symbol in the I canto of Savitri shows Satyavan's treatment with death. Savitri has been shown in this episode as an epitome of the
highest will power which even challenges the powers of the dark forces (death).

As a wife of Satyavan, Savitri faces Yama. By going within herself and recollected power of her sadhana, she challenges the power of Yama. She neither indulges in self pity nor cries when the crisis is upon her. She does not cry even when her heart was being sawed into two. It was Savitri's divine solitariness and strength, her propensity to incarnate in herself the will to triumph in a world surrendered to resignation and defeat and her consciousness of mission and might to rectify the very engines of our incapacity and anguish. It was this radiant vision and experience of Savitri's personality and power that had attracted Sri Aurobindo towards the story and this is the very spirit which he has re-incarnated and sustained in his cosmic epic.³

The Supreme Spirit or the Brahman has been seriously described in India as Satyam (truth), Jnanam (knowledge), Anantam (Infinity) and that which shines in the form of joy (Anandarupam Amritam Yadvibhati). It is also described as Shantam (Peace) and Shivam (Auspicious and Good), Adwaitam (one without a second), Prapanchop shamarn (one in whom the cosmos itself finds a resting place). It is characterized as Sat
(Being), Chit (consciousness), Ananda (pure bliss or pure joy). The Upanishads poses a question, "if the void (Akasha) were not full of Joy or Bliss, who could have breathed and lived." It further asserts that it is from Ananda, they ultimately merge. It is in this symbolic sense that the eternal joy - "intoxicated dance of Shiva" goes on with the cycle of creation, existence and destruction.

What is important from the point of view of human evolution and endeavour is not merely intellectual knowledge and recognition and the existence of Reality but exploration of the realm of spirituality that is beyond the fringes of time and space. The spiritual world is not something external but is rather within our own consciousness. One has to seek this spiritual world in one's consciousness. Modern Psychology has been trying to probe into the mysteries of consciousness which Sri Aurobindo has practiced in his poetic world. Sri Aurobindo deals with the secular form of dharma in his philosophical vision of Savitri. One sees so many examples of religious tolerance in his poetry. The infatuation with creed and dogma and banishment of spiritual realization and God contact have affected all religion. Another of religious intolerance which Sri Aurobindo sees in his Savitri is the multiplicity of religious faiths and dogmas/creeds. The prophets of various religions ignore the essence of truth and lean upon only the surficial part of it. Religion in itself has shown its power of survival and is undergoing an evolution, the final sense of which is still obscure. In this new phase of the mind that we see beginning, however crudely and
hesitating, there can be detected the possibility of a pressure towards some decisive turn and advance of the spiritual evolution in Nature. Religion is rich but with a certain obscurity in her first inferational stage had tended under the over weight of the intellect interspace; but it must follow the upward curve of the human mind and rise more fully at its summits towards its time or greatest field in the sphere of a Supernatural Consciousness and Knowledge.

Sri Aurobindo establishes the secular approach of dharma in his philosophical vision of Savitri. As a matter of fact, Sri Aurobindo deals with the gradual development of the evolution of human mind through the text of Savitri. Indeed the originality of Savitri so prevails as it has been regarded as the crest-jewel of Indian Poetry in English. Thus the entire philosophic contents of Savitri can be analysed in the three major philosophic constituents—love, beauty and delight. Sri Aurobindo makes a wonderful synthesis between the material and moral values of life in his philosophical vision of Savitri. The basic destiny of man can be awakened and made more powerful. In metaphysical language, it is called Aatma or the Soul.

In our body, it is symbolic of the owner of a chariot in which the driver, the bridles, the horses and the chariot represent the intellectual faculty, the mind, the organs of action (karmendriyas) and the gross body respectively. As the owner of the chariot or ratha is supreme in the chariot like wise our soul
should be supreme in all the diverse manifestations of man's
activities. Such a notion is hardly visible in an extremely vast
majority of men and women. The philosophy of Savitri can be re-
interpreted according to the analysis of this chapter by citing the
dialogic mode of Yajnavalkya when he tells his wife Maitreyi in
*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*:

The Atman, O, Maitreyi, ought to be meditated
upon; for it is only when the self is seen, heard or
reflected upon and meditated upon that all this is
known.⁵

The next core Chapter, *Use of Myths and Symbols*,
has analysed the mystic speculations of Sri Aurobindo on the basis
of various myths and symbols used by him in poetic world. Myth
is a multi-faceted phenomenon whose boundary cuts across
diverse disciplines such as anthropology, psychology, sociology,
religion, culture and literature. The researcher has dealt with the
original motifs of the Greek Myths while analysing the myth of
Savitri. In Greek *Muthos* and *Logos* have an antithetical relation to
each other. But originally muthos and logos were indistinguishable
in uses of classical mythologies. Myth in Aristotle's Poetics seems
as the word of plot, narrative structure and fable. Its antonym and
counter part is logos. The myth is narrative; story intuitive. Finally,
the word myth denotes the mytho-poeic vision. The various
primitive myths have been handed to us though not in their pristine
form. Fortunately, the modern man has an adumbration of the mythopoeic mind of the primitives. The myth-making faculty is thus present in the modern man too.

The images and symbols are suggestive for the operation of myth and legend in the poetic bulk of Sri Aurobindo. Myth as usual functions for the higher motifs in Sri Aurobindo's poetry:

Actually, poesis is neither more nor less than making; a poet etymologically is a maker; and poetry is, quite literally, make believe. The term Fabulation which some of us have used to designate the story telling faculty, should make clearer how the function of myth-making relates to other forms of mental activity... It stands mid-way between the strictly cognitive and the obscurely intuitive .... It is out of the limbo between rational intelligence and the unconscious that fictions are generated. 

Myth, symbol, legend and history are the different modes of acquiring the rich store of knowledge. In his Preface to Perseus the Deliverer, Sri Aurobindo tells us that any author uses the myth/legend for justifying the spiritual principles. Thus, for Sri Aurobindo, the legend and myth seem the identical terms and are easily exchangeable. Therefore, the texts of Savitri and Urvasie are meant for the symbolization and the objectivization of human
knowledge and thoughts. Urvasie as a mythical character reveals the manifold aspects of life such as the challenge of fate and the existence of man on earth. As a first experiment of the poet in the epic form, this poem solves the purpose of the poet. Sri Aurobindo has worked on the encyclopaedic knowledge so far as the aspects of mythical characters in Urvasie are concerned. The dear campanions of Urvasie such as Meneca, Mullica, Rambha, Nelabha, Sheela, Nolinie, Lolita, Lavonya and Tilottama have been brought in the text of the first to deepen the effect of the myth of Urvasie on the reader.

Urvasie anticipates Savitri in many ways and more especially for showing the effects and the efficacy of the myth. The mighty mother in Urvasie becomes suggestive of the universal mother in Savitri. Thus Urvasie becomes a prelude and an introduction to the text of Savitri. Both Urvasie and Savitri have been composed on the epical pattern. It has been proved in this core chapter that Sri Aurobindo before writing Savitri thought of making Urvasie an epic for human aspiration and for his evolutionary philosophy of life.

Savitri as the mythic world from Indian culture presents the culmination of Sri Aurobindo's poetry. The myth of Savitri has been derived from the tale of the Mahabharata. This legend in the form of a myth serves the purpose of transpersonalization and the universalization of human emotions.
The very name of Savitri comes from the Vedic origin which means "to give birth to" symbolically as is the case with Sri Aurobindo's vision. Savitri stands for the creative process of life. She thus becomes the mysterious power of the word of mantra. Thus, the epic Savitri denotes an example of mantric poetry. Savitri stands for the dynamic or Shakti; she stands for the great creative and the preservative power of the sun god. This dynamic power is known in the Vedas as Gayatri: The form of Gayatri in the Vedas is the form of knowledge.

The character of Savitri makes Sri Aurobindo profess his Yogic process. His Yoga is based on the simple theory of the evolution of consciousness in being for the process of the becoming. In the age of Veda the spiritual achievement or the occult knowledge was confined to a few; it was not spread in the whole mass of humanity. The mass of humanity evolves slowly from the material and the vital man to the mental man. The Vedic age was followed by a great outburst of intellect and philosophy which yet took spiritual truth as its basis and tried to reach it an end. Then followed an era of the development of philosophies and Yoga process which more and more used the emotional and aesthetic being as the means of spiritual realization. Sri Aurobindo's observation on the Ramayana and the Mahabharata shows his scholarcity and his spiritual interest too. As a literary critic his tendency is highly constructive. Not that he could not
wield a devastating pen. He did it on certain occasion. His essays on *Future Poetry* are monuments of his global sweep, sympathetic understanding of the poetry of other countries cast in different languages.

Sri Aurobindo has used many symbols such as "Dawn", "Fire", "Bird", "The Sea", "The River" and "Colour", just to deepen the philosophical moorings of his poetry. The symbol "dawn" suggests the re-awakening of man and saves him from the layers of ignorance. It signifies the importance of human intellect for greater dawn by which a man can remove the lying dress and dirt that is being cemented in side of the human mind. In *Urvasie*, king Pururavas sees the quite maiden when he comes back from heaven after the war. His gaze becomes symbol which has been described by the poet the birth of a day. Thus, the concept of "dawn" as symbolic expressiveness does not show any sign for the act of sensuousness, but it becomes immediately an ascension of the higher spiritual motifs of human life. Once again, the symbol of "dawn", in *Savitri* reaches to its height and even the text of this begins with "The Symbol of Dawn".

The "fire" is another symbol that recurs consistently in the poetry of Sri Aurobindo. *Fire* or *Agni* has been described as the force of Rudra and it becomes a force that brings the purification of human intentions and the truth of human consciousness and the divine energy at the instance of the Vedic
symbols. Agni or fire has been described as the most important symbol that expresses the universal truth of the Vedas.

The chapter under discussion thus brings the fact into being that Sri Aurobindo uses freely the myth and symbol for transpersonalization of human emotions. Sri Aurobindo drives his symbols and myths mostly from the Vedas, the Puranas and the Upanishads.

The next chapter, Spirituality as the Leitmotif (His Overhead Poetry) is core chapter which analyses in the text of the thesis about the subtle sign and signifiers of Sri Aurobindo as a poet. Sri Aurobindo creates the cosmic view through his cosmic epic Savitri:

Aurobindo created what is probably the greatest epic in English and the language of the modern period. It is the most comprehensive, integretated, beautiful and perfect cosmic poem ever composed ..... Savitri is perhaps the most powerful artistic work in the world for expanding man's mind towards the absolute.?

Savitri thus represents the cosmic view of the spiritual norms. One finds in it both the temporal and the timeless. It can be justifiably placed in the category of the Vedas in respect of its spiritual vision of cosmic appeal. At the same time, it becomes a
unique example of the future of poetic creation in the sense that future poetry will seek to reveal the universal truth which lies behind the apparent differences of artificial barriers of Cast or Countries.

Now there is a question as to why Sri Aurobindo made his epic 35 times as long as the story being told in the *Mahabharata*. The reason why Sri Aurobindo needs such a vast canvas is that he has gone far beyond the moral, ethical or religious considerations. He has transformed the simple legend into a symbol of cosmic significance. Before coming to the composition of *Savitri*, Sri Aurobindo has become a Siddha - the one who has realized the power of God. He has become a fully evolved soul. He had sighted the mind, that is the Truth-Consciousness. According to his spiritual vision, man is to be transformed because he will no longer be acting in ignorance but in knowledge and therefore in light, in love, in harmony and in Ananda (bliss). Sri Aurobindo sees the possibilities of the Supermind purifying and divinising the whole content of man, his material, vital and mental being. And his mental beings are Satyavan and Savitri. He has clarified before the composition of this epic that the legend of Savitri is one of the many symbolic myths of the Vedic cycle. Satyavan is the soul carrying the divine truth of being within itself, but descended into the grip of death and ignorance. Savitri is the Divine Word, daughter of the Sun, goddess of the Supreme Truth
who comes down and is born to save. Aswapathy is the Lord of Tapasya, the concentrated energy of spiritual endeavour that helps us to rise from the mortal to the immortal planes.

It is obvious to Sri Aurobindo that the next stage in human evolution was to be reached not necessarily by mutation, or miracle. It is a process of evolution. Thus man would participate in the evolutionary process that is going on here and now. This almost superhuman effort to usher in the era of superman on earth, primarily took the form of an intensely searching probe into the higher regions and the upper reaches of consciousness. This is a part of the attempt to bring the power of the Supermind to bear on the matter, life and mind of humanity. It is an intense search for a more complete experience which would help, synthesize, unite and harmonize the dyad of the reality, namely Spirit and Matter, Purusha and Prakriti, Being and Becoming through the agency of Supermind. His great epic Savitri leads one to understand the highest norms of spirituality.

Sri Aurobindo in his spiritual explorations finds that any complicated issue of life can be solved through tracing the iconic and inner motifs of Sadhana. There is a distinction between atom and atma. The atom denotes the one side of life while the atomic power is manifold in its nature. The humanity enlarge has to aspire not the engrossment of the matter but the height of spiritual norms through yogic performance. To Sri Aurobindo, human life is
an evolutionary process - a process which transforms man gradually from lower nature to higher consciousness. Therefore, man must evolve beyond mind and manifest a consciousness and power of our existence, a Supermental or truthfulness; and he should be competent to attain the perfection of the spirit. Sri Aurobindo talks of the Supreme Brahman or the position of Ananda in the highest form of poetry. The Sahrdaya relishes the poetry from the detached angle and with the necessary aesthetic or psychic distance. And these ideas fall under the concept of objectivization/universalization of human ideas. This is the ideology that Sri Aurobindo makes an application to his poetic creation.

The next core chapter of the work is "His Poetic Craft" which undoubtedly brings into being the spiritual norms, the use of myths and symbols, Vedic tradition and allusions and the Yogic experience of the poet. Since Sri Aurobindo stresses repeatedly the Spiritual, Yogic and the Intellectual soul-vision in his poetry, there appears to modern critic the sense of repetition in his poetry. The researcher quotes the letters and other texts of Sri Aurobindo in order to justify his poetic range and the aspects of his poetic craft. Sri Aurobindo himself negates the point that the art of poetry is not meant only for low mimetic objects of life. For justifying the process of repetition he strongly condemns the low memetic zone of the poetical world:
But all Poetry is not of this kind; its rule does not apply to poets like Homer or Valmiki or other early writers. The Veda might almost be described as a mass of repetitions, so might the work of Vaishnava poets and the poetic literature of devotion generally in India. Arnold has noted this distinction when speaking of Homer; he mentioned especially that there is nothing objectionable in the close repetition of the same word in the Homeric way of writing. In many things, Homer seems to make a point of repeating himself.⁸

This then becomes crystal clear that the repetition in the poetic craft of Sri Aurobindo denotes the higher form of art and that the repeated word communicates the meaning suggestively according to its contextual usage.

The contribution of Sri Aurobindo is certainly unique and based on the principles of art. He has written the mantric poetry what one finds in the composition of the Rama Charit Manas by Goswami Tulsidasa. The Mantric poetry brings into being the three highest forms of the poetic speech; the intensity of the rhythmic movement; the highest intensity of the verbal form and the substance of thought. The concept of style in Sri Aurobindo becomes a "living organism", and it grows organically. Sri Aurobindo as a poet sees beyond the low-mimetic zone of the
matter and reveals the spiritual paradigm of life.

The overall assessment of the analysis of the core chapters of this thesis reveals the fact that Sri Aurobindo reveals the quintessential essence of his mystic and spiritual experiences. His Yogic experience made him convert his poetic vision into the range of mantras. He has advocated that the mantric poetry fulfils the higher norms of life. His poetry throbs with an upsurge of the whole consciousness, and therefore the comprehensiveness of his poetry can be had only through the proper understanding of his poetic vision. However, Sri Aurobindo leaves an indelible impression to the responsive reader that there should be a proper balance between our thought and action and this process will make our life heavenly.
REFERENCES


