CHAPTER V

NATURE IN SRI AUROBINDO'S EPIC POETRY

ILION

In Ilion the events of the war that follows Hector's funeral to the final fateful day . . . . the day which sees at once the death of Achilles and the burning of Troy, begin with the dawn (as in Savitri) of the final day of the war and depict Nature's forces in a mighty conflict. In this fragment of an incomplete epic Nature is seen as a force of Conscious Being processing an inevitable evolution. As an evolutionary force, as Vedic 'Rita ', it is constantly working from the terrestrial dawn towards a Dawn of Divine purity and Light :-

Dawn is her journey eternal compelling the labour of mortals,
Dawn the beginner of things with the night for their rest or their ending,
Pallid and bright lipped arrived from the mists and the hill of the Euxine,
Earth in the dawn-fire delivered from starry and shadowy vastness,
Wake to the wonder of life and its passion and sorrow and beauty,
All on her bosom sustaining, the patient compassionate Mother,
Out of the formless vision of Night with its look on things hidden,
Given to the gaze of the azure she lay in her 
garment of greenness,
Wearing light on her brow. In the dawn-ray 
lofty and voiceless,
Ida climbed with her god-haunted peaks into 
diamond lustres,
Ida first of the hills with the ranges silent 
beyond her,
Watching the dawn in their giant companies, 
as since the ages
First began they had watched her, up bearing 
Time on their summits.
Troas cold on her plain awaited the boon of 
the sunshine.1

Dawn is seen moving forward in a "journey eternal"
along her fellow travellers, the mortals who are struggling
forward constantly in the light of the dawn. Life and things
and labour begin with the dawn and end with night. Light and
Darkness however, go on doing their respective jobs in the
cosmic march of Nature in her "journey eternal". Earth de-
liberated from "starry and shadowy vastness" wakes to the
"wonder of life and its passion and sorrow and beauty / All
on her bosom sustaining, the patient compassionate Mother".
Mother Earth is seen clad in her "garment of greenness" /
Wearing light on her brow. Ida and other mountains and Troas
await the "boon of sunshine". In these lines, Sri Aurobindo
has depicted the eternal movement forward of man and Nature
in the divine light of "bright lipped" dawn. The scene, is
gradually shifted from the "bosom of Mother Earth" and the lofty peaks of Ida and other mountains to "Troas cold on her plain" awaiting the boon of heavenly sun-shine. Both Nature and the mortals are putting in labour to move forward. Use of the word "labour" is deliberate to suggest that the movement is neither easy nor smooth nor unopposed. Night's starry and shadowy vastness, (with shining stars in it) clamps a blanket of inertia and darkness on the smooth movement of the earth and man towards the goal of their emancipation and salvation (from darkness). Dawn helps but darkness hinders the pace of evolution in Nature as in man's own personality and life. The ensuing struggle between two human forces is part of Nature's struggle for freedom and salvation. Darkness in the caverns of human personality hinders man's progress towards freedom. Resultant conflicts and contradictions in his own behaviour as in the behaviour of other forces of Nature often culminate in a strife or war in the human world. Cosmic forces of light and darkness of the Conscious Being take an active part in this eternal struggle of Nature towards freedom and salvation, particularly, at the human - consciousness level.
Earth has been called "the patient compassionate Mother" 'who sustains on her bosom' all the drama of life in which men and gods are engaged in a strife between life and inertia, Light and darkness in this show of devolution and evolution. Nature's forces at various levels are depicted in action:—

Mighty they came from their spaces of freedom and sorrowless splendour,
Sea-vast trailing the azure hem of his clamorous waters,
Blue-lidded, maned with the Night, Poseidon for the future,
Earth-shaker who with his trident releases the coils of the Dragon,
Freeing the forces unborn that are locked in the caverns of Nature. 2

Allusion to Greek gods, taking an active part in this epic suggests the cosmicity of scale and range in the depiction of Nature's evolution through a human conflict on the earth.

Mighty Super forces of Nature, personified as gods, are active throughout the titanic conflict. Numerous Nature gods like Zeus, Aphrodiate, Apollo, Aries, Venus, all take sides. The continuity of greenness of the earth comes in for a comment:—
But from his luminous deep domain, from his estate of azure
Zeus looked forth; he beheld the earth in its flowering greenness
Spread like an emerald dream that the eyes have enthroned in the sunlight.

Colour imagery is accrued with symbolic significance treating earth as metaphor of creativity, beauty and freshness, a dream creation or passion play or 'leela' of the Supreme Absolute Unmanifest One manifesting Himself in all His Light in the Void. The human vision can see the Reality of this dream like creation of the Supreme in His sunlight. This seeing of Divine Reality has been termed 'Vidya' in the Upanishadic parlance. Light is the predominant principle of knowledge or 'Vidya' in Sri Aurobindo's epic poetry. As in the Rig Veda Usha is the source of divine life and creation, dawn is the symbol of Nature's constant newness, freshness and divine evolution in Sri Aurobindo's poetry.

The five thousand lines he has composed of Ilion in less than nine books in hexameter depict the evolutionary flow of events in Nature from the dawn towards Dawn during the final, fateful day of the great conflict known as War of Troy. With the dawn, Talthybius, the herald, hastens to the Trojan camp to present the terms of an agreement for ending the war. The
proposed agreement offers peace in return of Helen with honour and an appropriate amount of wealth and suitable attendants.

Besides describing the implusive reaction of Deiphobus the text is remarkable for the use of epic similes (from Nature) recalling Milton's *Paradise Lost* in its allusive narrative style. When Talthybius arrives in Troy, the council meets to consider the offer of Achilles, heated debate takes place similar to the debate in Satan's council in the hell. When the Trojan council, rejecting the offer, decides to keep Helen and to continue fighting the invaders, Forces of Nature wake up. A similar meeting of gods also takes place to decide whether gods should take part in the ensuing battle between Achilles and the Trojan forces or not. The war resumes, the opposing armies of men and gods join the battle, but the poem breaks off as Panthesilea is going to meet Achilles in the battle-field. Besides Greek influence this poem shows that even before coming into contact with Indian scriptures the poet had a spiritual bent of mind and cosmic vision that he has projected in this fragment of an epic in quantitative hexameter appropriately chosen to suit
the epic theme and form. Oriental influence on his mind and vision is yet not visible and the poet is approaching Nature in the spiritual way of Homer rather than in the way of Kalidasa or Vyasa or Balmiki or the great Vedic and Upanishadic poets and seers. The Vedic gods, as bright forces of Nature, guide, sustain and help man evolve forward. Not so the Greek; of whom the poet says:—

high over all things
Sit in their calmness the gods and oppressing
our grief-tortured nations
Stamp their wills on the world.4

This poem further shows that the poet looks on Nature as an executing power in the divine scheme of evolution:—

but my soul in me widens,
Helped by the toil behind and the age long
effort of Nature,
Even in the worm is a god and it writhes
for a form and an outlet.5

From worm to god, consciousness in Nature writhes for a form and an outlet. This widening of the soul underscores the idea of evolution of the soul towards the cosmic Self. This evolution is helped by its own toil to free itself from the inertia of dormant consciousness, rather imprisonment, towards an awareness of a wider sphere of cosmicity. This is Greek concept of evolution. To the Indian mind
(atman) needs to break open the confinements of its 'maya'.

But 'atman' or 'Atman' is one. Evolution is becoming of the Being. To the Greek evolution of the soul is constantly helped by the "age long effort of Nature". The image of the "worm" symbolizes the state of lower consciousness of matter which is still dormant and under developed. But the consciousness of the spirit, which pervades the earth, the worm, man and god, being of the same divine 'Spirit', is bound to evolve gradually from states of life and mind consciousness to higher states of consciousness in gods. In this spiritual unity earth, worm, man and god represent different states of consciousness in different states of development or evolution towards the Godhead or Life Divine. Even in this Homeric epic the poet is making a momentous endeavour to universalize his vision and philosophy of life. Man, Nature and God are different states of spiritual consciousness at different levels of the Being. But the element of bliss is missing even in this vision of reality. The poet is yet not able to view existence as 'Sachchidananda.

Comparing Sri Aurobindo and Homer, A. N. Dwivedi writes :-
No doubt, Sri Aurobindo's imagination is subtler and seeks comparisons and contrasts in rare nuances of life's and Nature's moods. Still there is no taint of conceit or sophistication and the images have an untortured, natural appeal.

There is no denying the fact that Sri Aurobindo is "Aurobindonian without ceasing to be Homeric" in this epic. But the Greek influence is much pronounced in the choice of theme, diction, syntax, similitude imagery and metaphor and diction. Even though universality of outlook informs the delineation of events and characters yet they are all Greek and being rooted in the ancient myth of Greek soil, much of the effect or, at least, keenness and sharpness of efficacy and thrust gets diminished and blurred in stylistic nuances in the creation of this epic. Moreover, stylistic effort is seen out-weighing and out-doing the thematic aim which is to project a universal vision of life in Nature. Yet, as far as craftsmanship is concerned, Sri Aurobindo has displayed breath taking mastery over handling of quantitative hexameter, Nature-imagery and epic-simile, and use of allusions in quantitative verse which flows forth in swaying music to the beats of cosmic rhythm. The central point of focus in the poem is not 'Atman' but cosmic evolution being workedout at the human level...
by the executing and moving force of dynamic Nature.

TREATMENT OF NATURE IN AHANA

If the tone and rhythm of the Ilion are martial and kinetic in spirit, there is another poem, Ahana, which modulates the sweetness of voice of Nature in hexameter. All sorts of Nature discords (or problems of perception) are discussed in this poem. The earth calls on gods and aspires celestial light and life, having gone through suffering and struggle in the fullness of time. At the call and quest of the earth Ahana, the God of Dawn, descends. Diction, rhythm and atmosphere of this Nature poetry is in marked contrast to that of the Ilion. Jasse Roarke makes an interesting comment on the marked contrast of style of "Ilion" and "Ahana" as:

Here the hexameter is given a sweetness not suitable to the austerity of a martial theme.

As a Nature poem Sri Aurobindo's Ahana is similar in spirit to the Rig Vedic Ushas. The bare beauty of the dawn inspires the imagination of the poet and a flash of spiritual ecstasy rends the veils of ignorance. The truth of things seen by Poet's kindled soul and the bliss experienced (that vision) becomes the substance of the poem.
'Ahana' is the poem of soul's perception of the real. The theme, thought and approach unmistakably place the poem in the Vedic tradition of Nature poetry. Since the beauty of the dawn and the revelation of Reality in its light overwhelm the seeing soul, the utterance is spontaneous and free like fresh flowing waters of a stream. The poem projects a vision:—

Vision delightful alone in the hills whom
the silences cover,
Closer yet lean to mortality; human, stoop
to thy lover.
Wonderful, gold like a moon in the square of
the sun where thou strayest
Glimmers thy face amid crystal purities;
mighty thou playest
Sole on the peaks of the world, unafraid of thy loneliness. Glances
Leap from thee down to us, dream-seas and
light-falls and magical trances;
Sun-drops flake from thy eyes and the heart's
caverns packed are with pleasure
Strange like a song without words or the dance
of a measureless measure.
Tread through the edges of dawn, over twilight's
grey-lidded margin;
Heal earth's unease with thy feet, O heaven-born
delicate virgin.

The tone, in the Vedic tradition, is supplicate and
the spirit evokes the "heaven-born delicate virgin" to
"heal earth's unease with thy feet". The rays of the dawn
are described poetically in the phrase "sun-drops flake from thy eyes" and the joy that every dawn brings to the human heart is articulated in the next phrase "and the heart's caverns are packed with pleasure". This poem, too, illustrates the Vedic concept of unity of earth and heaven:

Two are the ends of existence, two are the dreams of the Mother:
Heaven unchanging, earth with her time-beats yearn to each other,
Earth-souls needing the touch of the heaven's peace into rapture.
Heaven needing earth's passion to quiver its peace into rapture.

Unchanging heaven and earth "with her time-beats yearn to each other". For the complete transformation of Nature, Heaven, yearning for the earth, must descend to the earth and the earth moving to her time beats of change, must ascend to heaven. Earth-souls need the heavenly peace and the heaven needs the earth's passion "to quiver its peace into rapture". For the realization of Divine Bliss man must ascend and God must descend into his consciousness.

Ahana, the Dawn of God, is further described in the Vedic manner:

Wast thou not made in the shape of a woman?
Sweetness and beauty
Move like a song of the gods in thy limbs and
to love is thy duty
Graved in thy heart as on tablets of fate;
joy's delicate blossom
Sleeps in thy lids of delight; all Nature
hides in thy bosom
Claiming her children unborn and the food
of her love and her laughter.¹¹

Sweetness and beauty are the salient features of Ahana.

Sweetness and beauty pervade all Nature "like a song of the
Gods". "To love is thy duty" and "joy's delicate blossom /
Sleeps in thy lids of delight". "All Nature hides in thy
bosom" and in this bosom lie hidden love, beauty, sweetness
and joy. Nature claims her new creation from Ahana. "Love
and laughter" with new creation emanate from God's Dawn.
Ahana thus becomes an image of God's manifestation in Nature's
creation. The entire poem moves from description of Nature to
interpretation of Nature:—

Music is here of the life and the flute and
the lyre and the timbal,
Wind in the forests, bees in the grove-spring's
ardent symbol
Thrilling, the cry of the cuckoo; the nightingale
sings in the branches,
Human laughter is heard and the cattle low in
the ranches.¹²

Description of Nature in visual imagery is lifted to the level
of the divine in the symbolic images of "life" and "flute"
and unity of all things is underscored in the cohabitation and
continue of birds, trees, men and cattle and the music of
their voices is the "life" and the "flute" and the "lyre"
and the "timbal" of the lord. Divinity pervades all crea-
tion. And yet, the poet wonders some people call this God
manifesting Nature an illusion or 'maya':-

Still must they mutter that all here is vision
and passing appearance,
Magic of Maya with falsehood and pain for its
only inherence.15

On Old theory of looking at Nature as mere Maya or
illusion or dream is rejected. Divinity of Nature is assert-
ed. Nature is seen as the manifestation of the Supreme
Absolute Unmanifest :-

One is there only, apart in his greatness,
the End and Beginning.
He who has sent through his soul's wide spaces
the universe springing.14

The spinning universe emanates from Him who has sent
it "through his soul's wide spaces" and spins back into
Himself at the end of the cycle as He is the "End" of its
movement and He is its "Beginning". Nature not only emanates
from him but also continues to evolve and move forward towards
Him. That this movement is musical is made evident in the
rhythm and aural imagery of this poem, as also in the use of
the image of "flute". In the music of the rhyming quanti-
tative meters the poet tries to recapture in his poetry the
rhythm of the cosmic evolutionary movement of Nature towards
its Creator. Nature as such is viewed as cyclical Divinity.

Doubt and denial of God are severely censured in
sharp ironical tone and rhetorical utterance which flows forth
with such unarming force of conviction that the expository
style of speech assumes dialectical and dynamic effectiveness
as the poem proceeds :-

Now have the wise men discovered that all is
the craft of a super
Magic of Chance and a movement of Void and
inconscient stupor.15

And the irony is countered through conviction :-

Who can believe it ? Something or someone,
a Force or a Spirit
Conscious, creative, wonderful shaped out
a world to inherit
Here for the beings born from its vast universal
existence.16

This Vedantic truth of Nature as the Supreme Unmanifest
Absolute One's manifestation is stressed throughout the poem:-

Nought else is she but the power of the Spirit
who dwells in her ever,
Witness and cause of her workings, lord of
her pauseless endeavour.
All things she knows, though she seems here
unseeing even in her slumber
Wondrous her works are, design and its magic
and magic of number,
Plan of her mighty cosmic geometry, balance of
forces,
Universe flung beyond universe, law of the
stars and their courses,
Cosmos atomic stretched to the scale of the
Infinite's measure.17

Nature is defined as the power of the Conscious Being:
"Nought else is she but the power of the Spirit who dwells in
her ever". Description of Nature as an immanent Divinity
further continues through this incomplete epic of Nature :-

Mute in the trance of the Eternal she sleeps with
the stone and the azure.
Now she awakes; for life has just stirred in her,
stretching first blindly
Outward for sense and its pleasure and pain and
the gifts of the kindly
Mother of all, for her light and her air and
the sap from her flowing,
Pleasure of bloom and inconscient beauty,
pleasure of growing.
Then into mind she arises; heart's yearning
awakes and reflection
Looks out on struggle and harmony, — conscious,
her will of selection
Studies her works and illumines the choice of
her way; last, slowly
Inward she turns and stares at the Spirit
within her. Holy
Silences brood in her heart and she feels
in her ardent recesses
Passions too great for her frame, on her body
immortal caresses.
Into the calm of the Greatness beyond her
she enters, burning
Now with a light beyond thought's, towards
Self and Infinity turning,
Turned to beatitude, turned to eternity, 
spiritual grandeur, 
Power without limit, ecstasy imperishable, 
shadowless splendour. 18

Nature as the power of the Absolute Unmanifest as 
Conscious Being, continually evolves itself at different 
levels of the Being. It is seen as dynamic principle of 
evolution in accordance with the Rig Vedic concept of 'Rita'.

Seemingly inconscient aspect of Nature is described as "trance 
of the Eternal". This inconscient Nature awakes as "life 
has just stirred in her stretching first blindly Outward as 
... ... in the pain "pleasure of growing". Awakening 
of life consciousness in the dormant matter continues to 
evolve further as "Then into mind she arises", As such as 
life-consciousness ascends up the stair of evolution, it 
turns into mind-consciousness in plants, birds, animals and 
men. But the continuing evolution will not end at the 
interim stage of mind-consciousness. It will continue 
naturally to move up the stair of consciousness of Supramen-
tal state of consciousness at a higher level of the Conscious 
Being, as Nature "turns inward and stares at the Spirit 
within her". This state of consciousness of the "Spirit 
within her" is much beyond the ambit and reach of reason.
This is the spiritual state or supramental state of realization of existence as 'Sachchidananda'. This evolution of the inner self-consciousness is directed by the executing energy of Conscious Being i.e. Nature which "Now with a light beyond thought's towards Self and Infinity turning / Turned to beatitude, turned to eternity, spiritual grandeur:/ Power without limit, ecstasy imperishable, shadowless splendour". Nature is seen as the "power of the Spirit" manifesting in different forms and at different levels of consciousness. These states are described one by one in a progressive order of evolution of consciousness from dormancy to superconsciousness of the "Self and Infinity" as 'Sachchidananda'. In a rhetorical style the poet first projects the questions or doubts and then resolves those doubts and questions in illuminating answers. Ultimately, Nature is seen as manifestation of the Supreme Unmanifest (Atman) which produces, moves, and is inherent in it:-

Out of him rather she came and for him are her cry and her labour; Deep are her roots in him; topless she climbs, to his greatness a neighbour. All is himself in her, brooding in darkness, mounting the sun-ways: Air-flight to him is man's journey with heaven and earth for the runways.19

Nature emanates from God and "all is himself in her". Heaven and earth are the platforms of evolution or stages in
the journey of man's consciousness back to Him: All creation, including man, goes on moving forward and evolving into higher and higher states of consciousness as, for example, is the case of ascension of Aswapathi and Savitri. All existence is "his travel in Time". Existence is Being as becoming. It is He — 'Sachchidananda'. Time here is the symbol of eternity of cyclical change and evolution of Nature towards the Self. Nature is He in Time. It moves as becoming of the Being, the poet asserts that God is in all things, Nature is Divine Unity :-

Deep in our being inhabits the voiceless invisible Teacher;
Powers of his godhead we live; the Creator
dwells in the creature,
Out of his Void we arise to a mighty and shining existence,
Out of In-conscience, tearing the black Mask's giant resistance,
Waves of his consciousness Well from him into these bodies in Nature,
Forms are put round him; his oneness, divided by mind's nomenclature,
High on the summits of being ponders immobile and single,
Penetrates atom and cell as the tide drenches sand-grain and shingle.
Oneness unknown to us dwells in these millions of figures and faces.20

The creator, "the voiceless invisible Teacher
dwells in the creature" as light dwells in darkness. Darkness
covers light and "Out of his Void we arise". In other words darkness is the Void out of which His manifesting Light causing existence emerges. Creation emanates from Him as His Light emanates from His Void. Negation of darkness or division of creation into black and white is wrong. Such schismatic misperceptions of reality cannot hold up to the truth of unity of all things as He says,"Oneness unknown to us dwells in these millions of figures and faces". Since all are in One, division of creation into Maya's good and evil is not true. But man has to see this unity of existence as"Out of his Void we arise to a mighty and shining existence". Such lines render the Rig Vedic hymn of creativity as the Supreme One manifesting in His Light in terms of modern scientific view that creation wells up or emerges from inconscient matter. Matter is viewed as the inconscient Void. Out of this Void of His darkness or mystery or unknowability or mask He manifests in His Divine Light into myriads of forms in existence. As such His consciousness emerges as life-consciousness in new forms and at different levels of the Being. His force or energy or power of consciousness permeates His existence or Being and not only produces new forms but moves them regularly, gradually and eternally towards Himself in a cycle of birth and death and rebirth. But
all creation longs to reach back to Him through ceaselessly
evolving itself towards Him. While He devolves into creation,
the creation evolves towards Him. Nature as Power of the
Conscious Being moves this creation for its evolution i.e.
for its salvation or freedom from mayaic cycle of lower cons-
ciousness or ignorance and entanglement and Pain. Nature as
such is viewed as an evolving principle. The Vedantic idea of
the self belonging to the Self is synthesized with the Western
concept of cosmic evolution and modern scientific idea of
natural evolution. To see light helps acquisition of knowledge
or 'Vidya'. But darkness covers Truth or Godhead merely as a
"Void". Men sometimes think that things emerge from nothing
and return to nothing. But this nothingness or "Void" is the
"Mask". To remove this "Mask" which hides Him, man must look
on God's Light. This however, needs a lot of effort. For
death and darkness often hinder the vision :-

Ignorance darkness, death and inconscience
gape to absorb us;
Thick and persistent the Night confronts us,
its hunger enormous
Swallowing our work and our lives.21

Mask of Darkness causes & abets Mayaic ego, Ignorance
of death and inconscience darkens man's vision and hinders
the pace of evolution. Light or 'vidya' alone leads to di­
vine realization. That is why, evolution of Nature is never
linear and smooth :-

Caught by the moments, held back from the spirit's
timelessness, slowly
Wading in shallows we take not the sea-plunge
vastly and wholly.22

But there are Omnipresent signs and tokens of the
Supreme Creator in physical forms in Nature which, if seen by
the soul, can act as strong clues towards open and conscious
realization of the Supreme Spirit :-

Honied a thousand whispers come, in the birds,
in the breezes,
Moonlight, the voices of streams; with a
hundred marvellous faces
Always he lures us to love him, always he
draws us to pleasure
Leaving remembrance and anguish behind for
our only treasure.23

The aural images of "Whispers" of "birds", "breezes" and
"Voices of streams" and visual images like "moonlight" and
"a hundred marvellous faces" with which he "allures to love
him" testify to the manifestation of the Creator in His Cre­
ation. Nature as a metaphor of Divine manifestation and His
creativity principle reveals Him. Man may or may not arouse
his spiritual consciousness to see all in One and One in all
All things have bliss for their secret; only our consciousness falters. Fearing to offer itself as a victim on ecstasy's altars.

Is not the world his disguise? when that cloak is tossed back from his shoulders, Beauty looks out like a sun on the hearts of the ravished beholders.

Mortals, your end is beatitude, rapture eternal his meaning: Joy, which he most now denies, is his purpose: the hedges, the screening were but rules of his play; his denials came to lure farther.

"Cloak" is the image of ignorance. This "Cloak" needs to be removed to see His "Beauty" that "looks like a sun". "Cloak" covers Him. The Sun reveals Him. Man is bound to see His Beauty ultimately. Man is bound to realize His Beautitude in complete Identity with Him through self-evolution.

Initial setbacks on the way to self-discovery or 'Vidya' through Light are as short-lived as the illusory cloak of darkness itself is before Light.

In this poem on the dawn of Creation Christian concept of evil is sought to be synthesized with the Vedantic view of existence as 'Sachchidananda':-

What was the garden he built when the stars were first set in their places, Soul and Nature together mid streams and in cloudless spaces
The "garden" alludes to Eden. Human Souls (Adam and Eve) inhabit the garden or the universe "mid streams and in cloudless spaces" in "naked innocence". "Someone" is Satan and "the fruit of derision" is the fruit of "knowledge of good and of evil. But this concept of knowledge does not go with the Vedantic concept of knowledge as Light or 'Vidya'. On the contrary, it is 'avidya'. It is illusion. It is 'Maya'. It is not Truth. God's Light is Unity and cannot be divided. Mask or Illusion of darkness vanishes at the emergence of Light. At first, the poet propounded the view that Creation is 'Sachchidananda'. But now he is interpreting the same reality or existence or creation as caused by the fruit of "knowledge of good and evil". Upholding this view he has to admit that this diarchy of Creation, "Cleaving in God a division", is God's own doing. But the Vedanta does not allow any such cleavage or division of God. God and His Light as existence is indivisible. Darkness is not diviscon. It is a mask covering One indivisible Light within it. The two parallel views fail to merge
here. According to the Vedanta Reality is 'Sachchidananda'. Darkness is only an illusion, 'avidya' or a mask as Sri Aurobindo himself has interpreted it in the first part of this poem (Ahana). But the poet is trying to synthesize the Christian and the Vedantic way of looking at Reality. 'Avidya' (or Satan) or surface or illusory perception asserts the existence of evil as one aspect of God:--

"No, there is evil", someone whispered, "'tis screened from detection".26

When Adam and Eve were convinced of the existence of evil aspect of God, "they ate it". And the poet goes on building the antithesis of the Christian concept of worldly creation as rooted in evil in contrast with the Vedantic view of its Source in Him who is immanent in it:--

The roots of our being were shaken; Hatred and weeping and wrath at once trampled a world overtaken, Terror and fleeing and anguish and shame and desires unseated; Cruelty stalked like a lion; Revenge and her brood were created. Out to the desert he drove the rebellious. Flaming behind them Streamed out the sword of his wrath and it followed leaping to find them, Stabbing at random. The pure and the evil, the strong and the tempted, All are confounded in punishment; justly is no one exempted.
Virtuous? yes, there are many, but who
is there innocent? Toiling
"This is the garden", we say, "lo, the trees
and this is the river."
Vainly redeemers came, not one has availed
to deliver.
Never can Nature go back to her careless and
childlike beginning.

'Ahana', before it took this turn, has expounded the Vedantic
vision of existence. In his Vedantic vision the poet has held
out that hatred and weeping are not the fall out of God's
revenge. They are rooted in 'maya' or ignorance of His Light
and Unity. They are the symptoms of matter's inconscience
and darkness which vanishes before knowledge or 'vidya'.
They are not created by a personal God or Satan. They are
rooted in man's misperception and ignorance in taking dark­
ness for Reality. Evil is not real or personal but ignorance
or 'avidya' of Reality which in truth is the Unity of Light
of the Unmanifest Absolute One (Atman). If evil is misper­
ception of reality it cannot be real according to the Vedantic
approach. But it is real and rooted in Satan according to
the Western view of reality.

Hence the two views remain thoroughly different and
irreconciled in the poem. As such, this attempt at synthesis-
ing the Aurobindonian and the Western concept of Nature fails.

In the preceding parts of this poem, repeated assertions have been made to the effect that Nature manifests the Unmanifest Absolute One (Atman) — "Deep are her roots in him".28 And again:

"Inward she turns and stares at the spirit within her".29

In fact, the whole poem is a song of perception of the divinity of Nature and its cyclical movement back to its source — the Supreme Self. Now the poet says :-

"Never can Nature go back to her careless and childlike beginning".30

Is not that antithesis an undoing of the entire Aurobindonian concept which holds out that Nature, turning gradually through various stages towards its own Source in Him who is immanent in it, is 'Sachchidananda'? Only man is ignorant and unconscious of the Divinity of Nature. The poet has so far been trying to sink this truth into the reader's consciousness. But now he is taking an entirely different view of Nature as now in his view it is a sinner, it has lost its innocence. Is it not the contradiction of what has been said earlier? On the risk of repetition the following lines may be reviewed in a quick flash-back :-
"Now with a light beyond thought's towards
Self and Infinity turning
Turned to beatitude, turned to eternity,
spiritual grandeur
Power without limit, ecstasy imperishable,
shadowless splendour."

This turning of Nature to "shadowless splendour" evidently
speaks of the poet's concept of cyclical evolution of Nature
from emanation to absorption. And now he says "Never can
Nature go back to her careless and childlike beginning".
Moreover, can God according to His earlier view, in accordance
with the Vedantic concept of Absolute Unmanifest One (Atman)
manifesting in His Light, be cleaved and divided into good and
evil? Can he be revengeful? Can he be cruel? Can He be
angry? Can He madly "stab at random"? Can He be indiscrimi-
nate?

These are the questions which arise out of this irre-
conciled and antithetical perception of reality and this un-
successful or, at least, inadequate attempt at the reconcilia-
tion of the main tenor and tone of the first part with the
conclusive part as explicated in the lines quoted above. The
problem arises when the poet tries to synthesize mythological
conceptions of reality with his own Vedantic way of direct
perception of reality and the desired synthesis fails to come
off. Mainly the poem records the poet's spiritual vision of
Nature. Suddenly an element of myth is introduced and inserted into its texture. But it fails to take roots in its substance and instead of strengthening the poem, it weakens it. The poet's imagination fails in synthesizing myth with reality and Nature with Christianity in the poem which, actually, as a song of Ahana of creation, synthesizes the Vedantic view of Nature as the Light or energy of the Conscious Being which produces and moves everything in it towards the Unmanifest Absolute One (Atman) with the modern scientific interpretation of it as a factual evolving principle from matter to vitality and from vitality to mental intelligence in man and living phenomena. However, the poem breaks down as soon as synthesis of religious mythology with this scientific and spiritual view of Nature is attempted.

SAVITRI

A BRIEF RESUME OF TRIBUTES

achievements in Savitri. A few of their critical judgements and tributes are being quoted here below. First of all, to quote Jasse Roarke:

This the sovereign epic is not a poem to be read once or twice and mastered; it is not to be mastered at all, it is to be grown with.

Similarly, K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar observes:

From the "Symbol Dawn" of the opening canto and the vision of Savitri "the daughter of infinity" with "a body like a parable of dawn" to the last line of the last canto of the epic with its promise of "a greater dawn", it is verily Cosmic sweep of comprehension, a mandala, a full circle. Like Satyavan, have we not too "wandered in far off eternities", yet have not we too remained like him, "a captive in her golden hands"?

Says D. S. Mishra:

Sri Aurobindo reinstates the epic form gloriously in age which is devoid of all heroic values.

K. D. Sethna writes:

It is legend as well as a Symbol, a story with many scenes and levels of development at the same time that it is instinct with a mystical light.

To V. K. Gokak social transformation is the aim of the author of Savitri:

He (Sri Aurobindo) was a prophet of life and no more escapist into a world of Nirvana. He believed in the inevitable transformation of humanity into a race of higher beings and worked for it. The outburst of the Goddess of
Pity in Savitri VII, 4 contains more indignation against social wrong than many socialist poems.

All these observations and tributes by some of the most prominent scholar-critics of Sri Aurobindo's poetry, however, make it amply clear that no reader or researcher or critic has so far approached Savitri to comprehend Sri Aurobindo's treatment of Nature in this epic.

**BASIC CONCEPTUAL IDEATION**

Savitri, essentially is an epic of Nature as the evolving Light principle of the Supreme in the Vedic tradition of mantric poetry. Thematically, it is in line with the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. But it transcends all limits of human consciousness reached so far and depicts a mammoth conflict between the forces of darkness and light in man's inner self as well as in the universal Self i.e. manifestation of the Being at different levels. It is the story of man's struggle for survival and self emancipation in the face of his own inner darkness and hostility which usually thwarts him as a play thing of dark forces of the external phenomena.

This struggle for immortality is depicted on the spiritual plane in inner regions of human personality in a dynamic
relationship with and in terms of external Nature. To Project oneness, the cosmic conflict is simultaneously displayed on two levels in man’s inner self and in the external planes of objective reality. Savitri, the incarnation of the Light of the Divine Mother Creatrix, commits to descend to the earth in response to Aswapathy’s long self-evolutionary penance and ascetic (yogic) meditation and spiritual call to her to fight man’s battle against death and darkness. Her opponent in the epic is Death.

As such, Princess Savitri, King Aswapathi’s only daughter is the living incarnation of Savitri, the Divine Light, the Creatrix of the worlds. She contemplates the problem of death in the scheme of things and, in a review in her yogic meditations, can see the necessity of the unveiling of Death for the benefit and enlightenment and emancipation of mankind. She resolves to face and unveil and expose Death by dint of her divine light and Yogic meditation. On the fateful day of Satyavan’s death, she accompanies Satyavan to the forest and sees him dying there in her arms, but refuses to give in. She accompanies Death who is carrying Satyavan’s soul to the other world. In an epic debate with Death, she defeats Death and frees Satyavan’s soul from his clutches. Her victory
over death is the victory of Light over Darkness, Knowledge over Ignorance, bliss over pain, Good over Evil and Heaven over Hell. Savitri as an epic, therefore, dramatizes a colossal conflict between the dark forces of 'avidya' on the one side, and the bright forces of Light i.e. 'vidya' on the other.

THE DAWN

Conceived and set in Nature, which is viewed as manifestation at different levels of the Being and evolves itself at all these levels and at its highest level as the human self for emancipation in Light (Vidya), the epic begins with the dawn of the day of Satyavan's death:

It was the hour before the Gods awake.
 Across the path of the divine Event
 The huge foreboding mind of Night, alone
 In her unlit temple of eternity,
 Lay stretched immobile upon Silence' marge.
 Almost one felt, opaque, impenetrable,
 In the sombre symbol of her eyeless muse
 The abyss of the unbodied Infinite;
 A fathomless zero occupied the world.
 A power of fallen boundless self awake
 Between the first and the last Nothingness,
 Recalling the tenebrous womb from which it came,
 Turned from the insoluble mystery of birth
 And the tardy process of mortality
 And longed to reach its end in vacant Nought. 37

The poem begins with the first dawn of creation. The Vedantic and, very obliquely, the Western view of creation are alluded
to in a synthetic interpretation of the "divine Event" of Creation. Before the One manifested Himself in His Light in the unlit temple of eternity, described as 'Void of darkness' (in the 'creativity Hymn' in the Rig Veda), "a fathomless zero occupied the world". Then "a Power of fallen boundless self awake / Between the first and the last Nothingness / Recalling the tenebrous womb from which it came". The 'Void' which was lit by the manifesting Self is described as "the tenebrous womb". "Night" and "the abyss of the unbodied Infinite" symbolize the Mask of darkness or 'Void' of space out of which the world arose when the Unmanifest Absolute dreamed of manifesting Himself in His Light i.e. the Creation in the Cosmos. Advent of the dawn of creation is described in the lines such as:

An unshaped consciousness desired light
And a blank prescience yearned towards distant change.38

The "unshaped" consciousness", present in "a blank prescience", "yearned" for "change". The dawn of life had yet not come. Matter was still yearning for change "distant" in this state of "prescience". After this yearning of the state of dormant consciousness in matter to awake to life,
a sensation was felt in the 'Void': -

A thought was sown in the unsounded Void,
A sense was born within the darkness' depths.39

But the poet also seems to be trying obliquely to interpret this awakening of life in the 'Void' of matter in terms of the Western archetypal imagery of the "fall": -

A memory quivered in the heart of Time
As if a soul long dead were moved to live:
But the oblivion that succeeds the fall,
Had blotted the crowded tablets of the past,
And all that was destroyed must be rebuilt
And old experience laboured out once more.
All can be done if the God-touch is there.
A hope stole in that hardly dared to be
Amid the Night's forlorn indifference.40

"Fall" here has the ramifications of Christian mythology. The dormant state of consciousness seemed to awake to life once again after the "fall". But the "Night" symbolizing darkness and ignorance would not let the hope thrive to life and recovery of bliss. Even so no veil of the "night" can hide the rays of light, hope and life: -

The persistent thrill of a transfiguring touch
Persuaded the inert black quietude
And beauty and wonder disturbed the field of God.41

The metaphor of "inert black quietude" describes the state of inertia and darkness of matter before consciousness awakes it to life. Matter which emerged from the "Void" as
inert black quietude" woke up to life under "the persistent thrill of a transfiguring touch" and the result was "beauty and wonder of God".

In this opening passage the poet has synthesized three theories of creation. This description of origin of cosmic creation holds true to the theory of science of origin of the universe from the void as a result of big bang. It also reveals how life emerges from matter in different consciousness forms under the impact of the rays of the sun. Secondly, this description of the origin of the world obliquely alludes to the Christian theory of Fall of man and subsequent creation of the world by God. Above all, this description of the origin of Cosmic Creation upholds the Upanishadic concept of Nature which has been viewed as the manifestation of the Unmanifest as Brahma who has two aspects of Purusha and Prakriti. "The inert black quietude" in the above lines is Prakriti which thrilled under the transfiguring touch of Purusha", revealed "wonder and beauty in the fields of God." As a result of the love play of Purusha and Prakriti, darkness is removed and light dawns on the ground of inert matter:

One lucent corner windowing hidden things
Forced the world's blind immensity to sight.
The darkness failed and slipped like a falling cloak
From the reclining body of a god.42

Darkness is described as a "cloak" which covers the "body of a god". The metaphorical image of the "body" signifies the matter and the earth. The image of "cloak" for darkness signifies the dark Void as a mask which hides Reality but which can be removed when things are seen in the light of the god of light. Nature is then seen as the manifestation of God:

Then through the pallid rift that seemed at first
Hardly enough for a trickle from the suns,
Outpoured the revelation and the flame.
The brief perpetual sign recurred above:
A glamour from the unreached transcendences
Iridescent with the glory of the Unseen,
A message from the unknown immortal Light
Ablaze upon creation's quivering edge,
Dawn built her aura of magnificent hues
And buried its seed of grandeur in the hours.43

Besides elucidating the physical phenomenon of the dawn of creation, these lines carry the aesthetic aura of beauty of the dawn in all its glory of hue and colour. And the glory and glamour of the dawn is "Iridescent" with the glory of the "Unseen". The image of the "seed" of creation which is "buried" by the dawn portrays the process of creativity in Nature under the photosynthetic influence of the rays of the rising sun. The dawn brings life, beauty and light of
to space "in the hours" i.e. in time in cyclical creativity.

The earth and the wind the stars and spaces all welcome the
dawn. As the dawn brings light from heaven to the earth, the
air brings the heaven's music to Nature :-

Air was a vibrant link between earth and heaven;
The wide-winged hymn of a great priestly wind
Arose and failed upon the altar hills;
The high boughs prayed in a revealing sky.44

The air, "the wide-winged hymn of great priestly
wind", and boughs, the hills and the sky are the revealing
and correlating images of His consciousness and glory in
Nature. As to the Vedic seers, these are the clues and tokens
of the Creator.

The poet continues to interpret Nature of
existence on the earth :-

Here where our half-lit ignorance skirts the gulfs
On the dumb bosom of the ambiguous earth,
Here where one knows not even the step in front
And Truth has her throne on the shadowy back
of doubt,
On this anguished and precarious field of toil
Outspread beneath some large indifferent gaze,
Impartial witness to our joy and bale,
Our prostrate soil bore the awakening ray.45

The phrase "half-lit ignorance" tells of the paradoxical
state and inadequacy of scope and capacity of human know-
ledge and awareness on the earth. This paradox of doubt -
faith is further stressed in the metaphor "dum-bosom of the ambiguous earth". The "bosom" of the earth is dumb because of illusion or ignorance that covers the creation on the earth. "Ambiguous" it is because of the paradoxical character of reality which remains half-lit until some seeking and seeing soul like Aswaththi or Savitri makes it fully lit-unambiguous. "Truth" here has "the shadowy back of doubt". The earth is viewed as the doubt inflicted "anguished and precarious field of toil". But it is supervised by "some large indifferent gaze". This dumb-ambiguous earth receives the "awakening ray of the dawn of the fateful day. But its lustre is lost (absorbed) like Purusha in Prakriti in matter's covering veil:-

A spark of deity lost in Matter's crypt Its lustre vanishes in the inconscient planes.46

As Purusha is unseen in Prakriti man living so circumscribed anguished and baffled in 'mayaic' ignorance develops 'mayaic' ego and lifts the burden of his lot on this half-lit earth :-

And, leader here with his uncertain mind, Alone who stares at the future's covered face, Man lifted up the burden of his fate.47

Man with his "uncertain" insight into reality "stares at the future's covered face". The image of "covered face"
signifies man's ignorance of his own future. This image, if extended, could also suggestively signify the covered face of death. Man never knows when Death who keeps his face covered in darkness will pounce upon him. In this anguished state man lifted the burden of his predicament. Some redeemer like Aswapathi or Savitri was direly needed for the salvation of this anguished child of Nature.

INCARNATION OF SAVITRI

It is in this state of things on the earth that Savitri, the Divine Flame Incarnate descended on the earth to remove its darkness and ignorance. Emancipation of human consciousness through evolution of the inner self in the Light of the Divine Flame is the issue of this poem. For the sake of structural analysis the poem can be divided into three parts. The first part deals with the problem of death in Nature. Satyavan's death, being the central event, is taken up in this first part. The second part deals with Aswapathi's yoga and the third part deals with Savitri's yoga and conquest of death. All this action takes place in Nature. In fact, the entire poem is an interpretation of Nature and of man's life and death in Nature. The opening passage takes up the
issue of human fate from the very beginning of the creation. Pain, suffering, evil and death are the challenges to human existence and survival which are analysed and answered in the light of Truth and holistic view of evolving Nature in the text of the poem. Nature as the energy of the Conscious Being (which produces and moves everything) is seen as a principle of evolution of the physical into the spiritual. Visual interpretation of Nature in relation with man's soul and life is the theme of this poem of love-mARRIAGE OF Satyavan and Savitri and death of Satyavan and ultimate emancipation of the later's soul from (ignorance of ) death and darkness in Nature.

NATURE AS EVOLVING CREATIVITY PRINCIPLE

Nature as the energy of the Conscious Being produces and moves everything. Its ongoing creativity process reveals the secrets of the original evolution of creation in the 'Void' :-

An ocean of electric Energy
Formlessly formed its strange wave-particles
Constructing by their dance this solid scheme,
Its mightiness in the ay atom shut to rest;
Masses were forged or feigned and visible shapes;
Light flung the photon's swift revealing spark
And showed, in the minuteness of its flash
Imaged, this cosmos of apparent things.
Thus has been made this real impossible world,
An obvious miracle or convincing show.48

The world is viewed to emerge from "an ocean of elec-
tric Energy". This image of "ocean of electric Energy"
carries the dual connotation of Physical Atomic Energy and
Divine Light". The second image of dancing "wave particles"
projects the idea of cosmic dance of invisible atoms combining
in different groups or molecules to appear in different forms
and bodies recalling Shiva's cosmic dance of simultaneous creation
and destruction of various forms in the visible universe. These
lines explain Nature as the creativity principle in terms of the
ancient myth of creation of the cosmos in the wild ecstatic
dance of Shiva in the Void (or visibly inert atomic matter) as
well as in terms of modern physics. The modern physicists hold
that matter is not dead mass. They have discovered that it is
the form of energy. Einstein in his theory of relativity has
proved that matter can be converted into energy. The equation
E = Mc² where 'c' stands for speed of light and 'm' for mass
brings out the relation between energy ('E') and mass ('m').
Einstein has established that the mass of any particle of
matter depends upon speed (energy) with which the particle is moving. This "ocean of electric Energy" producing and moving everything in the universe is the energy of Nature which is the Conscious Being or the manifestation of the Supreme Spirit.

The Book of Traveller of the Worlds in Book Two describes the design and order of the universe:

In this revolving chamber without walls
In which God sits impassive everywhere
As if unknown to himself and by us unseen
In a miracle of inconscient secrecy
Yet is all here his action and his will.
In this whirl and sprawl through infinite vacancy
The Spirit became Matter and lay in the whirl,
A body sleeping without sense or soul.
A mass phenomenon of visible shapes
Supported by the silence of the Void
Appeared in the eternal Consciousness
And seemed an outward and insensible world.
There was none there to see and none to feel;
Only the miraculous Inconscient,
A subtle wizard skilled was at its task.

The image of "brute machine" suggests of the machine like design of the apparently prescient world. The image of "unmasking of the spirit" in this visibly prescient or dormant world in the zero state of inertia again captures the idea of Nature as God manifesting Himself in Cosmic Brahma. The Supreme Soul or Purusha unmasks slowly to initiate creativity in union
with Prakriti. The universal Void is visualized with the help of the visual image of a "Chamber". But this "Chamber" has no walls. God sits Unmanifest, unknowable in this vast-open "Chamber" everywhere. But He is the master of this Chamber as "Yet is all here his action and his will". Rejecting the Samkhyan concept of duality of Spirit and Matter, Sri Aurobindo enunciates the idea of unity of Matter and Spirit or Purusha and Prakriti as "In this whirl and sprawl through infinite vacancy" i.e. the Void "the Spirit became Matter and lay in the whirl", like a "body sleeping without sense or soul". Then out of this whirl of Spirit or Matter or cosmic dance of the Creative Brahma as 'Ardhanarishwara' i.e. Purusha and Prakriti as "mass phenomenon of visible shapes" emanated in the silent Void, and life appeared "in the eternal consciousness". This design brought to consciousness by Purusha uniting with Prakriti, seems "an outward and insensible world". But nothing is inconscient in this seemingly inconscient Nature:

Still consciousness was hidden in Nature's womb, Unfelt was the Bliss whose rapture dreamed the worlds. Being was an inert substance driven by Force. At first was only an etheric Space: Its huge vibrations circled round and round Housing some unconceived initiative:
Upheld by a supreme original Breath
Expansion and contraction's mystic act
Created touch and friction in the void,
Into abstract emptiness brought clash and clasp:
Parent of an expanding universe
In a matrix of disintegrating force,
By spending it conserved an endless sum.
On the hearth of Space it kindled a viewless Fire
That, scattering worlds as one might scatter seeds,
Whirled out the luminous order of the stars.51

"Nature's womb" is the metaphorical image visualizing
the creative process of Nature. "Womb" here is the image of
the first Source bearing to life all things in Nature. And
"Consciousness is hidden in the "womb" of Nature. This is a
striking metaphor of hidden Purusha in Prakriti and of the
creation emanating from the central point of their union
or Oneness. This poetic enunciation of the process of creativity
of hidden Purusha in the womb of Prakriti articulates
volumes of truth of existence in a peerless verse. Lending
speech and thought to the ineffable, Nature casts the spirit
into physical forms and bodies:

This is her secret and impossible task
To catch the boundless in a net of birth,
To cast the spirit into physical form
To lend speech and thought to the ineffable;
She is pushed to reveal the ever Unmanifest.52

A similar comment in the Life Divine explicates the
evolution of form in Existence out of the Inconscient :-
Out of the Inconscient, Existence appears in a first evolutionary form as substance of Matter created by an inconscient Energy, Consciousness, involved and non-apparent in Matter, first emerges in the disguise of vital vibrations, animate but subconscient; then, in imperfect formulations of a conscient life, it strives towards self-finding through successive forms of that material substance, forms more and more adapted to its own completer expression.

EMERGENCE OF LIFE CONSCIOUSNESS

Evolution of energy in forms was followed by evolution of consciousness in new forms and bodies. The following lines, for instance, explicate this process of evolution of living creatures from what he calls "Matter's womb" :-

In Matter's womb she cast the Immortal's life,
In the unfeeling vast woke thought and hope,
Smote with her charm and beauty flesh and nerve
And forced delight on earth's insensible frame
Alive and clad with trees and herbs and flowers
Earth's great brown body smiled towards the skies,
Azure replied to azure in the sea's laugh,
New sentient creatures filled the unseen depths.

Emergence of this plant life in "trees and herbs and flowers" was followed by the appearance of animal life in Nature :-

Amid a tedious crawl of drab desires
She writhed, a worm mid worms in Nature's mud.

This life - consciousness, through these stages of worm-consciousness and plant consciousness emerged in brute-consciousness, and gradually "moulded" man:
Then man was moulded from the original brute
A thinking mind had come to lift life's moods,
A keen-edged tool of a Nature mixed and vague;
An intelligence half witness-half machine.56

Advent of man marks a unique phenomenal stage in the

evolutionary movement of Nature. Man's "thinking mind" has
"come to life's moods", as a "keen edged tool", of Nature.
Since man's mind at the beginning is only half witness, "half
machine" it is bound to evolve through various stages of

evolution to the highest level of Super Mind.

Various theories of evolution in Biology such as
Darwin's or Bergson or S. Alexander's theory of biological
evolution; and of Physics such as Relativity Theory, Quantum
Theory etc. have been assimilated by Sri Aurobindo, in an
integral view, with the Vedantic view of Nature's evolution
as the becoming of the Being. This view upholds the scienti-
fic viability of the Vedantic conception of evolution and
absorption and the Yogic way of perceiving Nature as the mani-
 Festation of the Unmanifest Absolute One (Atman) as whose
energy it produces and moves everything. Another point to be
noted is that Sri Aurobindo's perception of Nature's spiritual
evolution holds true to verification both at the physical as
well as at the level of science . The energy that physic-
ally moves the atoms is the spiritual energy of the Supreme
As the poet says of Nature:

She builds creation like a rainbow bridge,
Between the original Silence and the Void.58

Nature creates life in the world as a colourful bridge between original Silence and revelation in the Void.

**EVOLUTION OF HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS IN HARMONY WITH EVOLVING NATURE**

Nature's purpose has been to bridge the gap, through evolution, between the human consciousness and Heaven:

Earth she would lift to neighbourhood with heaven,
Labours life to equate with the Supreme
And reconcile the Eternal and the Abyss.
Her pragmatism of the transcendent Truth
Fills silence with the voice of the gods,
But in the Cry the single Voice is lost.
For Nature's vision climbs beyond her acts.
A life of gods in heaven she sees above,
Ademi-god emerging from an ape
Is all she can in our mortal element.
Here the half-god, the-half-titan are her peak:
This greater life wavers twixt earth and sky.59

As an evolving energy of the Conscious Being Nature is dynamically moving her creation towards Heaven i.e. the Supreme Self of the Absolute. She communicates the transcendent Truth practically through the divine voice of her godly objects. But the Voice of the Supreme One becomes inaudible in her creativity "cry". The life of gods in heaven is within her purview
and her aim is to transform or raise terrestrial existence also to their celestial height of glory. In pursuing that goal of evolution she has already evolved a demigod - man - from an ape. This evolution of life in the form of man remains the zenith of her achievement so far. This stage of evolution of life consciousness is the middle state between the earth and the sky. But the goal is far off albeit achievable.

Ceaseless evolution of the physical into the Spiritual for the conscious realization of Nature's Ultimate Goal is inevitable:-

All life is fixed in ascending scale
And adamantine is the evolving Law.60.

The Ultimate Goal of Nature as the process of the becoming of the Being is to evolve up to its Source in the Self of the Absolute (Atman) :-

Earth must transform herself and equal Heaven
Or Heaven descend into earth's mortal state.
But for such vast spiritual change to be,
Out of the mystic cavern in man's heart
The heavenly Psyche must put off her veil
And step into common Nature's front
And rule its thoughts and fill the body and life.61

Transformation of earth by way of the unveiling of "heavenly Psyche" in man is inevitable. Sri Aurobindo sees
two kinds of movements in Nature. There is the upward evolutionary movement of the human spirit as a part of Nature in its yearning towards the Godhead and there is downward descent of God to Nature through the human Psyche and many other bright phenomena of Nature. As a result of such a transformation of his Psyche, man, like Aswathiphi, will become Super Man and consciousness in humanity will wake to its divinity:-

The Spirit shall look out through Matter's gaze
And Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face.
Then man and superman shall be at one
And all the earth become a single life.
Even the multitude shall hear the Voice
And turn to commune with the Spirit within
And strive to obey the high spiritual law:
This earth shall stir with impulses sublime,
Humanity awake to deepest self,
Nature the hidden godhead recognise. 62

Nature is evolving itself to "recognise" the Spirit within her or to reveal in its identity this "Spirit within". As man is the highest form of the evolving self, his presently imperfect, half-lit mind can gradually find light and perfection provided man consciously tries to be One with Purusha by conquering various confining and blocking forces of egoistic falsehood, darkness, ignorance and misperception both within and without.
His mind is bound to gradually evolve into Super-Mind. It has to realize the highest knowledge and inherent divine power,
spiritual peace and bliss in higher planes of consciousness.

On man's evolving Nature he says:

Our evolution in the Ignorance with its chequered joy and pain of self-discovery and world-discovery, its half-fulfilments, its constant finding and missing, is only our first state. It must lead inevitably towards an evolution in the Knowledge, a self-finding and self-unfolding of the Spirit, a self-revelation of the Divinity in things in that true power of itself in Nature which is to us still a Supernature.

As such Savitri is the epic of evolution of the inner self in dynamic harmony with the evolution of Nature. Enlightened men and Rishis, like Aswapathi, aspire to evolve continuously in dynamic relationship with evolving Nature towards the Supreme Spirit for the salvation of the self from illusory 'Maya' (or mere physical consciousness) in a reunion with the Supreme Spirit.

Aswapathi takes up the path of Yoga to consciously realize the divinity of his own self and to evolve himself for his salvation through 'Vidya'. Cantos three to five of Book One describe his individual practice of Yoga. These are split up into two parts. — "The Yoga of the Soul's Release" and "The Yoga of the Spirit's Freedom and Greatness" — by the middle Canto "The Secret Knowledge" through evolving consciousness of oneness of self and Nature.
Nature as moving energy of the Conscious Being creates an urge in human mind to know the "first and last things". Man, like Aswaphathi, is partly conscious of the Light within and without and feels the need for his further enlightenment or 'Vidya', for he being:

A colonist from immortality . . . . . .
Although consenting to mortal ignorance
His knowledge shared the Light ineffable.

Of human evolution through 'Vidya' i.e. knowledge of Divinity of all things as of the human self, he says (of man) that "Discovering self and spirit he discovers God", and at such a stage of self-realization, he says:

The unity of God and Nature cannot fail to manifest to him.

In such an evolved state of mind, unity of things is revealed. In Savitri Aswaphathi achieves the evolution of mind through various stages. At last his mind wakes into spiritual mind and can see existence as 'Sachchidananda':

At last he wakes into spiritual mind;
A high liberty begins and luminous room:
He glimpses eternity, touches the infinite
He meets the gods in great and sudden hours,
He feels the universe as his larger self,
Makes Space and Time his opportunity
To join the heights and depths of being in light,
In the heart's cave speaks secretly with God.
Man, at the evolved level of his spiritual self, like Aswapathi, can see the universe as his "larger self" and can experience with Divine Bliss in direct communion with gods.

Such a development of the human self is bound to take place at the head of evolution of Nature. Man is bound to realize the Supreme Truth of Reality through Self-Unfolding:

This truth of the Absolute is the justification of the cycles of the world; it is not their denial. It is the Self-Being that has become all these becomings; the Self is the eternal unity of all these existences; — I am He. . . . . . . This is the truth of being to which man's entire knowledge of himself in God and in Nature rises and widens . . . . . . . The conscious unity of the three, God, Soul and Nature in his own consciousness is the sure foundation of his perfection and his realization of all harmonies: this will be his highest and widest state, his status of a divine consciousness and a divine life and its initiation the starting point for his entire evolution of his self-knowledge, world-knowledge, God-knowledge.

Savitri is an epic effort towards making this "perfection" a possibility. As an epic of the Flame Incarnate it radiates the Light of the Supreme. The Flame of the Supreme Light has descended to the earth to remove all darkness, ignorance and shadow of Death. She has to help mankind emancipate and free itself of all shackles of pain, suffering, evil and death. The Light of God, the harbinger of God knowledge, the Source of cosmic energy, the first cause of all creation and
evolutionary progress of Nature, Savitri, the Light-Incarnate has descended to the earth at the end of the darkest night with the dawn of a new day on the earth. The earth has, through a long drawn out struggle towards perfection, as depicted in Aswapathi's Yoga, is ready to take a new leap forward to a new consciousness of divine reality and immortality. Nature as the law of evolutionary change, is now ready to assume a new role of evolution of Heaven on the earth by bringing about a transformation of the earth - consciousness.

The journey cannot cease till salvation is achieved. Aswapathi's journey to the self is bound for the goal of the human release from mayaic illusions. Whatever error and opaqueness of vision has caused human suffering must be left behind :

This too must now be overpassed and left
As all must be until the Highest is gained
In whom the world and self grow true and one:
Till that is reached our journeying cannot Cease.
Always a nameless goal beckons beyond,
Always ascends the zigzag of the gods,
And upward points the spirit's climbing Fire.69

The goal of evolving Nature is to make man ascend to the highest level of consciousness . Spiritual Bliss can be experienced only in complete harmony and oneness of the self and the cosmic world.
As Aswapathchi sees things in the light of the soul his vision of outer reality is becoming more and more clear. His Yogic ascension implies that the soul within and the cosmos without are the reverse and obverse of unitary Reality. Evolution of the (inner) one means the evolution of the other (i.e. the cosmic Self). There is no difference or distinction between the two. As such there is no difference or contradiction between the Vedantic idea of the evolution of the self and the Western view of the evolution of the Cosmos. In the Vedantic view all are in One and One is in all. All souls are the multiplication of the Supreme Soul. The outer and the inner, the physical and the spiritual are the One. The physical manifests the Unmanifest Spirit. Physical evolves towards the Spirit and the Spirit devolves into the physical. No Western or Indo-Anglian Poet or thinker has viewed this unity of evolution from the physical to the spiritual and devolution of the spiritual to the physical. Only Sri Aurobindo in his poetic vision has seen Nature devolving and evolving in a continuum to achieve the Supreme Goal. This integration of the East and the West is achieved by Sri Aurobindo in Savitri and this is his unique and in-
valuable contribution to universal knowledge. He declares that the Unseen attracts the seen and vice versa and this mutual attraction is the cause of universal evolution:-

Always the ideal beckoned from afar,
Awakened by the touch of the Unseen
Deserting the boundary of things achieved,
Aspired the strong discoverer, tireless Thought,
Revealing at each step a luminous world,
It left known summits for the unknown peaks:
Impassioned, it sought the lone unrealized Truth,
It longed for the Light that knows not death, and birth.70

The human spirit has always longed for and aspired and striven to achieve the 'Light that knows not death and birth'. This aspiration and longing of the earth's spirit is communicated in Yoga to God by Aswapathi, the earth's foremost soul, and 'a glowing mouth', 'a luminous shaft manifests and he can see the unity of all things:-

All grew to all kindred and self and near,
The intimacy of God was everywhere,
No veil was left, no brute barrier inert,
Distance could not divide, Time could not change.71

This is the enlightened state of realization (Vidya) immanence of the creative Light (Brahma) manifesting the One in all and all in One. Nature seen in this purely spiritual consciousness appears in a new glow. The physical
scenery of the Being's Truth and Beauty :-

There was a strange spiritual scenery,
A loveliness of lakes and streams and hills,
A flow a fixity in a soul - space,
And plains and valleys, stretches of soul-joy,
And gardens that were flower - tracts of the spirit,
Its meditations of tinged reverie.
Air was the breath of a pure infinite.72

This consciousness of Divine Beauty and Bliss in all creation
(as 'Sachchidananda') descends upon Aswapathi's evolved mind.
Heaven exists in Nature. But only an aspiring soul can see
it in its Supreme Beauty and Bliss :-

All objects were like bodies of the Gods,
A spirit symbol environing a soul,
For world and self were one reality.73

Aswapathi realizes the unity of the self and the world
and like the Vedic seers sees "all objects like bodies of the Gods". He sees Nature, the unity of Purusha and Pra­kriti, always marching forward in its pursuit of the Ulti­mate Goal in the One. This yogic vision is the highest state of realization of Truth of existence :-

There he beheld in their mighty union's poise,
The figure of the deathless Two-in-One,
A single being in two bodies clasped,
A diarchy of two united souls,
Seated absorbed in deep creative joy;
Their trance of bliss sustained the mobile world.
Behind them in a morning dusk One stood
Who brought them forth from the Unknownable.74
Sri Aurobindo's description of reality as viewed by Aswathapith in this (developed) vision of the Divine Mother upholds the Samkhya doctrine of Purusha and Prakriti. But unlike the Samkhyan conception of duality of Purusha and Prakriti, Sri Aurobindo sees Purusha and Prakriti as "Two in One" in this vision of a "single being in two bodies clasped" as Vedantic 'Ardhanarishwara'. In this union as "Two-in-One" Purusha and Prakriti experience the "Creative joy" and "their trance of bliss" sustains the world. Brahma or the Divine Mother or 'Ardhanarishwara' manifests the Unknownable Unmanifest One who appears standing behind them in the "morning dusk". First the Unknownable, the Supreme Unmanifest One, manifests Himself as Brahma. Brahma in an experience of creative union of Purusha and Prakriti as Two - in - One then brings forth the cosmic creation. This world is the 'inscrutable mask' of Brahma, the Divine Mother, 'Ardhanarishwara', of all creation. Aswathapith can see Purusha and Prakriti in Creative Union in Brahma and the latter emanating from the Unknowable and the Unmanifest Absolute One.
Mystery of creation is unveiled to Aswapathi's evolved soul who can see the Ultimate Reality of all Creation as 'Sachchidananda'.

This is the most exalted vision of Nature, of the (Creation) Goddess of Light; of Savitri, the goddess of Light. Aswapathi experiences 'Ananda' i.e. spiritual Bliss and Sri Aurobindo describes the state of his mind at in this stage of his conscious realization of Existence as 'Sachchidananda':-

Neighbour his being grew to Nature's crests. The primal Energy took him in its arms; His brain was wrapped in overwhelming Light; An all-embracing knowledge seized his heart; Thoughts rose in him no earthly mind can hold, Mights played that never coursed through mortal nerves: He scanned the secrets of the Overmind, He bore the rapture of the Oversoul. A borderer of the empire of the Sun, Attuned to the supernal harmonies, He linked creation to the Eternal's shape,75

The image of "Nature's crests" holds the key to the entire scope of the poem. Man, like Aswapathi, needs to raise the level of his consciousness to Nature—crests. Nature has its heaven for man. In Nature lives the Divine Mother, the Creatrix. As Aswapathi experiences the Bliss and Beauty of man's eternal relationship with Nature the primal
energy takes him in its arms. His 'Kundaline' awakes and he is spiritually transformed into a gnostic being. The poet then goes on describing the state of Aswapathi's enlightened mind. The Light descends on him and he attains the "all embracing knowledge". The "Cosmic Force" or "Kundaline" wakes up in his will and he is overwhelmed by a novel experience of 'Sachchidananda' as his mind is evolved to the higher level of the "Overmind".

In this exalted state of mind, Aswapathi attains to the gnostic heights and becomes one with the Divine Spirit as a Gnostic Being. Aswapathi can now feel one Heart throbbing in all Nature:

A Nature throbbing with a Heart divine
Was felt in the unconscious universe.76

Aswapathi's Yoga is a journey into the inner regions of Nature on the wings of the soul. Nature is found pulsating with a "Heart divine". The apparently unconscious universe is actually Conscious. Soon Aswapathi saw that the universe is the robe of the Supreme Wisdom:

The Wisdom was near, disguised by its own works,
Of which the darkened universe is the robe.77

Nature is the manifestation of the Supreme "Wisdom"
and darkness is only the "robe" covering the Supreme Light within like the body covering the soul. Aswapathi at the climax of his evolved consciousness of Truth can see into the Divinity of the Universe. The same Divine Light prevails and the same Divine Heart throbs in the Universe which is wrapped in the "robe" of the same darkness.

Aswapathi now can see into the future of the world which is bound to evolve and transform itself in the Light of the Divine Goddess (Nature) gradually Creating and recreating it out of itself and into itself:

All here shall be one day her sweetness's home,
All contraries prepare her harmony;
Towards her our knowledge climbs, our passion gropes,
In her miraculous rapture we shall dwell,
Her clasp will turn to ecstasy our pain.
Our self shall be one self with all through her.

Aswapathi can prophetically visualize Nature evolving itself into its Divine Self and transforming pain into ecstasy. Mystery of Nature is solved. Aswapathi's soul embraces the entire universe as its own being:

A last and mightiest transformation came
His soul was all in front like a great sea
Flooding the mind and body with its waves;
His being, spread to embrace the universe,
United the within and the without,
To make of the life a cosmic harmony,
An empire of the immemorial Divine.
The "mightiest transformation" implicitly awakes the might of the soul (which has been called 'Kundaline' in the Indian tradition of Yoga). The Supreme Light of Aswapathi's soul floods his mind as well as body like "a great sea". The image of the "great sea" refers to the vastness and power of cosmic Brahma; and Aswapathi's soul being flooded by the sea of Cosmic Brahma's Light and Power, metaphorically, suggests the immersion or unification of Aswapathi's self consciousness with the larger cosmic consciousness of Brahma. Brahma's Rajasiv guna, the cosmic energy descends on Aswapathi's seeking soul and, overwhelmed by its flood of Light he can see into the Truth of Ultimate Reality of Nature. The poet then describes the union of the soul within and the Soul without that transforms all life (for Aswapathi) into "a cosmic harmony". The idea is that spiritual unity with Nature can awake the human soul to the seas of Light, Power, Beauty or ecstasy of conscious Nature i.e. 'Sachchidananda' for those who aspire and keep in dynamic harmony with the spirit of evolution in Nature. This is how, in the lines above, Sri S Aurobindo describes the evolution of Aswapathi's spiritual vision of total cosmic transformation — the transformation of all Nature, the transformation of the body and the soul into the Divine Being. Aswapathi's visionary
experience is further described by the poet in these words:

One grew the Spirit's secret unity
All nature felt again the single bliss;
There was no cleavage between soul and soul
There was no barrier between world and God.80

In this vision of unity of the subjective and the objective aspects of Reality "The one consciousness that made the world was seen"81 and all being "now luminosity and force"82 the veil of darkness and ignorance was completely removed from Aswapathl's spiritual eye. His heart now beats in rhythm and harmony with the cosmic heart of God:

Man's heart that had obscured the Inviolable,
Assumed the mighty beating of a god's;
His seeking mind ceased in the Truth that Knows;
His life was a flow of the universal life.83

As Aswapathi's life evolved in unity with the universal life, he prepared for his spiritual ascent beyond the world in order to realize the "Descent" of the Divine Light to the earth to save mankind from erring, under illusions of darkness, into suffering, evil, pain and death. Such lines, as quoted above do, again and again enunciate Sri Aurobindo's idea of dual movement of evolution and devolution. As man evolves his mind and spiritual consciousness, the Divine Light assents to descend to the earth to save it from suffering, ignorance and evil. Sri Aurobindo's concept of evolution in Nature, therefore,
enunciates a simultaneous dual movement. While the human mind ascends in the light of the soul, the Supreme Light descends in response to the soul's call. In this way, even a single soul, like Aswapathi's can bring about the transformation of universal consciousness. In this view of evolution of the self and the universal consciousness Sri Aurobindo has reconciled the Indian doctrine of self-evolution and the Western theory of cosmic evolution. Self-evolution of Aswapathi is going to lead the evolution of the entire cosmic consciousness. In this state of consciousness evil, pain and death can no longer be the enemies of man. In this state of Consciousness of Infinity he has transcended all the barriers of death and darkness. In this vision, first the manifest becomes the Unmanifest - The Absolute One; and then the Unmanifest Absolute One is seen manifest in Nature:

A Bliss, a Light, a Power, a flame-white Love,
Caught all into a sole immense embrace;
Existence found its truth on Oneness' breast,
And each became the self and space of all.
The great world-rhythms were heart-beats of One Soul,
To feel was a flame-discovery of God,
All mind was a single harp of many strings,
All life a song of many meeting lives;
For worlds were many, but the Self was one.
This knowledge was made a cosmos' seed:
This seed was ceased in the safety of the Light,
It needed not a sheath of Ignorance,
Then from the trance of that tremendous clasp,
And from the throbings of that single Heart,
And from the naked Spirit's victory
A new and marvellous creation rose.84

Aswapathi at once becomes conscious of a "Cosmic Bliss", a 'Light', 'a Power' and 'flame-white Love' in an experience of an immense spiritual embrace with the larger Cosmic Self. At this level of higher consciousness, he finds One in all and all in One. Aswapathi's heart now beats in union with the Cosmic Heart in an experience of Bliss of universal rhythm in his evolved spiritual state of Self-consciousness and in realization of his oneness with the One in all. In this consciousness of universal unity Aswapathi saw "a cosmos" seed. This "Cosmos" seed born from the unity of Purusha and Prakriti, is root of unity of all existence for the worlds may be many but the cosmic "Self" i.e. Purusha and Prakriti in Brahma as 'Ardhanarishwara' is one as united or intertwined in that tremendous creative "clasp" in the Light of the Supreme sheathed in darkness of the Void. Aswapathi's soul having reached the highest planes of consciousness, removed the mask or sheath of darkness and ignorance from the face of reality and saw the Two in One in creative unity in the Unmanifest's manifest Light. This revelation shows the perfection
of Aswapathi's evolved vision or 'Vidya'.

Ignorance and darkness which sheath and wrap the
"Light" are banished. From this "seed" of Bliss of creative
unity of the Two - in - One "a new marvellous creation" evolves
in the cosmic Void. Aswapathi, by implication, spiritually
accomplishes the task of preparing the earth for the free
growth of the "seed" of the Spirit and for the subsequent
spiritual transformation of the world. He has pierced through
the illusory robe of darkness that covers knowledge and light.
In other words Aswapathi prepares the earth for the Flame
Incarnate of Knowledge and Light, Savitri, to descend and free
the world from the clutches of death and darkness.

ADVENT OF SAVITRI - THE SUN WORD - THE DIVINE LIGHT

As promised, Savitri, the Divine Mother, descends to
the earth as Aswapathi's daughter. Nature celebrates the
Divine Flame's Incarnation, the earthly birth of Savitri:

All Nature was at beauty's festival.
In this high single moment of the gods
Answering earth's yearning and her cry for bliss
A greatness from our other countries came.85

Nature is seen at beauty's festival "in this single
moment"of descent. Nature acts as a living character and as a
constant companion to Savitri and Satyavan. Besides Savitri's royal parents, it is Nature which like a loving Mother brings up Savitri and Satyavan. As Savitri grows up she communicates with the mystic heart in space, in the changing seasons in the earth's evolution in a cyclical movement "towards a far off unknown goal", there is 'summer with his pomp of violent moons', and then there is the rainy season:-

Rain-tide burst in upon torn wings of heat,  
Startled with lightnings air's unquiet drowse,  
Lashed with life-giving streams the torpid soil,  
Overcast with flare and sound and storm-winged dark  
The star-defended doors of heaven's dim sleep,  
Or from the gold eye of her paramour  
Covered with packed cloud-veils the earth's brown face.  
Armies of revolution crossed the time-field,  
The clouds' unending march besieged the world,  
Tempests' pronunciamentos claimed the sky  
And thunder drums announced the embattled gods.  
A traveller from unquiet neighbouring seas  
The dense-maned monsoon rode neighing through earth's hours.

This description of the rain tide, besides recalling Shelley's treatment of the sun-god, interprets the functions of the Rig Vedic Varuna in a new mode and register of science as a force of Nature as dynamic principle of movement termed 'Rita' in the Rig Veda. Rain and lightenings startle "air's unquiet drowse". 'Drowse' is Sri Aurobindo's image of inert or tamasic nature of dormant consciousness in matter and things which appear lifeless at a glance. This inertia is
broken by Varuna, whose "rain-tide startle the air's unquiet drowse". As tamasic drowse or inertia is startled, new life consciousness will appear in new forms in evolving Nature. This awakening of consciousness can be witnessed at different levels of existence in Nature as energy of Conscious Being whose (Light's child, Savitri, is also recovering higher consciousness in its dynamic movement marked by changing seasons just as Wordsworth's Lucy learns from Nature. This description of evolving Nature in dynamic rhythms, quantitative numbers capturing the music of the "thunder drums" and falling rains is followed by a short description of autumn marking a change in Nature's mood, which is brought out through a change in tone and imagery :-

Autumn led in the glory of her moons
And dreamed in the splendour of her lotus pools.88

While 'sun' and 'lightening' are the dominating images of summer and the rainy season, autumn has "The glory of her moons". It is dreaming and inactive for "moon" and "lotus" are images of dreamy inactivity and indolence.

Winter succeeds autumn at the end of the year's cycle:-

And Winter and Dew-time laid their calm cool hands
On Nature's bosom still in a half sleep
And deepend with hues of lax and mellow ease
The tranquil beauty of the waning year.89
Even winter is described in "a half sleep and mellow ease".
With the years passing in Time the Divine Flame is growing up along the evolutionary movement of Nature. Winter gives way to Spring and Savitri enters the stage of youth. The poet describes the queen of seasons:–

Then Spring, an ardent lover, leaped through leaves
And caught the earth bride in his eager clasp;
His advent was a fire of irised hues,
His arms were a circle of the arrival of joy.
His voice was a call to Transcendent's sphere.90

Like Vedic Indra, Spring is personified as "an ardent lover" who weds the earth and creates new life, beauty and freshness.

Loving creativity of the Spring and the earth-bride suggests the loving union of Purusha and Prakriti resulting in new creation in Nature. Indeed, the creative spirit of love permeates Nature. Visual beauty of the spring season is projected through imagery of colour and its rhythm and music are described as "a call to the Transcendent". The spring season arouses the spirit of love by its musical voice throughout His Nature.

The image of "Transcendent's sphere" for Nature is used to depict the evolutionary movement of Cosmic Nature which as "Transcendent's sphere" is His manifestation. Spring as Spirit of Love (Ritam) acts on the conscious being ('Aditi')
as a lover acts on the beloved in a wedding embrace and the result is new creation. Thus the 'ancient sweetness' of Nature is remoulded into new shapes and the 'leela' or the Passion play of the becoming of the Being continues in this eternal movement of Nature. Death cannot stop this process. It cannot dishearten man either. He, too, like the Spring, plays an ardent lover undeterred by death. Love and bliss in Nature are eternal and throbs of love can always awake "the old delight. And beauty and rapture and joy to live". As love brings delight and desire to live, the advent of the Spring brings joy to all things in Nature. There is a spirit of general yearning in Nature and the poet continues to describe the colour and song of the beautiful season:-

White jasmines haunted the enamoured air,
Pale mango-blossoms fed the liquid voice
Of the love-maddened coil, and the brown bee
Muttered in fragrance mid the honey-buds.
The sunlight was a great god's golden smile,
All Nature was at beauty's festival.91

This is imagist poetry at its best in the narrative mode. Such sensuous descriptions of the colours and hues, rhythms and songs of Nature in audio-visual imagery are rare in poetry. This aesthetic opulence in Sri Aurobindo recalls Kalidasa and Keats. The Vedic concept of Nature as 'Ritam' i.e. dynamic principle of change is aesthetically rendered in
English verse in quantitative meter and imagist form. In fact, the entire poem is full of such rich descriptions of Nature, the dynamic principle, 'Ritam' as 'Sat - Chit - Ananda.' The beauty of the forest where Satyavan and Savitri meet is given a graphic description in the poem:

And slowly a supine inconstant breeze
Ran like a fleeting sigh of happiness
Over slumberous grasses pranked with green and gold.

In Book Five Canto Two Satyavan and Savitri grow up in these beauties of evolving Nature (as her own children). Nature has given them light, love and care. They commune with objects of Nature throughout their lives. Nature is their mother, guide and guardian. But Nature in this epic of life and death and man and God has been viewed at different levels of perception and consciousness. An integral vision of unity of Nature emerges from this varying presentation of Nature in this epic as the poetic vision evolves from this aesthetic, scientific and dynamic perception of 'Ritam' and 'Aditi' to a spiritual consciousness of Ultimate Reality of Nature.

DIVINE LIGHT (SAVITRI) WEDS HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS (SATYAVAN)

The meeting of Satyavan and Savitri symbolizes the
meeting of Earth and Heaven. Nature provides for this meeting of Earth and Heaven in one of its most enchanting chambers of beauty:—

The white crane stood, a vivid motionless streak,
Peacock and parrot jewelled soil and tree,
The dove's soft moan enriched the enamoured air
And fire-winged Wild-drakes swam in silvery pools,
Earth couched alone with her great lover Heaven,
Uncovered to her consort's purple eye.
In her luxurious ecstasy of joy
She squandered the love-music of her notes,
Wasted the passionate pattern of her blooms
And festival riot of her scents and hues.

Marriage of Savitri and Satyavan symbolizes the uniting (Love) relationship of Earth and Heaven, Purusha and Prakriti. It recalls the marriage of Rama and Sita, Krishna and Radha, Shiva and Parvati as the creativity principle of unity of the male and female. Sansuous imagery "squandered" to describe the joys of marriage of Satyavan and Savitri explicates the creativity principle of 'Ananda' in Nature. In other words the symbolic significance of the marriage of the Divine Light Incarnate and Satyavan (Man i.e Truth Consciousness of Light of existence) fordoing the birth of Super-consciousness of Light in existence and resulting in Light, Bliss or 'Ananda'-consciousness in all existence is described in images drawn from Nature's familiar existence on the earth. The supernatural is naturalised with rapture and felicity. Sri Aurobindo describes the
scene of the union of Satyavan and Savitri (in Nature) in
the same style:-

The mighty Mother lay outstretched at ease
All was in line with her first satisfied plan
Moved by a universal will of joy
The trees bloomed in their green felicity
And the wild children brooded not on pain. 93A

Expectation of love and fulfilment transforms everything. Nature in peace, beauty and charm makes for the
meeting of the living Light and Man. By implication, Heavenly
love and bliss prevail in the rhythm of pure harmonies of
Nature, and Heaven can be seen in such regions of Nature.
Such are the spheres where gods dwell, Love delights and
Beauty reigns. Poets have been trying to see and sing of
Nature but have usually stopped short of realizing such divi-
nity in Nature. Only a poet like Sri Aurobindo, taking forward
the insights of a Kalidasa or Vyasa, a Dante or a Keats or
those fore-runners of men, the Vedic Rishis of Yore (like
Aswapathi) could see into the Divine Beauty of things.
Sri Aurobindo holds like the Vedantans that Ultimate Reality
of Nature can be apprehended only by seeing with the eye of
the soul. Satyavan's words explicate the reach and range
of the mind of poets who depend exclusively on the key of
sensuous apparatus to the secret Light of the Immanent spirit in the opaqueness of matter and find it not:--

I converse with Nature, mused with the changless stars
God's watch-fires burning in the ignorant Night,
I glimpsed the presence of the One in all.
But still there lacked the last transcendent power,
And Matter still slept empty of its Lord.94

All tokens and clues of God are there. But only the evolved mind can see and recognise Him through these symbols. Stars are "God's watch-fires burning in the ignorance of Night". The prophetic rays of the eternal's sun illumine the Void of Night and forebode new creativity manifesting Him in his Light emanating from the heart of Night's darkness. But Satyavan cannot see God's Light in His creation because he depends on sense-mind instead of seeing within to recognise things without. All the glimpses of One in all do not help transcend the barriers of darkness and inertia of matter to see reality. The Light Incarnate, as his better half, will now illumine his mind:--

But thou hast come and all will surely change:
I shall feel the world-Mother in thy golden limbs
And hear her wisdom in thy sacred voice.
The child of the Void shall be reborn in God.
My Matter shall evade the Inconscient's trance,
My body like my spirit shall be free:
I shall escape from Death and Ignorance.95
Light has come to wed man for the generation of new consciousness of bliss. Satyavan now finds hope of earth's emancipation and salvation in Savitri that everything will henceforth "change". A new consciousness of the presence of the Divine Light (the World Mother) in her (as light personified) will descend on him and he will see everything in that divine light. Her voice as the voice of Nature will convey the lessons of ('Vidya') "wisdom" of Nature to him and a new gnostic child of Light and Truth will be born out of their wed-lock. Matter will be freed of inconscient's inertia and the spirit shall find freedom from the shackles of the body. This new salvation of the spirit from the limitation of body consciousness will release him (man) from the darkness and death i.e. ignorance ('Avidya'). This is Vedantic concept of salvation ('Vidya') of the soul from the shackles of the matter consciousness (Avidya). This expectation of the world - soul (represented by Satyavan) is going to be fulfilled by the Flame Incarnate, Savitri who has descended to the earth in response to Aswapathi's call for earth's salvation from Death and Ignomace by way of the evolution of human consciousness.
SAVITRI'S YOGIC MEDITATION ON HUMAN PREDICAMENT

Savitri can never forget Narada's forecast of Satyavan's death. In a state of deep concern she hears a mysterious call telling her to look within. Savitri, thereafter, practises Yoga and prepares herself to meet the challenge of Death and darkness ('avidya'). She remembers her own words in reply to her parents on Narada's prophecy:

Death's grip can break our bodies, not our souls! If death take him, I too know how to die.96

Immortality and invincibility of love and soul is asserted in these words conveying Savitri's unflinching resolve to face the challenges of fate and death and expose its false sophistication and masked illusory darkness which covers light from man's vision.

There are ways to 'slay' darkness (ignorance) i.e. to turn hostility into peace, darkness to light, ignorance to knowledge and 'avidya' to 'vidya':-

Yes, there are happy ways near to God's sun; But few are they who tread the sunlit path; Only the pure in soul can walk in light. 97

As Narada tells the queen, Savitri's mother, "Only the pure in soul" can transcend the barriers of ignorance and inertia.
Ignorance is the cause of evil, suffering and man's reliance on unevolved sensory perception is the cause of his ignorance ('avidya'):

Thy mind's light hides from thee the Eternal's thought
Thy heart's hopes hide from thee the Eternal's will!
Earth's joy shut from thee the Immortal's bliss,
Thence rose the need of a dark intruding god,
The world's dread teacher, the creator, pain.
Where Ignorance is, there suffering too must come.98

The "heart's hopes" and the "Earth's joys" are illusory. And misleading quest of luxury and pleasure takes man away from the path of truth. Thereby man falls a victim of falsehoods, shadows and illusions. Truth lies in Light and purity of the soul. Truth can be perceived by the soul. Such perception means 'vidya' i.e. true knowledge. To awake man out of self complacence and sensual allurement "pain, the world's dread teacher" was created. Ignorance or body-confined 'avidya' is the cause of human suffering. God knowledge i.e. Nature knowledge ('vidya') is the only way out. So man must see the Soul in Matter as an analogy to the soul in the human body, for Matter or body as a "vast disguise conceals the Eternal's bliss."99 But giving up to uncertainty of the sense mind's perception men often fail to see "the soul in Matter" and find release from man's predicament of lower consciousness.
Man is a mixture of light and inconscient matter depending on sense mind for his knowledge, he remains uncertain in "an uncertain light". Sense mind cannot apprehend Reality simply because it looks for meaning only in the surface appearances of the "world whose purpose and meaning are hidden from our sight". Above him dwells God hidden in the mask or "mystery" of His own Light. He is placed on the "middle is-thmus". Around him is vast ignorance. Below him is the material world of the inconscient, dark mute. Man can find light if he ascends to higher regions of consciousness. His spiritual degeneration will lead to his down-fall. Savitri is now reviewing the human situation and the problem of evil, human suffering, pain and death in the light of the soul. She discovers that if man evolves himself properly, he can wake up to great spiritual vistas of light, truth, power, beauty and energy through his own soul:—

Our greater self of knowledge waits for us,
A supreme light in the truth conscious Vast:
It sees from summits beyond thinking mind,
It moves in a splendid air transcending life.
It shall descend and make earth's life divine.100

Savitri can see that "A supreme light in the truth conscious Vast /Shall descend and make earth's life divine".
This prophetic perception of "greater self of knowledge holds the hope of human evolution. Like the Vedantists, Sri Aurobindo's Savitri finds that neither little mind-ego nor physical senses but "only the spirit's vision" can help man see Reality:

Our sight and sense are a fallible gaze and touch
And only the spirit's vision is wholly true.101

Only the 'pilot' within can save man from 'avidya' and evil. And seeing within her soul like the Vedic seers, she can see Reality in oneness with all that she saw in her spiritual vision:

The World Puissance on Almighty Shiva's lap, ...
The Master and the Mother of all lives
Watching the world their twin regard had made,
And Krishna and Radha for ever entwined in bliss,
The Adorer and Adored self-lost and one.
In the last chamber on a golden seat
One sat whose shape no vision could define
Only one felt the world's unattainable fount,
A Power of which she was a straying Force,
An invisible Beauty, goal of the world's desire,
A Sun of which all knowledge is a beam,
A Greatness without whom no life could be.102

Savitri's meditation on the problem of human suffering, pain, death and evil and her yogic quest of the way of man's salvation from these shackles of ignorance and error of perception opens her soul to her own divinity. In Yoga both Aswapathi and Savitri undertake a long journey of the soul's self-discovery. Here the inner and the outer become one in One.
CONTEMPLATING THE ISSUE OF DEATH

Contemplation and exposition of unreality of death in comparison with divinity of soul is the aim of this epic of Light. Savitri has come to the earth to save man from the clutches of darkness of Death, which in association with evil, pain and suffering, is a metaphor of ignorance. From the time of forecasting of Satyavan's death Savitri has been contemplating the issue of Death to apprehend the mystery of Death. Throughout the year since her marriage she has been looking with-in (Yogic meditation) to solve the riddle of Death.

She finds like Aswapathi that Death is nothing but an illusion:

> Our life's re:pose is in the Infinite,  
> It cannot end, its end is Life supreme  
> Death is a passage, not the goal of our walk:  
> Some ancient deep impulsion labours on:  
> Our souls are dragged as with a hidden leash,  
> Carried from birth to birth, from world to world,  
> Our acts prolong after the body's fall  
> The old perpetual journey without pause. 103

The soul's journey continues from birth to birth and from world to world at different levels (of conscious being)
depending on one's acts (Karama as cause — effect of this chain of births and stages in the soul's journey to the Infinite who is the soul's "Repose" and God). Death is only "a passage, not the goal of our walk. These lines (above) sum up Sri Aurobindo's concept of Death. But the discussion is not so brief. The poet does not want to leave his thesis unproved. His Savitri probes deep into the mystery of Death, The latter is allowed a freedom to assert and prove her validity and significance. Death asserts herself strongly to delude Savitri in her Yogic contemplation:–

I am Death and the dark terrible Mother of life,
I am Kali black and naked in the world,
I am Maya and the universe is my cheat.
I lay waste human happiness with my breath
And slay the will to live, the joy to be
That all may pass back into nothingness.104

Death boasts that it is the "dark terrible Mother of Life"
but exposes itself as "Maya" and the "cheat" of the universe.
It slays the will to live and makes "all pass into nothingness".
But Savitri being the incarnation of Divine Light who is the Divine Mother of all creation has descended to the earth to save man from the darkness of death and will not succumb to such superficial tactics and braggings of Death:–

But not to submit and suffer was she born;
To lead, to deliver was her glorious part.
Here was no fabric of terrestrial make
Fit for a day's use by busy careless Powers. 105

The Flame Incarnate, has to deliver human mind from the clutches of dark death and its role of imposing limitations. She resolves to expose the false rule of delusive Death. Her Yogic contemplation wakes her own consciousness to her spiritual power and invincibility. Savitri resolved to meet death squarely in this light of her own soul.

SAVITRI'S CONFRONTATION WITH DEATH

Savitri faces Death on the fateful day at the end of a year of conjugal bliss. On this day, resolute and calm, she insists on accompanying Satyavan to the forest where Satyavan feels a cleaving pain in his head and dies in her lap. But Savitri will not let Death take away Satyavan's soul. An epic debate between Light and Darkness ensues. Savitri, the goddess of Light, asserts herself against the darkness of Death to counterpoint and high light the immortality of human soul while Death, the sophist God of Darkness, brags of its significance, power and function in Nature:

I am, the Illimitable, the mute Alone.
I, Death, am He; there is no other God.
All from my depths are born, they live by death;
All to my depths return and are no more.
I have made a world by my inconscient Force
My force is Nature that creates and slays
The hearts that hope, the limbs that long to live.106

This is false bragging, a fraudulant vaunt, the ignorant's view of reality. This is a false interpretation of Nature by this Sophist God of 'avidya'. Savitri replies to this blinding reasoning:

O Death, who reasonest, I reason not,
Reason that scans and breaks, but cannot build.
Or builds in vain because she doubts her work.
I am, I love, I see, I act, I will.107

Sri Aurobindo (Savitri) rejects the method and approach of reason. Reason "scans and breaks". It cannot see the whole, all in One and One in all. It is analytical and not integral or adhesive or uniting. It disintegrates, it will not unite. It misleads and will not show the Light which the soul has and which it can see in the cosmos at large. Savitri, asserting the truth of the soul, upholds the reality of the Absolute. She tells Dark Death:

I know the calm Transcendent bears the world,
The veiled Inhabitant, the silent Lord:
I feel his secret act, his intimate fire;
I hear the murmur of the Cosmic Voice.
I know my coming was a wave from God.
For all his suns were conscient in my birth,
And one who loves in us came veiled by death.
Then man was born among the monstrous stars
Dowered with a mind and heart to conquer thee.108
Savitri proclaims the truth of the world which is born of the Transcendent Supreme, Unmanifest, "the veiled Inhabitant". In her spiritual light (radiating from the Supreme) she can feel God manifest in His "intimate fire". In this spiritual consciousness she can hear His Voice and knows the purpose of her descent to the earth which is to carry out the will of the Supreme who is veiled from the vision of man by darkness, ignorance and death. She tells death that man is well dowered with a mind and heart that can "conquer thee". She tells that man can conquer death by way of his spiritual self-realization i.e. 'Vidya'.

Exposing the unreality of Death, she declares that Death is not real and that only the Existence of the Absolute in Nature is real. Death is unreal:

But Maya is a veil of the Absolute;
A truth occult has made this mighty world:
The Eternal's wisdom and self-knowledge act
In ignorant Mind and in the body's steps,
The Inconscient is the Super-conscient's sleep.

Death is the delusion of Maya which is the veil of the Absolute. This world is not an illusion. Even the seemingly "Inconscient" is dormantly conscient. Matter which seems inconscient has his consciousness in it which is just dormant and inert. Matter hides the Superconscient in His
state of sleep. Nothing is dead. All is Conscient. One is in all and all is in One.

LOVE AND DEATH AND ULTIMATE GOAL OF NATURE

Replying to Death's debate Savitri declares that it cannot Kill her love for Satyavan :-

My love is not a craving of the flesh;
It came to me from God, to God returns.110

Love in the human soul flows from its Source in the Supreme Soul's Love for His creation. Spiritual love as rooted in 'Him' is beyond the killing reach of Death. Satyavan's soul is imperishable and eternal. It comes from God and will return (immortal) to its Fountain Head - God. By implication, spiritual love, emanating in the Supreme Spirit, cannot be perished or destroyed by Death as can be anything of physical shape, body or form. It is eternal. Emanating from God it can help one, who shows it, to reach the Goal of salvation in a reunion with the Supreme One. Salvation from the shackles of the bodily (dross) consciousness, being the Goal of all evolution in Nature, can be achieved through Love. This theme of supremacy and immortality of love over Death is the soul of Sri Aurobindo's poetry - lyrical, legendary as well
as epic. Love is viewed as the cause of devolution and love
is the cause (or urge) and Goal of all evolution of Nature.
Like Ruru in Love and Death Savitri empowered by Love asserts
the supremacy of Love which evolves and leads man to freedom
in reunion with the Supreme instead of entangling man in the
ways of flesh and Maya which are subject (bound) to the laws
of change and Death. Nature itself is urged by this spirit
of Love to move forward for the spiritual transformation and
divinization of all things. The Infinite embraces the fi-
nite in absolute love. Savitri here articulates Sri Aurobindo
's concept of Nature which spells that, as the Consciousness
Force of the Divine, it is urgently (lovingly) and incessant-
ly moving forward to resume its original status in Oneness
with the Absolute :-

A mute material Nature wakes and sees:
She has invented speech, and unveiled a will.
Something there waits beyond towards which she
strives,
Something surrounds her into which she grows:
To uncover the spirit, to change back into God,
In God concealed the world began to be,
Tardily itTagawaels towards manifest God:
Our imperfection towards perfection toils,
The body is the chrysalis of a soul:
The infinite holds the finite in its arms,
Time travels towards revealed eternity. 111

Replying to Death's claim that Nature is a "mute material",
Savitri tells it that Nature "Wakes and sees" and in her
speech and rhythm she has "unveiled a will". The "will" that Nature reveals through her action evolves it upwards towards its own Divine Source that is the Absolute Unmanifest One. She evolves to "uncover the spirit, to change back to God". This evolution in Nature continues gradually as it endeavours to reveal the Unseen in it by reducing the gap between the apparent and the Real through improvement and change in forms trying to convert them into their original Spirit and His celestial Beauty manifesting the Unmanifest in it. "Tardily" i.e. slowly and gradually it moves to be apparently one with God in its Beauty, Bliss, Power, Love and Light. Our imperfection, says the protagonist and saviour of man, 'towards perfection toils', Man displaying the work of evolution of Nature at its apex (as creativity principle) is constantly striving for perfection by gradually evolving himself free from Pain, Death, evil, little ego and darkness through God knowledge and Soul knowledge ('vidya') by way of achieving more and more spiritual consciousness of his oneness with the Supreme Light. In these terms Savitri asserts the truth of the Supreme Light in contrast with the falsehood of Death and its illusion.
Savitri grows more and more emphatic, more and more scoring and more and more convincing in tone and tenor of this debate and asserts the Truth of the Supreme Light of the Absolute Unmanifest manifesting in Nature. She reveals through her speech God immanent in His Light in creation as Sat-Chit-Ananda:

A blaze of his sovereign glory is the sun,
A glory is the gold and glimmering moon.
A glory is his dream of purple sky,
A march of his greatness are the wheeling (stars),
His Laughter of beauty breaks out in green trees
The blue sea's chant, the rivulet's wandering voice
Are murmurs falling from the Eternal's harp,
This world is God fulfilled in outwardness.112

The sun and the moon radiate the light of God in Nature. The sky reflects the glory of God's dream creation and the moving stars reveal the evolutionary movement of the creation back to its Divine Source the Unmanifest Absolute One whom all Nature is endeavouring to manifest through gradually perfecting her own forms of Beauty and 'Vidya' i.e. universal consciousness of the Being. The trees reveal God's laughter and the flowers manifest His Beauty. The dancing rivers, the murmuring rivulets, the blue seas and the singing winds play the notes of the Divine's music. This world, says Sri Aurobindo
(Savitri) is the revelation of the outward glory of God. God is World. God in is the Subject (Immanent), World is the object. Nature imagery of colour and sound and dynamic movement is deliberately employed to reveal the Immanent Unmanifest and to depict the becoming of the Being. Savitri manifests the Unmanifest Absolute in Nature. The Unmanifest is as Immanent in every line of this poem of the vision of Soul's Light as He is in Nature which it treats as 'Sachchidananda'. Every line moves and reveals (counterpointing the delusive secrecy of Death) that world originated in God and to God it proceeds and that God is omnipresent in Nature as such, Death has no locus standi in this world. It is just a change, a pause, an illusion. Man will certainly see the unreality of Death. Evolutionary progression of man in harmony with the laws of evolution in Nature will decidedly enable man to gain self-knowledge, Nature knowledge and God knowledge. Illusion or veil of Death will be rent apart. Man will realize his own divine perfection. Conscious self-realization will lead to the evolutionary development of the sense mind through various planes and stages to the SuperMind. This development of the mind into Super Mind will
enable man to see and apprehend the Ultimate Reality and Goal of all movement and evolution of Nature. The gaps between the soul (subject) and the universe (object) will vanish and all will be seen in One and One in all. This concept of evolution of Supramental Consciousness in dynamic relationship with evolution in Nature, going on simultaneously in the inner self and cosmic Self, reconciles the Indian concept of evolution of the self and the Western concept of evolution of Nature as the Cosmic movement of objective reality. Sri Aurobindo's Savitri, as an integral vision of the subjective and the objective unity, has resolved all contradictions and conflicts. The subject of the debate between Death and Savitri is also proceeding in that direction of Light ('Vidya').

In the Supramental state of consciousness man will transcend the darkness of Death in the Light of the Sun of God. Savitri, herself the Divine Flame Incarnate, descended to bring the divine light to the earth. In this debate Savitri has divested Death of all her unreal powers and Death is forced to shed its mysterious darkness on the verge of an imminent defeat in this confrontation with the Spirit
of Light — the Divine Flame of the Lord the Mother of all creation - Nature. Savitri displays in her Divine Light all existence as the manifestation of the Absolute:—

The All-Wonderful has packed heaven with his dreams, He has made blank ancient Space his marvel-house; He spilled his spirit into Matter's signs: His fires of grandeur burn in the great sun, He glides through heaven shimmering in the moon; He is beauty carolling the fields of sound He chants the stanzas of the odes of Wind; He is silence watching in the stars at night; He wakes at dawn and calls from every bough, Lies stunned in the stone and dreams in flower and tree.

Even in this labour and dolour of Ignorance, On the hard perilous ground of difficult earth, In spite of death and evil circumstance A will to live persists, a joy to be.113

Nature manifests God. He shines in the gliding moon and "He is beauty carolling" in the sounds of Nature. The winds sing His song and the stars have His silence watching the earth at night. Inspite of the delusive cover of evil, death and Ignorance on all Creation, "a will to live persists in everything". There is "a joy to be" in every object of Nature. Nature as such reveals One in all and all in One. It is 'Sachchidananda'. This is said out of faith in Divine Reality in a tone of affirmation to Truth. This is an enunciation of bare Truth like a mantra of the Upanishads. This is the soul's authenticated and vivid interpretation of
the truths of Nature in the words of Savitri. Savitri employs
an affirmatory and truthful tone of hope and witness to coun-
terpoint the fallacious assertions of Death and its all nega-
ting tone vainly assertive of its own falsehood and unreality.
She tells Death that world is real and invincible and it
(Death) is nothing more than a shadow of darkness:

The world creates itself invincibly;
For its body is the body of the Lord
And in its heart stands Virat, King of Kings.114

Death cannot fail the creativity and continuity of the
world. It is invincible, real and eternal. It cannot die. It
is "the body of the Lord". At its heart is the most Powerful
Lord of all, the King of Kings, the Unmanifest Absolute One,
manifest in the universe as "Virat" Purusha. World heaves as
His mighty heart. Death cannot fail it. Death is a very
limited illusory entity in comparison with the invincibility
and eternity and infinity of the world.

EVOLUTION OF MAN INTO SUPER MAN

When Death tries to tell Savitri that man is so limited
in the prison of his mind and senses that neither can he see
light nor bridge the wide gulf between earth and heaven,
Savitri reminds him of the evolutionary march of man with Nature. She tells him that if man wills to head and move forward in faith and in harmony with Nature's evolutionary march, he will super-consciously ascend to the peaks of higher mind, illumined mind, intuitive mind, mind of light, over to Supermind to realize his true identity with the Supreme Spirit, the Absolute Unmanifest-manifest in him and Nature. This, according to Sri Aurobindo (Savitri) is the divine goal of Nature. But there is word of caution: case man fails to ascend upto the peaks of highest spiritual consciousness, Nature may turn out directionless:

If man lives bound by his humanity,
If he is tied for ever to his pain,
Let a greater being then arise from man,
The super-human with the Eternal mate
And the Immortal shine through earthly forms.
Else were creation vain and this great world
A nothing that in Time's moments seems to be.
But I have seen through the insentient's mask;
I have felt a secret spirit stir in things
Carrying the body of the growing God.115

Man, must endeavour hard to transcend the limitations of flesh and inertia. If he remains tied to his pain, "a greater being" may arise from man. Sri Aurobindo's concept of Superman is based on his vision and sound rationale of the entire process of Nature's evolution. Matter
evolves into life-consciousness and life-consciousness evolves into mind consciousness at the level of man. And this evolution, being a continuum, cannot stop at this stage of the emergence of the mental being. Mental being is a transient phenomenon. A new supermental consciousness is bound to emerge in the course of evolution in the future. Supramental Consciousness will evolve a Super Man at the head of evolution in Nature. The Immortal will appear in His Light in "earthly forms". The Super Man will be the mate (equal) of the Eternal. Death will have no meaning or effect on the Supramental Consciousness of the Super Man. He will manifest God on the earth.

If this is not the purpose of Nature's evolution, the creation is vain and "this great world / A nothing that in Time's moments seems to be". These two lines bring out a lurking sense of doubt in the poet's mind. These words reverberate S. Alexander's view that Deities are likely to emerge from the process of evolution in Nature and concede Bergsonian and Alexandrian point that a new being may emerge in Nature over and above man. A strong sense of reason, and science based on phenomenal logic, occidental philosophy, ethos, and
theology lets not the Western man realize the Vedantic view of immanence of the Spirit (Atman) and the teleological significance of evolution in Nature. That is why, thinkers like Bergson and S. Alexander extend the theory of a possible emergence of a new Creation at the head of Nature's evolution. In these words the disbelief in the purpose of evolution in Nature is echoed. But Sri Aurobindo immediately qualifies these words of precaution to man by a reaffirmation of his vision of man's emergence as Super Man at the head of Nature's evolution. So Savitri declares that she has "felt secret spirit stir in things". Nature as becoming of the Being carries "the body of the growing God". The image of "growing God" reaffirms the poet's belief in emergence of Super Man at the top of Nature's evolution. This Super Man with his Supramental Consciousness will not only survive all on-slaughters of Death, Darkness, evil, ego, and ignorance but will undo them through evolution of Super Consciousness. With the emergence of the Immortal Super Man Death will lose even an illusory entity:

The Spirit shall look out through Matter's gaze
And Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face.
Then man and superman shall be at one.
And all the earth become a single life.
Even the multitude shall hear the Voice.
And turn to commune with the Spirit within
And strive to obey the high spiritual law;
This earth shall stir with impulses sublime,
Humanity awake to deepest self,
Nature the hidden godhead recognise. 116

Unarming death completely, Savitri prophesies that man shall have the will "to climb to his own heights". Truth Divine shall descend upon the earth. The dumb earth will awake to become a "sentient force". Spirit in Nature will emerge as "One deity". Matter will manifest the Spirit which remains hidden within it in a dormant state of its inertia. Man will evolve into Super Man and Nature will become Super Nature depicting in Reality, the Absolute Unmanifest One. Nature shall recognise "the hidden godhead" in it. Such divinization of its creation is the real aim of all evolution of Nature. Savitri throws these affirmations of Truth of Existence as 'Sachchidananda' in the face of all-wrapping darkness i.e. Death. She exposes the illusory Nature of Death. Savitri wins man's battle against Death and Ignorance. Savitri, the 'avtar' of the Divine Flame, the Divine Mother of all Creation, proves the Divinity of all things to Death. Savitri is much more than a match for Death. The latter is
worsted, humiliated and defeated in the epic debate. Death loses his own identity, his sophisticated unreality. The several boons offered to Savitri and the alluring suggestion made to her to shun struggling earth fail to influence or effect any change in Savitri's resolve to return with the soul of Satyavan to the earth. At last, Death has to release Satyavan's soul and Satyavan and Savitri come back to the earth. They are eagerly received by Satyavan's father whose eye-sight and Kingdom (symbols of vision and Power) have been restored following the Death's boons to Savitri.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

2. Sri Aurobindo 394.
3. Sri Aurobindo 492.
4. Sri Aurobindo 436.
5. Sri Aurobindo 436.
7. Dwivedi 25.
10. Sri Aurobindo, 525.
11. Sri Aurobindo, 524.
15. Sri Aurobindo, 525.
17. Sri Aurobindo, 527.
20. Sri Aurobindo, 528.
22. Sri Aurobindo, 530.
23. Sri Aurobindo, 530.
25. Sri Aurobindo, 531.
27. Sri Aurobindo, 532.
28. Sri Aurobindo, 528.
29. Sri Aurobindo, 525.
30. Sri Aurobindo, 528.
31. Sri Aurobindo, 527.
45. Sri Aurobindo, 5.
46. Sri Aurobindo, 5.
47. Sri Aurobindo, 6.
48. Sri Aurobindo, 155.
51. Sri Aurobindo, 155.
52. Sri Aurobindo, 177.
54. Sri Aurobindo, Savitri, 130.
55. Sri Aurobindo, 117.
56. Sri Aurobindo, 130.
59. Sri Aurobindo, 196.
60. Sri Aurobindo, 342.
61. Sri Aurobindo, 486 - 87.
62. Sri Aurobindo, 709.
64. Sri Aurobindo, Savitri, 22.
65. Sri Aurobindo, 697.
66. Sri Aurobindo, 698.
67. Sri Aurobindo, 659.
69. Sri Aurobindo, Savitri, 238.
70. Sri Aurobindo, 277.
71. Sri Aurobindo, 291.
72. Sri Aurobindo, 292.
73. Sri Aurobindo, 293.
74. Sri Aurobindo, 295.
75. Sri Aurobindo, 301 - 302.
76. Sri Aurobindo, 312.
77. Sri Aurobindo, 312.
78. Sri Aurobindo, 314.
79. Sri Aurobindo, 318.
80. Sri Aurobindo, 319.
81. Sri Aurobindo, 319.
82. Sri Aurobindo, 319.
83. Sri Aurobindo, 319.
84. Sri Aurobindo, 322 - 23.
86. Sri Aurobindo, 349.
88. Sri Aurobindo, 351.
89. Sri Aurobindo, 351.
90. Sri Aurobindo, 351.
91. Sri Aurobindo, 352.
92. Sri Aurobindo, 393.
93. Sri Aurobindo, 390.
93A. Sri Aurobindo, 390.
94. Sri Aurobindo, 405.
95. Sri Aurobindo, 406.
96. Sri Aurobindo, 432.
97. Sri Aurobindo, 448.
98. Sri Aurobindo, 443.
100. Sri Aurobindo, 484.
101. Sri Aurobindo, 525.
102. Sri Aurobindo, 525.
103. Sri Aurobindo, 197.
104. Sri Aurobindo, 535.
105. Sri Aurobindo, 17.
106. Sri Aurobindo, 593.
108. Sri Aurobindo, 594.
109. Sri Aurobindo, 600.
110. Sri Aurobindo, 612.
111. Sri Aurobindo, 623.
112. Sri Aurobindo, 624.
113. Sri Aurobindo, 630.
115. Sri Aurobindo, 693.