Chapter VI

Vasavadutta

Chronologically, Vasavadutta may be considered the fifth and the last of the complete plays of Sri Aurobindo. It was written in 1915 when he had already completed The Viziers of Bassora, Perseus the Deliverer, Rodogune and Eric. It belongs to the Pondicherry period of Sri Aurobindo's creative activity. The period for him was the period of yogic realisation and exposition of philosophy through the Arya. In the 1957 edition of Vasavadutta (the first one in book-form after it had been published serially the same year in Sri Aurobindo Mandir Annual) the Publisher's Note says:

Vasavadutta exists in several versions, not all of them complete. What seems to be the last complete version has this note at the end... 'Revised and recopied between April 9th and April 17th, 1916'. An earlier version has similar entry at the end: 'Copied November 2, 1915—written between 18th and 30th October 1915. Completed 30th October. Revised in April 1916. Pondicherry.'

The play thus was completed in a remarkably short period of thirteen days. What is to be noted here is that Sri Aurobindo wrote the play in such a short time when he was already writing copiously for the philosophical monthly Arya. Prof. Iyengar says:

1. The Arya was first published on Aug. 15, 1914. It ceased publication in 1921 after uninterrupted appearance of about half a dozen years. Most of the important works of Sri Aurobindo, The Life Divine, The Synthesis of Yoga, Essays on the Gita, The Isha Upanishad, were serialised in this philosophical monthly.
Between 1914 and 1920, in one vast sweep, non-stop, Sri Aurobindo wrote almost the whole of his works, nearly five thousand pages, and most strangely not one book after another, but four, five, even six books serialised at a time.  

It was possible due to the Yoga-force. He says:  

I have made no endeavour in writing. I have simply left the higher Power to work and when it did not work, I made no efforts at all... It was in the old intellectual days that I sometimes tried to force things and not after I started the development of poetry and prose by Yoga.  

He claims to have written all that he has "written since 1909 in that way." Earlier Sri Aurobindo had practised pranayam for five years beginning from 1904, devoting four or five hours a day. The result among other things was "a great outflow of poetic creation." To a disciple of Sri Aurobindo this claim appeared to be making just a little too much of Yogic Force and though he did not doubt the potency of Yogic Force as regarding spiritual matters, he found it difficult to believe in its effectiveness for artistic and intellectual things. To him Sri Aurobindo gives a reply in which he challenges the "assertion that the Force is more easily potent to produce spiritual results."

3. Ibid., pp. 231-32.  
4. Ibid., p. 78.  
5. Ibid., p. 223.
than mental (literary) results. "

To Sri Aurobindo it seems the other way round. He says:

"In my own case the first time I started Yoga, pranayam, etc., I laboured five hours a day for a long time and concentrated and struggled for five years without any least spiritual results... but poetry came like a river and prose like a flood.""2

It was therefore natural that a play like Vasavadutta could be created in an almost record time of less than a fortnight.

As is usual with him, Sri Aurobindo borrows the fable of this play also readymade, this time from a page of epic India, i.e. the legend of Udayana and Vasavadutta, which is quite popular in Indian literature. References to the legend are found in Buddhist and Jain works as also in works such as Kautilya's Arthashastra, Patanjali's Mahabhasya, etc.3 The story of King Udayana Vatsaraja, 'the Prince Arthur of Indian literature', has served as the source material for much literature — Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain. There are also a number of classical Sanskrit dramas based on the legend. They include Malavicanimitra of Kalidasa; Ratnavali and Priyadarsika of Sri Harsha; Pratijnayauandharayana and Swapnavasavadutta of Bhasa; Tapas Vatsaraja of Ananga Harsha

2. Idem.
or Mayuraja; Unmadavasavadutta of Shaktibhadra, and Vinavasavadutta and Vatsarajacharita (both of uncertain authorship).

Among the Sanskrit works that deal with the legend (or rather the history of the Udayana family) in detail are the various abridgements of Brahatkatha of Gunadhyya, including Kathasaritsagara of Somadeva. It is from the Kathasaritsagara that Sri Aurobindo borrowed the Udayan-Vasavadutta story for his play. In his note in the first edition of the play in 1957, we have his own admission to this effect: "The fable is taken from Somadeva's Kathasaritsagara (the Ocean of the Rivers of Many Tales) and was always a favourite subject of Indian romance and drama..." Like the epics (the Ramayana and the Mahabharata), the Kathasaritsagara, too, has been quite popular with literary men in need of a readymade story for their different kinds of literary creations.

It is not clear, however, whether the writer of Vasavadutta was familiar with many classical Sanskrit dramas enshrining the legend. But his acquaintance with the plays of Bhasa at least is evidenced by his comments on the dramatist in the articles titled "A Defence of Indian Culture", published in the Arya.  


Nothing with certainty can be said about the historical background of the legend of Udayana and Vasavadutta. The different descendants of Brhatkatha narrate the story differently. Some scholars even deny that there is any historical basis to affirm Udayan's love for Vasavadutta. Dr. Pusalker, however, believes that the Buddhist and the Jain accounts, in their original oral forms, may have conformed to the actual historical incidents. But the written records contain the legend in the most perverted versions.

The legend as embodied in the Udayan dramas of Bhasa may be considered closer to the historical events. According to Pusalker, Bhasa "is not far removed from the central figures in the Udayana legend, and we may safely conclude that he bases his dramas on the oral accounts." However, there is nothing to suggest that Sri Aurobindo knew about Bhasa's use of the floating mass of traditions handed down orally in the latter's time. But, while Sri Aurobindo borrowed the story from the Kathasaritsagara, he made such changes in it as bring it closer to the version of the legend as given in the plays of Bhasa. This is clear when Bhasa's Pratijna-yaugandharayana and Sri Aurobindo's Vasavadutta are compared.

In Vasavadutta, as usual, Sri Aurobindo handles great

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3. Ibid., p. 272.
material — the Udayan-Vasavadutta legend. He is faithful to his "literary creed" and imparts novelty to the old theme through his "creative labour". Hinting at some of the changes necessitated in the process of the legend's transformation by his creative genius, Sri Aurobindo in his Note to Vasavadutta says: "... some of the circumstances, a great many of the incidents and a few of the names have been altered or omitted and others introduced in their place."

There is an unmistakable purpose in making so many changes in the tale, which together with other stories in the Kathasaritsagara, causes the book to be described (not wholly without justification) as samuddipitkandarpa — inspired by sex motive. Vasavadutta is richer in meaning than most other versions of the legend. It is not a lambha — the story of acquisition of a bride — but a rich romantic presentation of true love between two royal lovers.

There are numerous minor changes regarding names of characters, places, etc. But, apart from the alteration or omission of some names and their replacement with others, there are other deviations in the plays more important and meaningful. The ruse of artificial elephant is used by Mahasegn in the tale to abduct Udayan. In the play, bringing Udayan captive to Avunthie is left by Mahasegn to the

1. Sri Aurobindo, Vasavadutta, Author's Note.
ingenuity and scheming capacity of prince Gopalaca, who, banished from Avunthie, gets an easy shelter in Vuthsa Udayan's open arms. Vuthsa is so unsuspecting that no effort on the part of Gopalaca is required to ensnare him. So absolute seems his trust in the Avunthian that he deliberately escapes his guards in the forest, unburdens himself of his sword and, giving himself wholly in Gopalaca's hands, he saunters, out of his own free will, to the verge of the Avunthian forests, eager as it were to visit Avunthie. Seizing the opportunity Gopalaca declares Udayan his captive:

I seize upon thee, thou art mine,  
My captive and my prize.1

Vuthsa's yearning has ever been to move freely in the forest like a common man. If this yearning of the King, his faith in Gopalaca and the latter's ingenuity are kept in view, Vuthsa's abduction will seem more natural than does his capture through the strategem of the fake elephant.

The ruse of fake elephant is used also in Bhasa's play, but after making in it a series of changes. The changes notwithstanding, the episode of artificial elephant has been made a basis for attack on Bhasa's Pratijnayaugandhara-yam. The play is criticised severely, though not by name, by


In this chapter the play referred to in Collected Plays, B.C.L. Vol.6, is Vasavadutta unless otherwise mentioned.
Bhamaha. He says that Udayan could never have been deceived by an artificial elephant, and if deceived, his life could not have been spared by the enemy forces.

Bhasa, anticipating the criticism as it were, has tried to answer the question how one, so well-versed in elephant lore as Udayan was, could be deceived by the artificial elephant. In the play he shows that the ruse worked because the counterfeit of a divine elephant was at a distance of hundred bows. Its blue colour was lost in the shadows of Sal trees of the same hue, and only the tusks gleamed in the sunlight and stuck out as if they had no body attached to them. The criticism, however, is there despite Bhasa's effort thus to make the whole episode look natural and reasonable.

Sri Aurobindo in his play, substitutes the mechanical elephant with the cavern of the Elephant—a cavern that looks like an elephant from a distance. The captain of Avunthian Army thus informs Gopulaka about the net having been spread fully to capture Udayana:

On our left they (chariots) wait
Screened by the secret tunnel which the Boar
Tusked through the hill to Avunthie. Torches ready
And men in arms stand in cavern ranked
They call the cavern of Elephant
By giants carved.1

The change is intended to obviate the charge of lack of plausibility to which the original tale or the plays based

on it are open due to the use of the fake elephant strategem.

Equally important are the changes made in the *episode* of Vuthsa's escape with Vasavadutta from Ujjayinie. In the play there is nothing like Yougundharayan contacting Udayan unseen by power of magic and advising him to avenge his captivity by causing the elopement of the princess of Avunthie. Unlike in the tale, only Vasuntha goes in the play to Ujjayinie in the disguise of an old hunch-backed man and that too only to appraise the king of threatened revolt by Cowsambians if their king is not soon restored to them. Vasuntha says that, to prevent the people from declaring war on Ujjayinie in order to claim their king, Vuthsa must swiftly do whatever he can to break free from Mahasegn's captivity. Yougundharayan waits on Avunthian mountains ready to provide aid to his king in case it is needed.

In the tale Yougundharayan decides to get his king released through the use of his skill and with the help of Vasantaka. It is he who makes the entire plan of escape and confides it into the king who in his turn tells it to Vasavadutta. But this is not so in the play. The reason is that the playwright is interested in projecting a heroic image of Vuthsa. Vuthsa is capable of rescuing himself and is not a mere parasite on his minister. That is why, even when he has been taken to Avunthie, he gets the following
message communicated to Yougundharayan:

Whatever seeks me from Fate, man or god, Leave all between me and the strength that seeks.

... ... ... ... ... ... ... ...

Vuthsa will rescue Vuthsa.

And he shows that he can really do it. The whole scheme of elopement with Vasavadutta is his own as is its execution. Manjoolica, Vicurna and others, who help his escape with Vasavadutta, are his willing comrades, conquered through love or the charm of his personality. Sri Aurobindo shows in the play almost the entire house of Mahaseghn, revolting against him, his own wife and children, his own blood, conspiring against him. This renders the escape of Vuthsa with Vasavadutta easier and makes it seem more natural.

When Vuthsa meets Yougundharayan in the forest with Vasavadutta, he can rightly claim the secrecy of the whole plan and the credit of his successful venture. He says to his minister:

My father, all things to their hour are true And I bring back my venture. Am I pardoned Its secrecy?

Yougundharayan, overwhelmed with his king's boldness and bravery, replies:

3. Ibid., p. 324.
My pupil and son no more,
But hero and monarch! Thou hast set thy foot
Upon Avunthia's head.1

Sri Aurobindo perhaps keeps his modern audience in view when he decides to do away with the "myth and magic" part of the tale. Yougundharayan is left neither with the magic powers to change at will his or other's form, nor with the power of invisibility. In the play he does not teach Udayan any charms to break chains or to win the hearts of Vasavadutt or her friends. The magic powers of Yougundharayan, according to the tale, are attained through the blessings of a Brahmarakshasa (a demon of Brahmanical class) in the cremation ground of Ujjayinie. Sri Aurobindo's play makes no mention of any such things. In the play there is no talk of the legendary lute given to Udayan in his childhood by Vasuki, the snake. That Vasavadutta was born as a result of the blessings of Vasava (Indra), after whom she is named Vasavadutta (given by Indra), is not mentioned in the play either.

The elephant, Bhadravati, used for escape from Ujjayinie, reveals while dying that she was a Vidyadhari, named Mayavati, born as an elephant due to a curse, and that Vasavadutta too is no human being but was born as such due to a similar reason. Sri Aurobindo allows these things

1. Sri Aurobindo, Collected Plays, B.C.L. Vol. 6, 324.
no place in his play.

The changes referred to above do not form an exhaustive list of all alterations, omissions, replacements, etc., in the Udayana-Vasavadutta legend of the Kathasaritsagara. They are evidently large in number. Then, as a result of these, Vasavadutta is closer to Bhasa's Pratijnayaugandharayan than to the tale. On the basis of the many points of similarity between the plays of Bhasa and Sri Aurobindo, one can justifiably conclude that Sri Aurobindo was considerably influenced by the Sanskrit dramatist in his treatment of the original tale in Vasavadutta. Sri Aurobindo, like Bhasa, does not mention the exchange of taunting messages between the rival kings of Avunthie and Cowsambie regarding Vasavadutta's tuition in the lute by Udayan. Neither Bhasa nor Sri Aurobindo refers to the prediction by the soothsayer, at the time Vuthsa leaves for the Vindhya forests, that the journey is fraught with captivity and gain of a lady's hand. Neither of the two endows Yougundharayan with magical powers, as is done in the tale. Unlike in the tale, the Avunthian king does not, in either of the plays, accord princely honour to Udayan in Ujjayinie when he is brought a captive there. Neither in Bhasa's play nor in Sri Aurobindo's do the people of Ujjayinie protest against Udayan's capture fearing Mahasegn's designs to kill him.

The first encounter between the captive Udayan and Mahasegn is remarkable for a clash of arrogance and will
as shown by the conversation between Mahasegn and Udayan. Mahasegn exults in Udayan's capture and tells his queen:

I conquer still though not with glorious arms.
He's seized, the young victorious Vuthsa's mine.
A prisoner in my hands.1

Ungarica taunts:

Thou holdest the sun
Under thy armpit as the tailed god did.
What will thou do with it?2

Mahasegn replies:

Make it my moon
And shine by him upon the eastern night.3

It is this ambition that Udayan shatters to pieces at the first meeting by telling Mahasegn in so many words that he is "in error" if he thinks so. Enraged Mahasegn says:

Humble thy bearing proud!
... ... ... ...
Thou art here my captive only and my slave.4

So, it is with such words of unveiled contempt that Mahasegn receives the captive Udayan to his city in Sri Aurobindo.

In Bhasa's play, Udayan sends Yaugandharayan a personal message through Hamsaka, the brief message being, "Go and see

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1. Sri Aurobindo, Collected Plays, B.C.L. Vol. 6, 249.
2. Idem.
3. Idem.
4. Ibid., p. 258.
Yaugandharayan". The message leads to the vow Yaugandharayan takes to rescue his king at any cost. In Sri Aurobindo's play, likewise, Vuthsa sends a message for Yougundharayan. In the tale no such message is sent. However, the message in Sri Aurobindo's play is neither so terse as is Udayan's message through Hamsaka in Bhasa's play, nor is its interpretation left to the sagacity and far-sightedness of the minister. Besides, it clearly prohibits any effort, including war, on the part of the minister or others concerned to help Vuthsa. Then, it is not sent after Vuthsa has been captivated. The message here presents Vuthsa in a much better light than does the message in Bhasa's play. It reveals Vuthsa's independent will and heroic quality of boldness. It shows that, though Udayan has treated Yougundharaya as his "mind's wise father"\(^1\), the former can now depend on his ownself and can "fashion sovereignly and well"\(^2\) things he used to leave for the minister.

So, Sri Aurobindo seems to have imitated Bhasa in certain matters, but in view of his purpose in the play, he introduces necessary changes even where he imitates the Sanskrit dramatist.

In Sri Aurobindo, Udayan himself devises a strategy to secure his release from captivity and to escape from

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2. Idem.
Ujjayinie with Vasavadutta. Nothing is done at the instance of Youagandharayan. But this is not so in the tale where the minister explicitly and personally advises his king to elope with Vasavadutta. Udayan in Vasavadutta is to be given the entire credit for his release. In this the play makes a clear departure from the tale. But here again it is closer to Bhasa's play where the dramatist plays down the minister and emphasises the key-role of Udayana in securing his release. The similarity, however, is limited to the fact that elopement is not suggested by Youagundharayan in either play. In the case of Bhasa's play, the plan of escape is prepared jointly by Udayan's ministers — Vasantaka, Youagandharayan and Rumanvan — and communicated through Vasantaka to Udayana, who, in collaboration with his ministers, etc., executes the plan. So, he can hardly claim the whole credit for his release and escape with Vasavadutta as Udayan can do in Sri Aurobindo's Vasavadutta. Obviously, there is greater stress laid on Udayana's prime role in the event in Sri Aurobindo than in Bhasa.

To conclude, in view of the similarities between the plays of the two dramatists, Bhasa's influence on Sri Aurobindo is undeniable. However, a true creator that Sri Aurobindo is, he handles whatever material he borrows in a way that gives ample evidence of his genius, originality and creativity. Bhasa improves the folklore on which he is said to have based his play. Sri Aurobindo,
on his part, makes many changes in the Kathasaritsagara version of the story and thus moves closer to Bhasa. But, with the touch of Sri Aurobindo's genius and creativity, even Bhasa's version of the legend is transmuted into a creation still more modern. In other words, if Bhasa's play is an improvement on the folklore, Sri Aurobindo's play is an improvement on the play of Bhasa.

Sri Aurobindo's Vasavadutta has for its main theme celebration of heart's wisdom and power. In the play the dramatist attempts to clinch the issue of superiority between the heart and the mind, the emotion and the reason, by presenting the story of love of Vasavadutta and Udayan in a way that shows the heart to be wiser and stronger than the mind.1

One of the champions of the mind in the play is Yougundharayan, Vuthsa Udayan's minister, about whom Alurca says:

This man
Is like some high rock that was suddenly
Transformed into a thinking creature.2

1. Sri Aurobindo speaks of a superior guide within us than the intellect in one of his poems entitled 'In the Moonlight'.

   The intellect is not all; a guide within
   Awaits our question. He it was informed
   The reason, He surpasses; and unformed
   Presages of His mightiness begin...

   Sri Aurobindo, Collected Poems, B.C.L. Vol. 5 (Pondicherry

2. Sri Aurobindo, Collected Plays, B.C.L. Vol. 6, 226.
He is a wise deep-seeing statesman capable of handling excellently well all the affairs of the state. Therefore, Vuthsa entrusts to him all the state's cares:

Are they not for thee,
My mind's wise father? Chide me not. See now,
It is thy fault for being great and wise.
What thou canst fashion sovereignly and well,
Why should I do much worse? 1

As for Vuthsa, he is an admirer of nature, a seeker of beauty, an avid lover of music, a poet at heart, to whom "each petal is a thought." 2 He abhors statecraft and schemings and yearns for delight:

My will is for delight. They are not beautiful,
This State, these schemings. 3

He is a champion of the heart and believes in doing what the heart desires. When he showers love on Gopalaca, his friend Alurca has a reason to complain:

To lavish upon all men, love and trust
Shows the heart's royalty, not the brain's craft. 4

But who cares for "the brain's craft?" At last Vuthsa does not. Right at the moment, when Gopalaca comes to Cowsambie,

2. Idem.
3. Ibid., p. 218.
4. Ibid., p. 232.
Vuthsa sees in him a noble "guest, comrade, friend/Perhaps much more." This is even before Vuthsa knew anything about the guest's identity. When revealing his identity the guest says:

I am Gopalaca, Avunthie's son,  
Once thy most dangerous enemy held on earth.  

Vuthsa replies:

And therefore welcome more to Vuthsa's heart. 

It is "heart's royalty", obviously, and not an action reason will approve. Reason had already warned Vuthsa through Yougandharayan against such behaviour:

See not a son of heaven in every worm. 
Look round and thou wilt see a world on guard. 
All life here armoured walks, shut in. Thou too keep, Vuthsa, a defence before thy heart. 

But Vuthsa does not heed such advice of the brain. Gopalaca has allegedly been banished from Avunthie by his own father and he now seek refuge in Cowsambie:

Vuthsa Udayan, king. 
Grant me some hut, some cave upon thy soil, 
Some meanest refuge for my wandering head. 
But if thy heart can dwell with fear, as do 
The natures of this age, or feed the snake 
Suspicion, over gloomier borders send 
My broken life. 

2. Ibid., p. 221. 
3. Idem. 
4. Ibid., p. 220. 
5. Ibid., p. 222.
Before Vuthsa can speak Yougundharayan warns him once again:

Vuthsa, beware. His words
Strive to conceal their naked cunning.  

Vuthsa disregards the advice of a suspecting mind and says:

Prince,
What thou demand'st and more than thou demand'st
Is without question thine.  

He would be as generous to Gopalaca, he says, even if

Gopalaca were intended a secret arrow against him (Vuthsa):

If he shoot arrows and thou art that shaft,
I'll welcome thee into my throbbing breast.
What thou hast asked, I sue to thee to take.
Thou seek'st a refuge, thou shalt find a home;
Thou fleest a father, here a brother waits
To clasp thee in his arms.  

Naturally, Yougundharayan finds his king "too frank, too
noble" and Gopalaca finds him "the noblest soul on all the
earth."  

The clash of the heart and the mind has obviously started
as the king does not heed the advice of his minister. Thus,
the criss-crossing of the heart and the mind is introduced
in the play through the clash between its two most important
characters—Vuthsa and Yougundharayan. Vuthsa seems to

1. Sri Aurobindo, Collected Plays, B.C.L. Vol.6, 222.
2. Ibid., p. 223.
3. Idem.
4. Idem.
5. Ibid., p. 224.
accept heart as the sole guide of all his actions whereas his minister considers reason's sanction necessary before an action can be committed. The two thus hold exactly opposite positions as advocates of the heart and the mind respectively. However, they hold each other in high esteem. If Yougundharayan is treated by Vuthsa as his father, Vuthsa is treated by the minister as his son. When Yougundharayan does not consent to the king's act of granting refuge to Gopalaca, the son of Cowsambie's direct enemy, Vuthsa defends the act stoutly yet politely, and in a language that speaks of his great love and regard for his minister:

Frown not, my father. I obey my heart
Which leaped up in me when I saw his face.
Be sure my heart is wise. 1

Turning towards Gopalaca he continues:

Gopalaca,
The sentinel love in man ever imagines
Strange perils for its object. So my minister
Expects from thee some harm. 2

Vuthsa, no doubt, defends his action, but he is painstakingly unobtrusive in the manner of his defence. Gopalaca assures Vuthsa of his love in order to remove fears in the minister's mind. Still Yougundharayan's reason sees "a falsehood in the Avunthian's eyes." 3

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1. Sri Aurobindo, Collected Plays, B.C.L. Vol.6, 224.
2. Idem.
3. Ibid., p. 225.
As a votary of intellect he seems to have little faith in nobility, which, according to him, leads to defeat. Therefore, to the nobility of Vuthsa's soul, evinced by his unsuspecting love for Gopalaca, this champion of reason reacts thus:

O, such nobility in godlike times
Was wisdom, but not to our fall belongs.
Sweet virtue now is mother of defeat
And baser, fiercer souls inherit earth.1

Vasuntha, Vuthsa's young companion, gives a true description of Yougundharayan when he says:

He is the wariest of all ministers
And would suspect two pigeons on a roof
Of plots because they coo.2

Similarly, Vuthsa's oblique reference here is to Yougundhara when he says to Alurca:

Then rejoice with me
That I have found my brother, joy in my joy,
Love with my love, think with my thoughts; the rest
Leave to much older wiser men whose schemings
Have made God's world an office and a mart.
We who are young, let us indulge our hearts.3

Vuthsa's friends — Alurca and Vasuntha — too seem to believe in acting according to the dictates of mind rather than be guided by the heart. They have reservations about his rather too generous attitude towards Gopalaca whom they

2. Ibid., p. 228.
3. Ibid., p. 232.
find hard, stern, reserved and unresponsive even to the overwhelming love of Vuthsa. Vuthsa, however, tells them:

Love itself is sweet enough
Though unreturned; and there are silent hearts.\footnote{Sri Aurobindo, \textit{Collected Plays}, B.C.L. Vol. 6, 232.}

This is the language of heart which does not appeal much to the mind of the minister or of the two friends of Vuthsa.

The king, however continues to show absolute faith in the Avunthian and with him he saunters towards the Vindhya ranges. Vasuntha warns him against walking far away from his safe capital with Gopalaca, but in vain. To Vasuntha's fear that if Vuthsa goes to Avunthie, his return from there may not be as easy as going there, Vuthsa's answer is flat:

Who has talked of easy things?
With difficulty then I will return.\footnote{Ibid., p. 238.}

Then he gives Vasuntha a message for his minister:

But tell Yougundharayan
And all who harbour blind uneasy thoughts,
"Whatever seeks me from Fate, man or god,
Leave all between me and the strength that seeks.
War shall not sound without thy prince's leave.
Vuthsa will rescue Vuthsa."\footnote{Ibid., p. 239.}

Vuthsa, who has already escaped his guards deliberately, now disburdens himself of his sword and, making a gesture
of total trust in Gopalaca, he lies on the latter's lap saying:

Let me rest awhile
My head upon thy lap, Gopalaca,
Before we plunge into this emerald world. ¹

Gopalaca, another champion of reason and cunning, has spread his snare well in the forest-glude. He finds Vuthsa's abduction easy enough due to the absolute trust he shows in him. The abduction presently takes place and Vuthsa is taken captive to the Avunthian king.

Vuthsa's abduction might be regarded as a set back to heart: intellectual wisdom might seem here to have an edge over heart's wisdom. But the dramatist intends to force much different conclusions through the action of Vasavadutta, for, ultimately, it is the king who is proved right and not the minister. When Yougundharayan learns of Vuthsa's abduction, he orders to impetuously pursue and seize the abductors of his king. But it is already too late. Besides, he has been prohibited from effecting Vuthsa's rescue by means of war. So helplessly does he tell Roomunwath:

See how the lion's cub breaks out, Roomunwath,
Whom we so guarded in our close control,
To measure with the large and dangerous world
The bounding rapture of his youth and force.

¹ Sri Aurobindo, Collected Plays, B.C.L. Vol. 6, 239.
He throws himself into his foeman's lair
Alone and scorning every aid. I guess
His purpose, but it's rash, it's rash. What if
He failed? This boy and iron Mahasegn!
And yet we must obey.  

In Avunthie, however, Vuthsa has many friends to help
him. There is Manjoolica, brought as "a disdainful gift to
Vasavadutta." Their fates being one, Vuthsa and the captive
princess of Sourashtra are natural allies. Ungarica, the
Avunthian queen, helps Vuthsa. So does her younger son,
Vicurna. Vasavadutta is there too to help the captive
prince for the fire of love has been set ablaze in her heart
by Vuthsa's self-surrendering nature and the divine charms
of his personality. She makes complete surrender to Vuthsa,
her god of love. Thus Mahasegn's calculations to make Vuthsa
his vassal through Vasavadutta, "the golden instrument", are
upset. Yougundharayan's fears too prove false. Vuthsa
reaches back Cowsambie safe, with Vasavadutta as his prize
for his enterprise.

The theme of the play stands out in this background.
What is victorious at last is the king's unsuspecting heart
and not the suspicious minds of Yougundharayan; not the
cold calculation, policy and statecraft, but "the promptings
of the heart, the imperatives of love." The promptings

1. Sri Aurobindo, Collected Plays, B.C.L. Vol.6, 270.
2. Idem.
3. K.R.S. Iyengar, "The Evolutionary Dialectic in Sri
   Aurobindo's Dramas", Indian Philosophical Annual,
of heart are superior to any other wisdom because of their origin in the Divine, for heart in fact is the representative of the Divine in man. According to Sri Aurobindo, heart is the seat of the Guide within us. "He it was informed/The reason; He surpasses; and unformed/Presages of His mightiness begin."¹ As such intellectual wisdom can be no match to the intuitive wisdom heart provides. Vuthsa, after his victory, bows to the minister in utmost humility and begs his pardon for not taking him into confidence and planning things all by himself:

My father, all things to their hour are true
And I bring back my venture. Am I pardoned
Its secrecy?²

Yougundharayan on his part is overwhelmed with his king's boldness and enterprise. He accepts his mind's defeat by Vuthsa's heart with remarkable grace and compliments the king warmly:

My pupil and son no more,
But hero and monarch! Thou hast set thy foot
Upon Avunthie's head.³

Such projection of heart in its triumphant glory, to bring the theme of the play into sharp focus is witnessed in the play when Mahasegn, the king of Avunthie, clashes with

2. Sri Aurobindo, Collected Plays, B.C.L. Vol. 6, 324.
3. Idem.
Ungarica, his queen. Both of them favour the marriage of Vasavadutta to Vuthsa, though for different reasons. The mother of Vasavadutta is in favour of the marriage because she thinks that Vuthsa is an ideal match for her daughter:

The first man of the age
Will occupy her heart; the pride and love
That are her faults will both be satisfied.
She will be happy.1

The king's reason for the marriage is expressed when he says to Vasavadutta:

...without thee
I have no hold on Vuthsa. Thou, my child,
Must be the chain to bind him to my throne,
Thou my ambassador to win his mind
And thou my viceroy over his subject will.2

Now that Vuthsa is his captive, Mahasegn sees no difficulty in the marriage, but he wants to "teach" his daughter what she has to do. When Ungarica says that her heart will teach her what to do, Mahasegn reacts:

Oh, the heart, it is a danger,
A madness. Let the thinking mind prevail.3

In his view it is common natures that accept the heart as their guide and not princesses like Vasavadutta having "dignity, pride, wisdom, noble hopes."4 When Ungarica says

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1. Sri Aurobindo, Collected Plays, B.C.L. Vol. 6, 251.
2. Ibid., pp. 252-53.
3. Ibid., p. 251.
4. Idem.
that none of these — dignity, pride, wisdom, etc., will stand before love which "will unseat them all and put them down/Under his flower-soft feet"¹, Mahasegn feels exasperated

Thou hast chosen ever

To oppose my thoughts.²

Then comes Vasavadutta, summoned by the king, Ungarica satirically remarks:

Let royal wisdom teach a woman's brain
To use for statecraft's ends her dearest thoughts.³

Obviously, she is against Mahasegn's plans to use Vasavadutta for statecraft's ends. She would like her to follow the dictates of her own heart rather than do what the "royal wisdom" teaches her. The king, however, tells his daughter rather too frankly what his designs are and what she is expected to do to fulfil them:

My daughter, Vasavadutta, my delight,
Now is thy hour to pay the long dear debt
Thou ow'st thy parents from whom thou wast made.
Hear me; thy brain is quick, will understand.
Vutnsa, Cowsambie's king, my rival, foe,
My fate's high stumbling-block, captive today
Comes to Ayunthie. I mean that he shall be
Thy husband, Vasavadutta, and thy slave,
By thee he must become, who now resists,
My vassal even as other monarchs are.⁴

Vasavadutta is an obedient daughter of her father. She

¹. Sri Aurobindo, Collected Plays, B.C.L. Vol.6, 251.
². Ibid., p. 252.
³. Ibid.
⁴. Ibid.,
assures him:

Father, thy will is mine, even as 'tis fate's.
Thou givest me to whom thou wilt;...

So, Mahasegn treats Vasavadutta now as his "ally" and "a golden instrument," for it is through her that he can have any "hold on Vuthsa." Vasavadutta assures him that she holds her nation's greatness as her dearest good and that she will be guided solely by her duty to the country and to her father. To reinforce her loyalty to him and to reason, as it were, Mahasegn tells Vasavadutta once again:

Thou wilt not put thy own ambitions first,
Nor justify a blind and clamorous heart.

He hopes that Vasavadutta will be guided by her mind, not by the passions of the blood. She on her part considers it her "pride" "to be an engine" of his "great fortunes." As if not satisfied still, Mahasegn asks her pointedly:

Thou wilt not yield then to the heart's desire?

Equally pointed is the reply:

Let him desire, but I will nothing yield.
I am thy daughter; greatest kings should sue
And take my grace as an unhoped-for joy.

2. Idem.
3. Idem.
4. Ibid., p. 253.
5. Idem.
7. Ibid., p. 254.
A "treaty" thus is struck between the king and his daughter. But it is meaningless, says Ungarica. Vasavadutta is still a "babe" and can hardly understand the power of the heart. Ungarica is confident that ultimately it is heart that will prevail. Alone with her daughter she takes it upon herself to unfold to her child, in "another language" (different from the king's) the meaning and mystery of love.

She says:

Thou hast heard the King,
Hear now thy mother. Thou wilt know, my bliss,
The fiercest sweet ordeal that can seize
A woman's heart and body. O my child,
Thou wilt house fire, thou wilt see living gods;
And all thou hast thought and known will melt away
Into a flame and be reborn. What now
I speak, thou dost now understand, but wilt
Before many nights have kept thy sleepless eyes.
My child, the flower blooms for its flowerhood only
And not to make its parent bed more high.
Not for thy sire thy mother brought thee forth,
But thy dear nature's growth and heart's delight
And for a husband and for children born.

... ... ... ... ... ... ...

O Vasavadutta, when thy heart awakes
Thou shalt obey thy sovereign heart, nor yield
Allegiance to the clear-eyed selfish gods.
Do now thy father's will; the god awake
Shall do his own. Yes, tremble and yet fear
Nothing. Thy mother watches over thee, child.

Ungarica has no objection at the moment to Vasavadutta doing her father's will for she is confident that when the god of love awakes in Vasavadutta's heart, he will do his own and ultimately love will prevail.

2. Idem.
Ungarica is right to say that Vasavadutta does not understand at the moment her mother's words. When her mother has left her, Vasavadutta says to herself:

I love her best, but do not understand; My mind can always grasp my father's thoughts. ¹

This is because she is yet to "house fire", yet to feel the pangs of love and hear the cry of heart's desire. She has till now only "a fluttering" in her heart,"a nameless new expectancy."²

In the conflict between the heart and the mind, the emotion and the reason, presented vividly in the play, the king is all for the mind and the queen, for the heart. The battle-ground for the war is Vasavadutta. She is drawn to Vuthsa right at the first encounter with him and feels compelled, in spite of her pride, to admit this much about him:

Although my slave, dear then and prized.³

Her pride takes time to melt away. Vuthsa's self-surrendering nature and his charms do exercise influence, but she resists even though the resistance is found difficult. "The golden marvellous boy"⁴, whom she wanted to use as only a plaything,

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2. Idem.
will charm her, she fears, "with a smile."¹ Vuthsa's words, his voice, his smile, his face, his flower-soft eyes, all have "a witchery" about them, so that it may be difficult for her to hold fast to the mind's purpose, ignoring what the heart desires. She soon realises that she no longer governs her speech or action and is reminded of "the fire" her mother spoke of. Love is already born in her heart. But the resistance of the brain continues. The result is a fierce conflict:

His music is a voice that cries to me,
His songs are chains he hangs around my heart,
I must not hear them often; I forget
That I am Vasavadutta, that he is
My house's foe, and only Vuthsa feel,
Think Vuthsa only, while my captive heart
Beats in world-Vuthsa and on Vuthsa throbs.
This must not be.²

In the course of their continued association, however, Vuthsa engenders in Vasavadutta's heart irresistible love, inexorable passion. The "nucleus of resistance is suddenly shattered, the infinite contained energy released like an avalanche to overwhelm them."³ Manjoolica is right when, in the presence of both Vuthsa and Vasavadutta, she mentions the advent of love in Vasavadutta's heart and says that it has started asserting:

2. Ibid., p. 273.
I know what thy heart asks; too openly
Thou carriest the yearning in thy eyes.
Vuthsa, she loves thee as the half-closed bud
Thrills to the advent of a wonderful dawn
And like a dreamer half-awake perceives,
The faint beginnings of a sunlit world.

While being irresistibly drawn to Vuthsa, Vasavadutta feels
that she is growing "a rebel" to her father's house. Hence
her troubles which Ungarica can diagnose very well. It is
a clash of heart and mind:

It is because thou canst not here control
What thy immortal part with rapture wills
And the mortal longingly desires; for yet
Thy proud heart cannot find the way to yield.

She tells her daughter, "Love's learner" still, that she
will "know the joy of being forced/To what her heart desires.
Soon enough Vasavadutta is forced to know what her heart
desires:

There is a fire within me and a cry,
My longings have all broken in a flood
And I am the tossed spray! O my desire
That criest for the beauty of his limbs
And to feel all his body with thyself
And lose thy soul in his sweet answering soul,
Wilt thou not all this night be silent? ...

... ... ... ... ... ... ... ...
O in his arms! ... ... ...
His arms about me and the world expunged! 5

2. Ibid., p. 280.
3. Idem.
4. Idem.
5. Ibid., p. 290.
The "clamorous heart" makes her eyes sleepless and will not be silent until she is fused together with Vuthsa to make "one large soul/Parted in two dear bodies for more bliss."\(^1\)

The captor has become the captive now, consenting to anything Vuthsa might like to do with her. It is a miracle wrought by love.

Do with me what thou wilt, for I am thine. \(^2\)

The victory of Vuthsa over Vasavadutta is the victory of heart over mind; it is the victory of love over statecraft and policy, of heart's sincere passion over mind's cool calculation. The significance of the victory lies in the fact that it exposes the irrelevance of the "scheming brain" and the unfeeling heart which make "God's world an office and a mart."\(^3\) Vuthsa pours his contempt over the "schemings" of "older and wiser men" and calls upon those who are young to "indulge" the heart where love dwells. Vuthsa's marriage with Vasavadutta symbolises the heart's marriage with the mind, the blending and harmonisation of the two into a perfect unity. Significantly, the integration is attained through love, which is divine and which can act as the best unifier. Because Vasavadutta presents love in this light, it may very well be regarded as a hymn of love. Vasavadutta initially resists the power of love. Due to her pride, she

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hesitates in yielding to the heart's desire. But all her resistance is overcome and the way is paved for complete surrender to the god of love who must always triumph.

"Love", according to Mr. Seetaraman, "is the great disentangler and the true diplomat." In Vasavadutta, Manjoolica, Ungarica, Vicurna, and even Gopalaca — all play into the hands of love and work to help the execution of Vuthsa's plan of escape with his beloved. Vasavadutta surrendering completely, Manjoolica working as Vuthsa's messenger and charioteer, Vicurna's car bearing forth his sister and he himself riding as her guard, Ungarica secretly helping the plan, Yougundharayan sending the messenger to Vuthsa at the ripest moment — all this is effected through love, the greatest manipulator. Mahasegn fails to understand that it is not through cunning but through love that Vasavadutta has been plucked out by Vuthsa from the palace of Avunthie. After Vuthsa is brought a captive to Avunthie, Ungarica tells Mahasegn:

... Vuthsa is too great
For thy greatness, too cunning for thy cunning; he
Will bend not to thy pressure.2


2. Sri Aurobindo, Collected Plays, B.C.L. Vol. 6, 250.
Vuthsa himself says at the time to Gopalaca:

But now I warn you all that I will have
My freedom and will do my own dear will
By fraud or violence greater than your own.1

When he really frees himself and does his own will, Gopalaca says:

We planned a snare,
He by a noble violence answers us.
We sought to bribe him to a vassal's state
Dangling the jewel of our house in front;
He keeps his freedom and enjoys the gem.2

This is not to suggest that Vuthsa has the better of Mahasegn through greater cunning or fraud. In fact, his success is due entirely to love, which creates an atmosphere in which he so easily escapes with Vasavadutta with the help of Mahasegn's own people, including his wife and son.

What Gopalaca tells his father after Vasavadutta has eloped is significant. He wants the king not to feel that his "house is shamed."3 He requests the king to sanction the rapt and let there be love between Vuthsa's house and their own. The king has already heard what Ungarica told him about the escape:

Thinkest thou he seized her,
Her heart consenting not?4

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3. Ibid., p. 314.
4. Ibid., p. 312.
She also challenged the king thus:

Hast thou forgotten thy daughter's heart? Her good,
Her happiness are nothing then to thee?1

Therefore, he understands fully well the situation now:

I see that in their hearts all have conspired
Against my greatness.2

He, however, reconciles with what has happened inevitably and tells Gopalaca himself to make the peace. He also asks him to go to Cowsambie with Vasavadutta's household, all her wealth and gauds, etc., and stay there till she is solemnised as Vuthsa's queen. The king thus gives his final consent to the marriage of two loving hearts and yields at last to the powers of heart.

All this happens not due to tricks or brain's craft. It is effected by love, the alchemist. That is why, the play ends with the singing of love's anthem when all ends well. Vuthsa to Alurca says:

Ride thou, Alurca, near us; let thy harp
Speak of love's anthems and her golden life
To Vasavadutta. Love, the storm is past,
The peril o'er.3

As in his other plays, like Eric, The Viziers of Bassora, The Prince of Edur, etc., in Vasavadutta also Sri Aurobindo presents the theme of love as a great benevolent force, capabl

1. Sri Aurobindo, Collected Plays, B.C.L. Vol. 6, 312.
2. Ibid., p. 315.
3. Ibid., p. 329.
of eliminating evil and dissolving conflict to make for harmony and peace. Whether it is Vasavadutta's vaulting pride or Mahasen's blind political ambition, they not only prove ineffective before the imperatives of love, but are also destroyed. This is because love is a divine force which, according to Sri Aurobindo, works to ennable man by enabling him to rise above his base narrow egoistic self. In this context, the characters of Vuthsa and Vasavadutta promise interesting study. These two characters in the play are specific examples of the growing psychic consciousness in life. They are on their way to becoming what in Sri Aurobindo's terminology is known as homo-psychichus (psychic man).

Vuthsa's life in the play serves as an example of the life of the psychic man. Talking about him to his friend, Alurca, Vasuntha, a close friend of Vuthsa, says thus:

There is a wanton in this royal heart  
Who gives herself to all and all are hers.  
Perhaps that too is wisdom. For, Alurca,  
This world is other than our standards are  
And it obeys a vaster thought than ours,  
Our narrow thoughts! The fathomless desire  
Of some huge spirit is its secret law.  
It keeps its own tremendous forces penned  
And bears us where it wills, not where we would.  
Even his petty world man cannot rule,  
We fear, we blame; life wants her own way,  
A little ashamed, but obstinate still, because  
We check but cannot her. O, Vuthsa's wise!  
Because he seeks each thing in its own way,  
He enjoys.1

This epitomises an important aspect of Sri Aurobindo's world-view. The attitude of Vuthsa to life, based on the cardinal principle of self-abnegation, approximates the life-view Sri Aurobindo seems to consider essential for peace, harmony and true spiritual development. It is his intense love, coupled with complete self-giving, that leads Vuthsa on to what Sri Aurobindo calls psychicisation.

Sri Aurobindo speaks of growth of psychic consciousness, evolution of psychicised Life-Spirit, psychic transformation or psychicisation. These, according to him, mean to remove the veil (by the power of ASPIRATION, LOVE, BHAKTI, SURRENDER "which covers and conceals the SOUL and bring forward the soul or PSYCHIC BEING to govern the mind, life and body and turn and open them all fully to the DIVINE, removing all that is opposed to that turning and opening."¹ He further says: "Psychicisation means the change of the LOWER NATURE bringing right vision into the mind, right impulses and feeling into the vital, right movement and habit into the physical—all turned towards the Divine, all based on love, adoration, bhakti — finally, the vision and sense of the MOTHER everywhere in all as well as in the heart, her FORCE working in the being, faith, consecration, surrender."² Absolute psychicisation in this sense may not have taken

2. Ibid., p. 124.
place in the case of Vuthsa; but he does seem to be evolving towards it. As Sri Aurobindo says: "There is always a part of the MIND, of the VITAL, of the BODY which is or can be influenced by the psychic; they can be called the psychic-mental, the psychic-vital, the psychic-physical. According to the PERSONALITY or the degree of evolution of each person, the part can be small or large, weak or strong, covered up and inactive or prominent and in action." Vuthsa, with his heart brimful with love and his self-surrendering nature, is open to the influence of the psychic to a great extent. He is essentially noble, loving, kind and bold and possesses all cultural accomplishments. He has an inner-self matching in beauty with his external personality. All these qualities of his inner and outer being grow in intensity as the play moves on. By the time it reaches the end, Vuthsa's mind, heart, senses and will are wholly integrated and he is close to being a psychicised man.

The advent of love in Vasavadutta's heart and its gradual intensification till she knows nothing but love and her heart's desires, is in fact a near complete transformation of the princess who is initially too proud and prone to rule, and who understands her father's language of mind better than her mother's language of heart. When Ungarica goes away

after trying to explain to her the meaning and mystery of love, Vasavadutta says:

I love her best, but do not understand:  
My mind can always grasp my father's thoughts. 1

This is because she is still under the spell of her father's lessons in statecraft and has yet to taste the fruit of love. However, when the witchery of Vuthsa's personal charms and his bewitching self-giving manners work, she begins to forget statesmanship and her father's will, which she held dearest till now:

I govern no longer what I speak and do.  
Is this the fire my mother spoke of? Oh,  
It is sweet, it is sweet. 2

However, pride demurs when love raises its head in Vasavadutta's heart, and she says to herself:

But I will not be mastered  
By and equal creature. Let him serve  
Obediently and I will load his lovely head  
With costliest favours. He's my own, my own,  
My slave, my toy to play with as I choose,  
And shall not dare to play with me. 3

Even when she says this, she has somewhere in her heart the feeling that love is asserting itself and that Vuthsa's charms are irresistible. So she decides to execute her father's will before love sweeps her off her feet:

1. Sri Aurobindo, Collected Plays, B.C.L. Vol. 6, 255.  
2. Ibid., p. 273.  
3. Idem.
I think he dares;
I do not know, I think he would presume.
He's gentle, brilliant, bold and beautiful.

... ... ... ... ... ...
O, I have forgotten almost my father's will,
Yet it was mine. Before I lose it quite,
I will compel a promise from the boy.
Will it be hard when he is all my own?

This is how reason behaves. Vuthsa being her slave, it should not be difficult for her to strike a compromise between love and pride, between her heart's desire and her father's will. So she tries to elicit from Vuthsa a promise which will bind him to the throne of Avunthie as her father's vassal. But Vuthsa, though speaking in deep love's self-surrendering way, considers it a disloyalty in him to serve any sovereign other than Vasavadutta, and refuses to consent to his kingdom being annexed as a dominion to the Avunthian empire. When Vasavadutta reminds him of his vow to be ruled by her, Vuthsa says:

To obey thee in all things
Throned in Cowasambie, not as here I must,
Thy father's captive, there I shall be thine.

Vasavadutta now heads fast towards being engulfed completely by the fire of love. From desiring to govern Vuthsa as his queen to yearning for perfect fusion of her entire being into that of her lover is not a long journey for Vasavadutta. Her proud heart ultimately yields and she learns that true

2. Ibid., p. 277.
joy lies in surrender to the heart's desire. She does not remember anything now, not even his father's will, but only Vuthsa:

Have I a father or a house? O none,
O none, O none exists but only he.  

This is a miracle, so easily wrought by love. Vuthsa's love for Vasavadutta knows no bounds and it begets in Vasavadutta's heart equally boundless love. Besides, there is Ungarica's love for her daughter. She sees to it that Vasavadutta's heart expresses itself and gets bound to the nobler loving self of Vuthsa. As a result, Vasavadutta learns that self-giving is a prerequisite of true love and hence surrenders to Vuthsa, her lord, body, heart and soul:

O sleeping soul of my beloved, hear
My vow that while thy Vasavadutta lives,
Thou shall not lack again one heart's desire,
One tender bodily want. All things at once,
Wife, mother, sister, lover, playmate, friend,
Queen, comrade, counsellor I will be to thee.
Self shall not chill my heart with wedded strife,
Nor age nor custom pale my fire of love.
I have that strength in me, the strength to love of gods.

Thus, love purges Vasavadutta's being of all wavering and conflict, all her ego and pride, and leads her to peace, harmony and bliss. The ultimate effect of love and self-giving is an integration of all her faculties: the concentration of her mind, heart, senses and will, and the

2. Ibid., p. 292.
eventual psychicisation of her being. The integration of her faculties, of her personality, takes place in the fire of love, the divine force. Hence the hymn to love that Vasavadutta is.

The victory of Vuthsa in the play is the victory of heart, but not of the heart in the traditional sense of the term. Heart in common parlance denotes the seat of emotions. As such, the victory of heart would mean the victory of the emotion. However, as Sri Aurobindo points out, in Vedic psychology, heart is "not restricted to the seat of the emotions; it includes all that large tract of spontaneous mentality, nearest to the subconscious in us, out of which rise the sensations, emotions, instincts, impulses and all those INTUITIONS and INSPIRATIONS that travel through these agencies before they arrive at form in the INTELLIGENCE."¹ So heart is attributed with spontaneous mentality from which sensations, emotions, instincts, impulses, etc., rise. When we speak of the integration of all the faculties of Vuthsa — his mind, heart, senses and will — the integrated whole thus referred to is much akin to the heart as conceived in the Vedic psychology. This heart must naturally be wiser than the intellect and its intuition must surpass the intellectual wisdom. This is what happens in Vasavadutta.

where Vuthsa's intuitive wisdom overcomes the intellectual wisdom of Yougundharayan. Sri Aurobindo refers to the superior wisdom of the heart when he says in Vasavadutta:

The deepest things are those thought seizes not; Our spirits live their hidden meaning out.1

It is this superior wisdom of the heart that guides all Vuthsa's actions. As has been mentioned above, the veil covering and concealing the soul or the psychic can be removed through the power of love, surrender, aspiration, etc. Once the cover is removed, the soul or the Psychic Being may be brought forward to govern the mind, life and body as happens in the case of Vuthsa.

Love takes possession of the heart of Vasavadutta too, and she also learns that self-giving is the supreme secret of peace and bliss in life. That is why, shedding all her false sense of pride and disregarding intellectual wisdom, she bows to Vuthsa in absolute self-surrender, saying:

Do with me what thou wilt, for I am thine.2

To conclude, the heart that prevails is the heart that loves. The victory of heart and the triumph of love in the play are not two different themes, but one. Heart conquers

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1. Sri Aurobindo, Collected Plays, B.C.L. Vol. 6, 266.
2. Ibid., p. 294.
when love pervades it. The power of heart indeed lies in love which purges, ennobles, unites, solders, conquers and eventually leads to harmony, peace and delight. Love is Divine. So becomes the heart when it is possessed absolutely by love. This is the truth Vasavadutta illustrates and seeks to underline.