CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Having explained the fundamental postulates of his philosophy in The Life Divine and the essential tenets of the Integral Yoga in The Synthesis of Yoga, Sri Aurobindo undertakes to translate his metaphysical speculations into imaginative and poetic reality in Savitri. So Savitri is neither a philosophical treatise, nor a dissertation on the subject of Yoga, but, as he says, a mystic poem of intuitive vision in symbolic images. As such it unfolds the adventures of the Spirit from Inconscience to Superconscience and unveils the true purpose of our terrestrial existence.

'Love conquering Death' may be considered as the central theme of Savitri. To Sri Aurobindo, death is really an experience of human soul as an independent entity, isolated from the universal and transcendent Self and Love is the realisation of the psychic fact that the individual soul belongs to the cosmic and supracosmic Force. Only the power of Love, that represents the principle of harmony, can conquer Death. The conquest of Death does not mean the elimination of physical death. It suggests the growth of a person in the higher consciousness of the Divine. Savitri,
the Power of Love, becomes one with the Divine and so she is able to conquer Death in his own dark region. Here Sri Aurobindo is in line with the Upanisadic concept of Immortality.

To interpret his theme of Love and Death, Sri Aurobindo selects the story of Savitri from the Vana Parva of The Mahabharata and renders it into a symbol of the divine life. The legend itself has, in fact, a symbolic significance and Sri Aurobindo takes pains to bring it out in the light of his vision. He treats the death of Satyavan as the terrestrial Evil and portrays Savitri as the Power of the Divine Grace who asserts her superiority over Death to save mankind from the dark forces of Nescience.

Almost all the characters of the legend are transfigured into the concrete symbols of some planes of consciousness in Savitri. Aswapathy, the mortal father of Savitri, is represented as the Lord of Life, who, having achieved his personal salvation, ascends to the plane of the Overmind, meets the Divine Mother and persuades Her to descend and break the iron law of Fate. Satyavan, the possessor or the seeker of Truth, stands for the soul of the world that is subjected to the laws of Death and Ignorance. Death is described as the extreme power of the Inconscient that intersects the individual soul from the Oversoul, distorts
the face of Truth and brings the life of trial and tribulation
to the earthly creatures. Savitri symbolises the Force of the
Divine which creates and sustains the universe and guides the
course of evolution. She is said to be eternally present in the
heart of each individual to inspire him to grow towards the
Divine. She is, in reality, 'a golden bridge' that spans across
the gulf between the lower nature and the higher Nature.

On the metaphysical level, Savitri elucidates the universe
as the double process of descent and ascent. The Absolute descends
through Existence—Consciousness—Force—Bliss and also through
the medium of the Supermind into the Overmind, the Intuitive
Mind, the Illumined Mind, the Higher Mind, Mind, Psyche, Life,
Matter and the Inconscient. And the Inconscient, in return, has
evolved the principles of Matter, Life, Mind and it shall manifest
the Supermind in course of Time. On a higher metaphysical plane,
Savitri reveals that a liberated human soul should not aspire
to merge his consciousness into the Divine nor should he choose
to enter into the realm of Everlasting Day. Having realised
the highest consciousness of the Supreme he must come back to the
earth to work for the divinisation of man and Matter.

Savitri raises the death bound—humanity to the summit of
spiritual perfection. It stresses that men are not essentially
'a heap of broken images' but the sons of God, 'amritasya putrāh',
and so they must grow to be like Him. Of course, at this stage
of mental evolution, man is certainly the victim of imminent fate. Nevertheless, he is free to mould his destiny by the strength of his soul. Man has a divine spark within himself and if it is allowed to govern his mental, vital and physical nature, it will be able to cancel his present destiny and build a new one which is suited to his spiritual growth. For the realisation of the divine spark in him man has to aspire for the Divine, reject the temptations of the lower nature and surrender himself to the Divine Mother.

Sri Aurobindo has devoted about fifty intermittent years to the preparation of the final version of Savitri. He revises, reshapes and rewrites it for more than ten times not because he lacked in genuine poetic effusion, but because he wanted to see that every line of the poem must carry the inspiration from the Overmind. The extant Savitri is based on the tenth draft of the epic which was finalised by the poet in the last phase of his life. This perseverance of Sri Aurobindo indicates the quality of high seriousness which is regarded as one of the attributes of a great epic poet.

Savitri, written in blank verse of iambic pentameter, employs mostly the end-stopped lines to express the vision of the poet precisely and effectively. Its verse seems to have the poetic rhythm and the poetic word which are said to be the chief characteristics of the mantra. Poetic
rhythm is the sound-movement which carries on the thought-movement in the word. It is, in fact, the sound-image which helps to extend and deepen the movement of the thought. The poetic word is what Sri Aurobindo has called the sound-expression of an idea. It makes us see and feel even the abstract thought. Sri Aurobindo adopts his diction as well as his images from almost all the branches of human knowledge to objectify his subtle vision of the higher consciousness.

Thematically, Savitri is related to The Vedas and The Upanishads; but in its form, it has a close affinity with the literary traditions of the Western epic. It uses Homer's method of repetition, Virgil's technique of enlargement and Dante's art of fusing philosophy and poetry in symbolic images. Like Paradise Lost it begins with the introduction of a crisis which leads us into the middle of things and ends with a promise of 'a greater dawn', that is, the dawn of the Supermind that will create the phenomenon of Paradise on earth. Following the ideals of Aristotle, it deals with the thing which is likely to happen and has a certain magnitude to explain the divinisation of physical nature. It is also divided into three parts and they are harmoniously interrelated. Despite its apocalyptic long speeches, it has its own unity of structure and impression. Thus, Savitri is a unique epic of Overmind inspiration which broadens the frontiers of the traditional epic and raises
its structure to the height of spirituality.

In an age when the epic form has become almost an anachronism and even a nuisance, Sri Aurobindo reinstates it in a glorious way. His Savitri is undoubtedly an epic of the soul which attempts to comprehend the human situation in all its totality of destiny. It conveys the message of hope to the contemporary society which is confronted with the alarming danger of annihilation and destruction due to the explosion of the technological knowledge. It emphasises that the world is not made by the random bricks of chance, but it is the conscious creation of Sachchidananda, and prophesies that man will emerge as the Superman after the manifestation of the Supramental Consciousness into the cosmic environment. Therefore, the present state of man's existence should be considered as a temporary phase of the dark night that precedes the emergence of the Dawn of Illumination. Indeed, Savitri is a massive epic of hope.