CHAPTER-VII

CONCLUSION

Sri Aurobindo is one of the greatest poet of India. He has written poetry not like an ordinary men but he wrote poetry like a Rishi. His poetry has been personified as Mantric poetry. He was a devotee and a person who experimented with life itself. He supported the cause of evolutionary process in his poetry. The present thesis analyses the legendary figures and symbolic presentation in the poetry of Sri Aurobindo. Apart from the minor poems which have taken place in the text of this thesis, this thesis concentrates on the legendary figures such as Savitri, Urvasie and others. By the presentation of legends, myths and symbols, Sri Aurobindo experiments the theory of Overhead philosophy. Overhead philosophy indicates that a man passes through various stages to be a complete men. The Vedic and Upanishadic Rishi’s have also stressed that without knowledge it is rather very difficult to realize the power of Truth or God or Parmatma or Noor (Eternal light). Sri Aurobindo thinks that it is by the support of the knowledge that the power of the manifestation of God can be realized. Truth in this mortal world is under the shadow of untruth
(mithya) in this mrityulok. By his constant tapasya, Sri Aurobindo has prepared the ground for mantric poetry. It is by his power of Yoga he has a very good bulk of creative poetry. He discussed and analysed so many thematic contents related to his spiritual journey. To quote few works of Sri Aurobindo will be proving the purpose of this thesis. His main writings are The Life Divine, The Secret of the Veda, Essays on the Gita, The Psychology of Social Development, A Defence of Indian Culture and The Synthesis of Yoga.

The present thesis have analysed the legendary, and symbolic poetry of Sri Aurobindo into seven chapters. Apart from introduction and conclusion, it covers up five, core chapters. The second chapter ‘Theme of Savitri and other poems’ is important in the sense that it shows the very source of the poem or the legend it has described. For example Sri Aurobindo has taken the legend of Savitri from the Mahabharata and the theme of Savitri is based on a story of victorious fight by love against death. Sri Aurobindo was attracted by this theme from his childhood. The other narrative of his legendary is that of Urvasie. It is also coming near to the theme of Savitri because Urvasie also faces some struggles which she made against mundane life.
The legend of **Savitri** had a special attraction for Sri Aurobindo. The figure of Savitri is a mystic symbol and redeeming power that inspires us to participate in our own everyday drama of crisis and resolution and safely come through the ordeal. Aswapathy, the Madra King undergoes austeries for eighteen years. The Goddess Savitri appears at last and grant him the boon of a daughter of great beauty (kanyatejaswini).

In due course, a daughter is born and is named Savitri. She grows up to be a maiden goddess like (deva rupini) and Aswapathy tells her to seek and choose a husband for herself. She chooses Satyavan as her husband. Narad tells Aswapathy that Satyavan has but one year of earthy life left. Savitri, however, is firm and marries Satyavan. Savitri is aware of the fateful death awaiting Satyavan and thus she prepares herself to battle with death. When Satyavan dies in the forest on the fateful day, Savitri follows Yama the god of death and engages him in a debate. Death speaks in terms of worldly wisdom but she firmly holds on to love. Death challenges her about her strength to conquer Time and Death. Immediately Savitri’s inner light explodes and she commands Death to release the soul of the world called ‘Satyavan’. Death
suddenly finds himself helpless. His associates Night, Hell and the Inconscient desert him.

Savitri and Satyavan had achieved entry into paradisal regions and here the question arises to leave earth to its fate and themselves remain Above in heaven. But Savitri firmly rejects this promise of personal salvation. And finally Savitri and Satyavan return to Earth, to their parents and to the chosen task of divinising earth life. This aspect of *Savitri* legend held a special significance for Sri Aurobindo. He must have found the upakhyana ‘the gem of the whole poem’ of Vyasa.

Both *Savitri* and *Urvasi* are the legends. Savitri as the Magnum opus of Sri Aurobindo, becomes a poem which discusses ‘*Satya Ananyañaste Parodharma*’ (Truth and nothing else is the real dharma) because it deals with the story of struggle between the forces of *satya* and *asatya* (truth and untruth). Here *satya* is meant for light and *asatya* is meant for darkness. Savitri is itself a Light; marries Satyavan in the form of light. Finally she fights with the evil forces for saving the eclipse of Truth by the power of darkness. Death tells Savitri to face the realisation of life and not get lost in mere idealistic glamour of Light. But Savitri was not a person who could be easily disposed of by death through such
intellectual discussion and moral preaching. She challenges death and ultimately takes back the *atma* of Satyavan back from the *Yama* or power of death.

The canvas of Savitri is as wide as the cosmos and it takes into its domain worlds of being that are associated with mankind which are not seen by it on account of its impediments of lack of awareness. By and by, these levels do act upon human consciousness. They also include higher planes of consciousness which have not yet manifested here but which are pressing upon the earth-consciousness for manifestation. They contain beings, powers and presences that live on those planes of Light, Consciousness and Bliss, the worlds of Truth. The soul of aspiring humanity symbolised in Aswapathy, the Lord of manifested Life, first descends from his human consciousness into dark regions of unconsciousness and materiality, the regions of the lower Vital. He then ascends to the regions of Heavens of the higher vital and then crosses over to the Heavens of the Mind. After rising into regions above mind he passes above the line of manifested creation to the point from which creation proceeds. It is here that he experiences the presence of the Divine Mother who supports the universe. It is She, the power of the Supreme, who bestows on Aswapathy the boon
that saves the mankind from the severe bondage of Ignorance and subjection to Death. Being a power of the Truth-consciousness, Savitri liberates man and creates condition, here upon earth, for the embodiment of the Light Supreme. She shows how man’s life here can be fulfilled in a life divine.

Sri Aurobindo, through three of his poems *Savitri, Love and Death* and *Urvasie*, has treated the subject of Love. *Love and Death* seem to embody two contradictory principles, one affirming the divine eternity and immortality, the other insisting on the eternity of the Nescience of mortality. Ruru recovers Priyamvada from the dark nether regions of Death by the power of the charm of the supreme Mother and that of the God of Love. In *Urvasie* Pururavas struck by the shaft of immortal love, denied fulfillment by the power of the gods. At last gains his immortal love on heights of Heaven. In both of these poems the immortality and eternity of Love are affirmed. It is in *Savitri* that the subject of Love reaches its highest height. In *Savitri* the Love divine comes on earth as an embodiment of the Supreme Grace to deliver the soul of man out of the clutches of Death. The colloquy between Savitri, Love Divine incarnate, and Death is among the most inspired utterances of world’s poetry. Conquest over death, attainment of immortality has
been the dream of man from the dawn of his awakening. Savitri takes up this subject, brings out all the necessary conditions for the realisation of the dream of man. It affirms the necessity of the birth of a new Power, the Power of Divine Grace, or Love, which alone can save man from the reign of Ignorance which is Death.

The vision of Savitri includes not a material plan of this earth because this earth as nature deals with elemental realities. Savitri desired that the kingdom of Truth should be established on this earth. It can be done only when she is saving the life of Satyavan who is personified as Truth itself.

Savitri, the Divine’s delegate, presents the powers and personalities that are behind man’s present infirmities. Savitri embodies creation’s entire past and shows in her life how that past is transformed through the alchemy of Divine Grace into glorious future – the destiny that awaits man and earth. The Vedic image is that of the eternal succession of dawns whose beginning no one knows, nor the end, that creation proceeds from light to light, from consciousness to higher reaches of consciousness. From the material life through the vital and mental life man first reaches the spiritual life and finally the Life Divine. From the animal he rises to manhood and in the end to Godhood.
Savitri as a divine creature becomes the manifestation of the higher reality. In India, it is believed that whenever such a situation arises, when ordinary human wisdom cannot restore the balance, a divine manifestation appears on the earth and through his/her teachings and the practical ways, society begins to achieve a new balance, a fresh understanding of values: dharma rises and adharma declines. This was also the plan of Sri Aurobindo. Through the portrayal of the character of Savitri, he thought people would develop honesty, integrity, compassion and the spirit of service. These great people do not initiate any reform movements for such movements do not deal with the fundamental malady of society or of human beings. They arouse a basic spiritual stimulus. By their experiences, the paralysed will of the nation becomes young again. However a great personality like Sri Aurobindo have propounded the concept of Indian culture in Savitri for the benefit of the nation.

Sri Aurobindo materializes the philosophy of knowledge through the evolutionary process in Savitri. To Sri Aurobindo, human life is an evolutionary process- a process which transforms man gradually from lower nature to higher consciousness. He also
tries to awaken man as how to cross the existing physical barriers emerging out of human body for the higher vision of life.

Sri Aurobindo’s poetry reflects the intermingling of the East and the West. It means that it evolves entirely to human beings just as one finds in the philosophic vision of the Gita. His poems also reveal his preference for the classical thought and Eastern outlook. The religious thoughts of the East and the West mingle and form a composite articulation for the religious culture of the humanity. The symbols of Sri Aurobindo used in his poetry and more especially in Savitri are only the seeds; and these seeds as one sees in the Mahabharata and the Gita become a tree on which the flowers of karmas are to be sprouted.

Ahana takes man to the Brindavan of Lord Krishna and also to the lost garden of Eden. At the same time it reminds one of the Holy Ghost and arch angel Gabriel. The Tiger and the Deer in which Sri Aurobindo depicts the victory of peaceful ways over the violent ones. Here in this poem one sees the cosmic view of time and cyclicity of the movement and vision in the human life. He is hopeful that there will come a day when the process of love will triumph over the forces of hate.
The poem **Urvasie** brings forth the mythological character for characterizing the ancient Indian heritage and culture. The awakening of love between human Pururavus and divine Urvasie is described as luminous inner dawn as great as the love of Satyavan and Savitri. Pururavus is also informed that he would have Urvasie’s company only for a year. Urvasie marries Pururavus and symbolically through his good karmas (an evolutionary process). Pururavus brings heaven – the symbol of prosperity to the earth. However, Sri Aurobindo ends the poem on a note of disappointment because Pururavus forgets the greatness of his attributes and he thinks of his personal salvation.

Commenting upon a biographer’s attempt to present his life, Sri Aurobindo once remarked, ‘Nobody except myself can write my life – because it has not been on the surface for man to see’. No wonder philosophers have described him as the greatest synthesis between the East and the West; critics have acclaimed him as poet par excellence; social scientists regard him as the builder of a new society based on enduring values of the life of the spirit; devotees throng in mute veneration offering their heart and their soul in a silent prayer that can secure for them the beatitude of the supreme; Yogins long to live in the sunlight of his splendour to
kindle in it their own suns; in the tranquil benignity of his spiritual presence in the fulfillment of all our hopes and all our keenest and noblest aspirations; gods of light and truth and joy and beauty and sweetness are busy in their tasks to carry out his will in the creation; in him avatari incarnation becomes man to fulfill the divine in man. Such is the real birth of the Immortal in the Mortal.

Among Sri Aurobindo’s writings Savitri occupies a special position. By any standards, Savitri is the most remarkable epic; it is surely among the greatest poetic achievements of the twentieth century. Savitri as a magnum opus of Sri Aurobindo’s poetical works become an Odyssey of world literature written in English. Sri Aurobindo’s intensive reading and weighing the story and the life sketch of Savitri and Satyavan as it is revealed in the Mahabharata, inspired him for working on the superhuman concept. The uniqueness about the legend of Savitri lies in the fact that in this legend, Satyavan dies and Savitri pursues him in the land of the dead. She heroically wrestles with darkness and death and finally her love triumphs. She comes back to earth to live her life with Satyavan. She does not sacrifice life on earth. This was the special attraction of the story for Sri Aurobindo. Sri Aurobindo took from the Mahabharata, this legend and breathed into it a new life. As a
result *Savitri* has become a supreme expression of Sri Aurobindo’s message and vision.

Sri Aurobindo is probably the only spiritual philosopher the world has ever known who believed that mankind has a terrestrial future – a life of fulfillment here on the earth. All other spiritual philosophers affirm that perfection is not possible for man on earth and that is a state to be hoped for only in the life after death. Sri Aurobindo’s yoga aims at making this miracle real - the miracle of a life divine here on the earth.

Infact, Sri Aurobindo has used Savitri the ancient Hindu legend taken from the *Mahabharata* as a vehicle of expression of his own philosophy of man’s realization of the ‘life divine’ on this earth. Admidst joy of the divine earth, a man can ascend to the higher vision of consciousness. Thus the concept of God (heaven) lies in the mind of man. The evolutionary mind can transform the divine earth into heaven. The arrival of Savitri on the earth symbolizes the overcoming of fear psychosis that arises due to the forces of darkness. As a perfect human being, she reposes an unflinching will to spare light for the others. Sri Aurobindo portrays the advent of Savitri on earth with a divine radiance. Savitri incarnates on earth for the regeneration and emancipation of the
suffering humanity. She also stands for removing all karmic attachment of the scenes and situations from the earth. To get rid of the material point of attraction and repulsion is the essence of **Karma Yoga**. Sri Aurobindo writes in **Savitri**, ‘our minds have made the world in which we live’.

Savitri as a ray of hope for humanity spreads the light on the earth. Divine as she is, she also exhibits a complete perfection of a human being and wins over the lower particles of human body. Savitri’s oneness or the perfect equanimity of human mind brings her near to Bhagavadgita’s concept of **Shita Pragya**. Sri Aurobindo thus sings of the spirit and the woman incarnate as Truth. His epic narrates how Man (Aswapathy) through arduous spiritual endeavour succeeds in breaking through the barriers of mortal nature and finally compels the Divine (Savitri) to descend on to this earth to save the human soul (Satyavan) who is the prisoner of mortality from death.

Thus, the overall assessment of Sri Aurobindo brings the fact into being that he is a conscious artist who also creates his own criticism; and on the pillars of his own criticism he writes his poetry. He regards the poet as a magician who works to create the spiritual sensibility for employing the appropriate images, myths
and symbols in his language. One of the specific contribution of Sri Aurobindo as a poet lies in his significant statement that ‘poetry like everything else in man, evolves’. It means that he enjoys and holds a specific place among the poets of Indian English literature, for he enunciates the mantric effects in his poetry. He is the poet who relates English poetry to the natural ascending order; he creates the poetry of power, beauty, wonder and the poetry of spontaneous substance in the specific language that is the language of Sri Aurobindo himself, and nobody else’s. Here in lies the greatness of Sri Aurobindo as a poet of unique craftsmanship.