

IMAGES AND EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS
IN
SRI AUROBINDO'S LATER POEMS

BINDA VASUDEVAN

Research Supervisor
Dr. P. RAMACHANDRAN
Department of English
UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT

THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT
FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

2006

Dr. P. RAMACHANDRAN

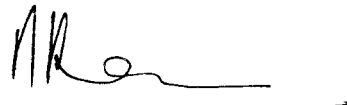
Retd. Professor

Marath House, Marath Lane

Thrissur

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled IMAGES AND EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS IN SRI AUROBINDO'S LATER POEMS submitted to the University of Calicut for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy is a record of bona fide research carried out by the candidate under my supervision and that no part of the thesis has been submitted for any degree before.



Dr. P. RAMACHANDRAN

Research Supervisor in English

University of Calicut

Calicut,

June 2006.


3

BINDA VASUDEVAN
Lecturer Selection Grade
Department of English
Sree Narayana College
Nattika, Kerala.

DECLARATION

I, BINDA VASUDEVAN, hereby declare that this thesis IMAGES AND EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS IN SRI AUROBINDO'S LATER POEMS has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship or other similar title or recognition.

Calicut,
June, 2006.


BINDA VASUDEVAN

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my profound sense of gratitude to my Guide, Dr. P. Ramachandran, who initiated me into research work. His constant guidance, patient encouragement and tolerance made this work possible.

I place on record my sincere thanks to the Management, S. N. Colleges, Kollam for permitting me to pursue research work. I am extremely grateful to Dr. Sankaran Raveendran and Dr. B. Sreedevi, Department of English, University of Calicut, for the valuable suggestions and encouragement extended. I thank all the members of the Staff of the Department of English, University of Calicut, for the goodwill and support.

I am indebted to Sri K.N. Krishnan Namboodiri, Remadevi Mandiram, Thrissur. His deep knowledge and critical insight have been largely instrumental in giving a shape to the thesis. I owe a deep sense of gratitude to Smt. Sarada Allath, Professor (Retd.), Department of English, Medical College, Pondicherry. Her genuine interest and generous assistance was of immense help.

I take this opportunity to sincerely thank my colleagues at S.N. College, Nattika, and of course, my Mother, Sisters, Brothers, 'Venettan', Kuttan and Sari.

I am indebted to Omana and family, for the neat and timely execution of my thesis.

Finally, I express my sincere gratitude to Sri Aurobindo and The Mother, but for whose unified grace, this study would not have been ventured.

CONTENTS

	Page No.
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER I THE SYMBOLS OF INTERSECTING TRIANGLES AND CIRCLES AN INTRODUCTION TO HIS PHILOSOPHY	9
CHAPTER II SYMBOLS OF A SUPERNATURAL ADVENTURE	45
CHAPTER III AGNI	74
CHAPTER IV BLOOMS AND HUES	121
CHAPTER V SOME OTHER SYMBOLS	177
CONCLUSION	220
WORKS CITED	226
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	229
APPENDIX - ILLUSTRATIONS	

INTRODUCTION

The present thesis attempts a detailed study of the images of Sri Aurobindo's poems, particularly those written during his later years. They contain a number of lyrics and sonnets of a mystic nature. Any study of a poem involves a study of its images because a poem is the images it presents.

There are schools of thought which opine that a critical study should not go beyond a sensuous analysis of the images. In their opinion, if we make attempts to understand the intention of the poet or the purpose of the images, then we will be guilty of "intentional fallacy". Though such a theory can be justified on its own limited basis, there cannot be a total appreciation of a poem unless we go beyond the images too. As T.S. Eliot says:

The "greatness" of literature cannot be determined solely by literary standards: though we must remember that whether it is literature or not can be determined only by literary standards. (Scott 26)

In Sri Aurobindo's poetic works the images have a special importance as he believed that, "the first aim of poetic style is

to make the thing presented living to the imaginative vision, the spiritual sense, the soul feeling and the soul sight" (Future Poetry [FP] 32). The essential power of the poetic word is "to make us see, not to make us think or feel" (33). Whatever thought or feeling is there "must arise out of or rather be included in the sight" (33). It is the sight which is the "primary consequence and power of poetic speech" (33). All poets aim at this subtle pictorial effect and have to possess the power of "imaging" the whole experience in such a way that the reader gets the living illusion of reality before him. But for the poet who aims still higher than this and seeks to "make us live in the soul and in the inner mind what is ordinarily lived in the outer mind and the senses" (33), it is essential that "he must first make us see, by the soul, and its light and with its deeper vision what we ordinarily see in a more limited and halting fashion by the senses and the intelligence" (Prasad 334). He confirms a certain equation between "word" and the "vision". He draws our critical attention to the fact that all great poetic utterance is discovery and all poetry of even the highest intensity of style and rhythm is perfectly justified only when it is ultimately "the body

of a deep, high or wide spiritual vision" (FP 34). Vision is an indispensable, ultimate crowning factor in poetry. The aim of future poetry, according to him, should be to put forth the very heart of the Life Divine in the concrete body of the five elements of Truth, Beauty, Delight, Life and Spirit.

Any deeper analysis of Sri Aurobindo's images can be done only against the background of his philosophy, so my first chapter deals with his Philosophy. The teaching of Sri Aurobindo is unified by his central vision of a Spiritual and Divine destiny which must evolve. His concept of Involution of Sat-Chid-Ananda into Matter-Life-Mind and Evolution of the Involved into its pristine destiny is dealt with in detail. The Evolution is believed to be hastened by the Integral Yoga, whereby the aspiring soul can willfully take part in the evolution and bear witness to the Supramental Manifestation, establishing Life Divine on Earth. The Theory of Evolution and the Integral Yoga propounded by the Yogi-Poet are portrayed in "Savitri--A Legend and Symbol," the epic poem, started earlier and completed through repeated corrections unto his later days. Hence, any study of his philosophy is not complete without including "Savitri." The symbols of the Aurobindonian school

of thought are also dealt with, since they represent the world of his vision. The symbols are mainly the symbol of the intersecting triangles with the Lotus in the region of intersection, the symbol of circles and petals, the symbol of the Aurobindo Society and that of Auroville. The central clue of his Yoga system and the core of his Philosophy is well represented in the symbols. The aspiring soul that ascends and the divine grace that descends, to initiate and accelerate the ascent, is symbolised by the two intersecting triangles, one pointing up and the other down. The intersection, the union of the involved and the evolved, results in the Supramental Manifestation. It is typified by the Lotus, the flower of divinity, in water, the multiplicity of creation. The region of intersection is graced by the presence of the Supermind, the square, wherein the manifestation is realised. This is well depicted in "Savitri," the Divine Grace, the Mother. The symbol of circles and petals speaks of the mission undertaken by the Mother and the powers bestowed on her for the same. The circles and petals unravel the world of "Truth-Consciousness". The symbol of the Aurobindo Society is diamond like with lines joining the apexes of the two intersecting triangles. The symbol of

Auroville represents the "City of Dawn," the abode of Divine Life on Earth.

My second chapter goes on to analyse the symbols of supernatural adventure, the adventure of the soul in its aim to recast Heaven in the mould of Earth. The images are to be probed to ascertain if they represent a call from above and a response from below, a mounting, and a descent. "Rain" thrashing the "Mire", disclosing the marvel of the "Rose", initiating the souls to climb the "hill", to reach the "single soul of the bare infinities", and such like metaphors are to be analysed and grasped. The spirit embracing the Spirit, the downward flow and the upward surge, depicted through a host of images that symbolise the whole process of involution and evolution are dealt with. The spirit or soul is like "a bridge of fire," "a flaming chariot," that heads towards Infinity.

The "Bridge of Fire" is my next concern. The third chapter is dedicated to "Agni", the ancient fire symbol of exceedingly varied renown. It indicates the movement or the action of inner forces. The "spark of eternal fire" creates a "bridge of fire" within the being, enabling it to reach the Eternal Fire. It is also the Priest whose work or rite is that of

the seer. Again, Agni is "Satya", truth, because it brings about the true fruit of sacrifice. The fire symbol demands exhaustive probing and an intuitive understanding of its significance for the world of light unraveled by the poet to be realized.

"Colour and Light are always close to each other", opines Sri Aurobindo:

Colour being more indicative. Light more dynamic. As for the exact symbolism of colours, it is not always easy to define exactly, because it is not rigid and precise, but complex, the meaning varying with the field, the combinations, the character and shades of the colour, the play of forces. (Letters on Yoga [LY] 959)

Hence the fourth chapter is concerned with colours. Also flowers, since the Lotus in the core of the Aurobindonian symbol compels one to delve deep into the intimations of Immortality blooming through the blooms. The soul of man a "dim bud" of "God's flaming rose" invites attention. The colour of the flower also matters, as flowers have each its own individuality and a message to convey. "White lotus is Mother's Consciousness," says Sri Aurobindo. Red Lotus proclaims the Presence of the Divine on earth. It also symbolises the eternal

smile. The Red rose is Power, Light, Bliss, Love and Life. The Philosopher-Poet has assigned definite roles for flowers and colours, as expressive of evolution in its several stages and forms, and as symbols of artistic perfection.

Other symbols of the yogic vision are to be seen in the fifth chapter. Man, "the sun in the darkness" is "an old disvalued credit in Times' Bank" and "an animal with some instincts of God". The "instincts of God" prompt him to evolve and he becomes "the pilgrim of everlasting Truth." The pilgrim is equated to a "Tree" with its topmost boughs like fingers pointing towards the skies. A multitude of images like water, ocean, sea, sun, moon, bird, tree, wine, tiger and deer that typify the world of Infinite Bliss experienced by the Maharshi-Poet are dealt with.

A recapitulation and conclusion is effected before winding up.

I have taken up this method of approach to Sri Aurobindo's poems as he was truly a Rishi-Poet. According to an Indian adage none other than a Rishi can be a true Poet. And a Rishi or a Poet can be reached at only through

what he makes us see. Sri Aurobindo is, as he says in the sonnet "Lila",

A seer whose eye is an all-regarding sun,

A poet of the cosmic mysteries.

(Collected Poems [CP] 153)

He leads us to see the product of his spiritual vision and the flaming paths through which his pilgrim soul has trodden in a one-pointed effort, to reach the ultimate destined goal of humanity.

CHAPTER I

THE SYMBOLS OF INTERSECTING TRIANGLES AND CIRCLES AN INTRODUCTION TO HIS PHILOSOPHY

Sri Aurobindo's contribution to Indian Spiritual renaissance is characterised by his zeal for a total transformation involving not only the sadhaka or the practitioner of yoga, but also the very earth itself. With a great intensity of vision, supported by his wide ranging experience in politics, philosophy, literature, religion, etc. he presents his ideas with an irresistible force throwing light on the very predicament of the human being.

Man, the transitional being, has a long way to go along the path of real progress as envisioned by Sri Aurobindo, who strove for a divine life upon earth and remained absorbed in this spiritual work. The problem he set for himself was how Divine Consciousness could be brought down, mobilised, organised and turned upon life. By summarising in clear terms, the crisis through which humanity is passing, he has rightly stressed that a perfected human world cannot be created by men who are themselves imperfect. The emergence of the Divine life on earth, and not the isolated self realisation of a few individuals, was what he sought to

achieve. A new direction was given to the destiny of man by presenting mankind with a new hope and a new mission.

The teaching of Sri Aurobindo is unified by his central vision of a spiritual and Divine destiny which must evolve. According to his vision, there is an ascending evolution in nature which goes from the stone to the plant, from the plant to the animal, from the animal to man. Man now being the last rung at the summit of the ascending evolution, considers himself as the final stage in this ascension and believes there can be nothing on earth superior to him. It is a mistake born out of ignorance (Light for Students 8). The Philosopher-Poet portrays "Man the thinking animal," thus:

A trifling unit in a boundless plan
 Amidst the enormous insignificance
 Of the unpeopled cosmos' fire-whirl dance,
 Earth, as by accident, engendered man:
 A creature of his own grey ignorance,
 A mind half shadow and half gleam, a breath
 That wrestles, captive in a world of death,
 To live some lame brief years. . . . (CP 134)

In his physical nature, he is yet an animal, a thinking, speaking animal, an animal in his natural habits and instincts.

Nature not being satisfied with such an imperfect result, endeavours to bring out a being who will be to the man what man is to the animal, whose consciousness will rise far above the mental, and its slavery to ignorance. Sri Aurobindo upholds that the transitional being man living in a mental consciousness can acquire the new consciousness, the truth consciousness; and live a life perfectly harmonious, good and beautiful, happy and fully conscious. Man's attempt to reach the new consciousness is described by the poet as the attempt of a divinity within "to realise its own supernal light". It is "a consciousness in the inconscient Night" which "aspiring to godhead from insensible clay" confronts the "ruthless forces of the unseen". But "it travels slow-footed towards the eternal day". It is the consciousness of the eternal day which Sri Aurobindo called the Supramental. He tried to help those around him to reach it. Only the ascent to the Supermind, says he, can create the perfection dreamt of by all through the ages and remould not only the individual but also his social life into a divine pattern. But this process of evolution has to be assisted by a downward flow of the divine grace, without which all evolutionary efforts will come to naught. The divine and the anti-divine is a duality which is necessary for the Cosmic

Action. This duality is sharply manifest on the lower planes of manifestation. But as the human consciousness ascends higher the scale of evolution and existence, it loses its intensity and potential and leads the seeking soul to get absorbed in the One Supreme.

Human being still in the field of ignorance and consequent falsehood is walled in by limitations on all sides, for the very faculty of man--the mind--is only a groping limited power and hence the best he can achieve is only an ordered disorder. The Poet says in the sonnet "The Silver Call", that:

All eye has seen and all the ear has heard
 Is a pale illusion by some greater voice
 And mightier vision; no sweet sound or word,
 No passion of hues that make the heart rejoice
 Can equal those diviner ecstasies.
 A Mind beyond our mind has sole the ken
 Of those yet unimagined harmonies,
 The fate and privilege of unborn men. (CP 135)

Sri Aurobindo has pointed out that "Integral Yoga" is the path towards the earliest realisation of the Life Divine, "of those yet unimagined harmonies". One can discover the one self in all,

through this yoga. This discovery will help man to raise his consciousness to a higher level than the mental. Thus the human nature can be divinised so that the soul will be able to "feel timeless bliss of God" and "see matter illumining its parent light." Aurobindo says,

To become ourselves is the one thing to be done, but the true ourself is that which is within us and to exceed our outer self of body, life and mind, is the condition for this highest being, which is our true and divine being to become self-revealed and active. (Synthesis of Yoga [SY] 120)

His Integral Yoga or Supramental Yoga projects the object of the process of Supramentalisation--an evolutionary leap of the man, the mental being to another being--the Supramental being--man the selfconscious being to a Superconscious being. As much as a radical change as that which occurred when the conscious animal evolved into the selfconscious man. The Integral Yoga sets much store by the descending divine interference in this process. As the flame of the evolutionary efforts leaps upwards, the fuel of the divine help comes down helping man in every way.

Integral Yoga aims at a collaboration with the forces of evolution and involution to bring out the next higher evolute--the Supramental being. Its eventual outcome is a certainty whether man wills it or not. The Supramental Yoga is a conscious collaboration between the forces of an evolutionary ascent and a divine descent. It demands a total dedication of the life to the aspiration for the discovery, and embodiment of the Divine Truth. Only by complete dedication can one enter into the divine consciousness by merging into it the separative ego and realise the supramental consciousness on earth to transform mind, life and body (The Riddle of the World 201).

The Adwaita, the Gita marga, Tantric discipline, and Yoga are processes to reach that Superconsciousness transcending the "human" consciousness, which on attainment liberates the human being from the trap of ignorance--a liberation which brings in peace, harmony and delight of existence to the individual human being. But unless he brings in that peace and harmony to the world below, the earth remains "earthy". The spiritual beings of earlier times did not believe in bringing it down to earth because they held that earth is Illusionary or "Maya." This resulted in a personal craving for "Moksha" or "Nirvana" on the part of the

spiritually elevated beings. Sri Aurobindo refutes the idea of any essential duality between spirit and matter. He declares that what exists is the Spirit--mind, life and matter are all spirit in different forms. There is nothing like "Maya" or illusion in connection with matter or the material world. Infinite potentiality--the spirit--issues forth in innumerable forms by a process of involution. The inverse movement, evolution, helps the involved to evolve. Thus creation is described as a double movement, involution-evolution, a descent and an ascent. Aurobindo believed that the yoga should invest the yogi with powers that can expedite evolution by the utilization of the supramental power for transforming the mind, life and matter. Only the siddhi on the supramental level can equip man thus. Whatever the Siddhi, it is bound to be limited in its range and power, as long as it is on the mental plane or the "Manomaya Kosha." Aurobindo lays the highest stress on this aspect. He says:

The Vedic Rishis never attained to the supermind for the transformation of the earth or perhaps did not even make the attempt. The Rishis knew the supermind; attained it and passed on to the Divine but did not think in terms of utilizing it for life on earth, for humanity. (On Himself [OH] 64)

Sri Aurobindo was not satisfied with this. He stood rather for bringing the power of the universal soul down into the earth consciousness so that mind, life and matter are transformed and made capable of a Divine existence here on earth. The former, according to him, was an escape, though on a very high level, and was not a solution. Also he was not satisfied merely with the gospel of social service on the ground that poverty, misery, ignorance, jealousy and other seeds of quarrel would continue to sprout and no amount of social service can root out these seeds. Sri Aurobindo laid stress on striving for an essential change in human nature which would root out the cause of misery and bring about peace, love and harmony. For him, the gospel of "Nishkama Karma" is the best way of "doing things" whereby the "doer" is immunised from all undesirable reactions and made a fitter instrument of cosmic activity (Diwakar 202). But here too in the conventional doctrine, humanity in its totality is not aimed at. Thus he opines that all these teachings would add more "Jeevan Muktas," free from attachment and the inexorable bonds of Karma without however wiping out the limitations, the evil, the misery, the helplessness of present-day humanity. It is only the descent of a higher power on the levels of mind, life and matter

that can raise the potential of man to transform himself and transcend himself. Sri Aurobindo's yoga essentially seeks to arm man with the equipment necessary for this great task. A total surrender of all the powers of the sadhak, right from the beginning is the hall mark of his yoga. The Yogi-Poet upholds that "The Little Ego" should be surrendered to the World-Mother, thus:

One way lies free, our heart and soul to give,
 Our body and mind to Thee and every cell,
 And steeped in Thy world-infinity to live.

Then lost in light, shall fade the ignoble spell. (CP 157)

"Obedience, to the Divine will, not assertion of self will (nor SattwicAhankar) is the very first Mantra" (OH 108), writes Aurobindo to his disciple. He gives a call to aspire, to rise above ignorance, to the Supramental Gnostic Consciousness.

Sri Aurobindo affirms that only by a change of consciousness can one pass from ignorance to knowledge, the knowledge by which we become what we know. The "Integral" way to the Truth is to pass from the external to a direct and intimate inner consciousness, to heighten it by an inner will and aspiration and

an opening to the light, till it passes in its ascent beyond mind; to bring down a descent of the supramental divine, through self-giving and surrender, with a consequent transformation of mind, life and body (Satprem 130). This is the truth aimed at in Integral Yoga, which demands a total dedication of life to the aspiration for the discovery and embodiment of the Divine. Through the true realization of the Divine, the centre shifts to the true centre of the Supramental Truth world where everything is transformed to their true nature--animality disappears and the body also is transformed. The experience of a soul achieving this state of "Transformation", is described by the poet in the following lines:

I am no more a vassal of the flesh,
 A slave to Nature and her leaden rule;
 I am caught no more in the senses' narrow mesh.
 My soul unhorizoned widens to measureless sight,
 My body is God's happy living tool,
 My spirit a vast sun of deathless light. (CP 133)

In means, path and also in ideal, Integral Yoga differs from other systems of Yoga. It is Integral Yoga or Purna Yoga because it is a total Yoga in the sense that it makes use of all the resources or powers of man to gain victory. Sri Aurobindo aims at

a synthesis of Jnana, Karma and Bhakti yogas in an integral way. Also, here the sadhak aims at union with the lord in all His aspects and on all the planes of consciousness, wherever He can be contacted. It is integral in yet one more sense that it seeks not only to realize the full divine, but further yearns to bring down the Divine to the lowest rung of involved consciousness in order that consciousness may be divinised and the full cycle of involution-evolution completed. The very beginning of the yoga is with the complete surrender of oneself and all that one is or has; hence it is also called the Yoga of Surrender. "All life is Yoga", says Sri Aurobindo, descanting on the yoga of surrender. Since the emphasis is on contacting and communicating with the Supermind, it is the yoga of the Supermind. Thus it can be seen that the Integral Yoga is not a mere integration of all yogas in order to reach the goal of merging into the super consciousness. The Integral Yoga takes a third position higher up, uses all or any of the traditional yogas, enters into the evolutionary impetus or pushing forces, gets churned in the crucible of evolution to transcend and leave the "human" at its periphery to step into the supramental world of the supramental being. Then the aspirant feels one with the divine, enjoys the "Bliss of Identity" and exclaims:

It is Thy rapture flaming through my nerves
 And all my cells and atoms thrill with Thee;
 My body Thy vessel is and only serves
 As a living wine-cup of Thy ecstasy.

.....

Thy spirit's infinite breath I feel in me;
 My life is a throb of Thy eternity. (CP 142)

The Integral Yoga wants to bring down this bliss to the earth below. Once it is brought down, it will spread and infiltrate everywhere. All, then, that is expected of the human being is an unobstructed opening to this force *i.e.* a passive, calm, total surrender to it, that will slowly, effectively and pleasantly with a calm repose, enter into the being, its mental, vital and physical natures down to the very physical cell of its body.

It was obvious to Sri Aurobindo that the next stage in human evolution is to be reached not necessarily by mutation or miracle, but by a process. His vision of future humanity being quite clear, he chose to make an experiment by way of consciously trying to help nature expedite the next evolutionary leap that humanity is bound to take. He proclaims his vision in clear terms, stands witness to the truth of the vision, gives a call

to humanity to prepare itself and finally helps all souls to respond to the extent that each one is capable of. Thus man would participate in the evolutionary process that is going on here and now. This intensely searching probe into the higher regions and the upper reaches of consciousness was the result of an almost superhuman effort to usher in the era of supermen on earth. It was an intense search for a more complete experience which would help synthesise, unite and harmonise the dyad of reality, named Spirit and Matter, Purusha and Prakriti, Being and Becoming, through the agency of the Supermind. He had sighted the Supermind, that is, Truth consciousness, the instrumentality through which the Divine acts on the lower planes of consciousness, including the inconscient. He says that the coming of the superman is as sure now as the coming of man before he actually came. This leap from Mind to the Supermind is as certain as the leap from Life to Mind. Man would then be transformed because he would no longer be acting in ignorance but in knowledge, that is, in light, in love, in harmony and in Ananda. The possibility of the supermind purifying and divinising the whole content of man, his material, vital and mental being was envisioned by the Yogi and his sadhana consisted in hastening that

process in himself and in those that followed him with faith.
Sri Aurobindo becomes "The Witness Spirit."

I dwell in the spirit's calm nothing can move
 And watch the actions of Thy vast world-force,
 Its mighty wings that through infinity move
 And the Time-galloppings of the deathless Horse.

This mute stupendous Energy that whirls
 The stars and nebulae in its long train,
 Like a huge Serpent through my being curls
 With its diamond hood of joy and fangs of pain.

It rises from the dim inconscient deep
 Upcoiling through the minds and hearts of men,
 Then touches on some height of luminous sleep
 The bliss and splendour of the eternal plane. (CP 143)

The central clue to his yoga system and the core of his philosophy is well represented in the Aurobindonian symbol with intersecting triangles having the lotus in water at the region of intersection.

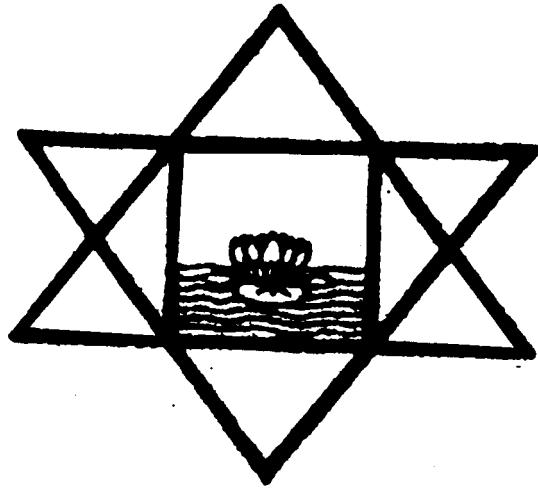


Fig.1. Sri Aurobindo's Symbol; rpt. in towards tomorrow - An Introductory Booklet (TT). (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Society, 1996) 17.

A fixed, unflinching aspiration that calls from below and a Supreme Grace from above that answers are the two powers that can effect in their conjunction the great and difficult realisation aimed at by Sri Aurobindo (The Mother 35). Their conjunction results in the realisation of Life Divine on earth, represented by the Lotus in water--divine life in the multiplicity of creation. The inverted triangle stands for the supreme grace, the very highest supramental force descending from above and opening from below to victoriously handle the physical nature and annihilate its difficulties. Light and truth, the sole conditions needed for the grace to descend can be brought about by total sincere surrender, an exclusive self opening to the divine power, a willful aspiration represented by the triangle pointing upwards.

The Aurobindonian idea finds, expression in "Savitri--The legend and symbol," where Savitri the girl-wife becomes the Mother Might and Vanquisher of Death and also the Creatrix of the Life Divine on earth (Dwivedi 50). The legend of Savitri, based on the Mahabharata story of Savitri and Sathyavan, is a "Symbol" for Sri Aurobindo, through which the poet spans earth and heaven, encompasses diverse occult worlds, and projects the drama of life, death and immortality on the cosmic stage. It can be considered as a Manual of Yoga, a poetic philosophy, an experiment and an experience. It is an attempt both to retell the old story of Savitri as found in the "Mahabharata" and to record in symbolic terms his "Mystic experience"--to project his total vision. He says:

What I am trying to do every where in the poem is to express exactly something seen, something felt or experienced; if for instance, I indulge in the wealth-burdened line or passage, it is not merely for the pleasure of the indulgence, but because there is that burden, or at least what I conceive to be that, in the vision or the experience Savitri is the record of a seeing, of an experience, which is not of the common kind and is often very far from what the general human mind sees and experiences. (OH 249)

The poem opens on the day when Sathyavan is fated to die, according to Narada Muni's prophecy. The dawn of the fateful day after twelve months of conjugal love is also the "Symbol dawn" of a new epoch in cosmic history. Dawn symbolises "Time-Eternity" in contrast to the "Timeless-Eternity" of the Absolute. The opening lines "It was the hour before the Gods awake"--localises the situation in time. That the Earth is enveloped in darkness is conveyed through the fact that "It is still Night". The situation changes from Darkness to Light, Dawn defeats Night implying the overthrow of the forces of the vast lethargic Ignorance by the powers of Knowledge or Life-Consciousness. Savitri wakening at that movement, becomes the symbol of the "Universal Mother" helping and saving every man from the evils of frightening ignorance by her victory over death.

Even her humanity was half divine:
 Her spirit opened to the spirit in all,
 Her nature felt all Nature as its own.
 Apart, living within, all lives she bore;
 Aloof, she carried in herself the world:

.....

The universal Mother's love was hers.

(Savitri [S] I.1.11-12)

Sri Aurobindo paints the picture of a woman who would lead man-kind from darkness to light, from his ignorance of God to knowledge. His Savitri is the incarnation of the Godhead of love, everything in her points to a nobler kind than the human.

Ardent was her self-poised unstumbling will;
 Her mind, a sea of white sincerity,
 Passionate in flow, had not one turbid wave. (I.2.18)

Deep and daring as she is, she prepares herself inwardly to "Confront death on her road."

In waging a fight against fate, Savitri is turning the impossible into possible, an integral transformation of all elements that make man, a divinisation of human nature and earth nature, to establish Life Divine here on this very earth. In the legend, she strives undaunted throughout, but not for herself alone. Sathyavan regains his life, Dyumatsena, Sathyavan's father, regains his eye sight and kingdom; and Aswapathy, Savitri's father, has the promise of a hundred sons. All these boons and promises of prosperity imply the inauguration of a new age in man's and earth's history, a revolutionary change brought about by the presence of the embodiment of the divine power, "Savitri". It is her adamant purpose and relentless struggle in the dark spaces of Night that

enables her to bring down into this world of obscurity and falsehood, and death and suffering, Truth and Light and Life Divine and the Immortals' Ananda (Dwivedi 69).

Savitri and Sathyavan are the "first born of a new supernal race", they are the supreme's dual power, she the Force, he the Soul, set in the world for the regeneration of Mankind. They are "one" in their mission and vision and have:

A Mind unvisited by illusion's gleams,
 A Will expressive of soul's deity,
 A Strength not forced to stumble by its speed,
 A Joy that drags not sorrow as its shade. (S I.4.59)

On the material plane, the poem begins on the day Sathyavan is to die and ends with the defeat of Death and the reunion of Sathyavan and Savitri here on earth. On the spiritual plane, it involves the issue between world annihilation and world survival, and ends with the defeat of a "partial and temporary darkness" of the "Soul and Nature".

"Savitri" offers the vision of the true reconciliation of the opposition between the Timeless Eternity of the Absolute and the Time Eternity of the Individual, resulting in the emergence of a divine life. The conjunction of the descending grace and the

ascending soul, establishing Life Divine on earth of the Integral Yoga can be seen by the victory gained by Savitri--truth consciousness--bringing about peace and happiness for one and all.

Sri Aurobindo writes thus on the "Symbolism" of the Tale of Sathyavan and Savitri:

The tale of Sathyavan and Savitri is recited in the "Mahabharata" as a story of conjugal love conquering death. But this legend is, as shown by many features of the human tale, one of the many symbolic myths of the Vedic Cycle. Sathyavan is the soul carrying the divine truth of being within itself but descended into the grip of death and ignorance; Savitri is the Divine Word, daughter of the Sun, goddess of the supreme Truth who comes down and is born to save; Aswapathy, the Lord of the Horse, her human father, is the Lord of Tapsya, the concentrated energy of spiritual endeavour that helps to rise from mortal to immortal planes. Dyumasena, lord of the shining hosts, father of Sathyavan is the Divine Mind here fallen blind, losing its celestial Kingdom of vision, and through that loss its kingdom of glory. Still this is not a mere allegory, the

characters are not personified qualities, but incarnations or emanations of living and conscious forces with whom we can enter into concrete touch and they take human bodies in order to help man and show him the way from his mortal state to a divine consciousness and immortal life. (OH 265)

The descent of the absolute into the Nescience and ascent from Nescience to the supreme knowledge, the two ladders constantly spoken of by Sri Aurobindo represented by the two triangles in the Aurobindonian symbol, is envisioned in "Savitri". The two triangles together give a revealing picture of the whole involution-evolution process of creation. Involution is the process through which the Spirit issued forth in different forms. Evolution is the inverse movement, whereby the involved evolves. The Spirit being absolute and infinite remains as it is; it is the "Satchidananda" aspect of the spirit, which is at the root of the eternal involution-evolution. While Satchidananda is the "Being" aspect, creation is the "Becoming" aspect of the Supreme Spirit. The inverted triangle with the three corners holds the triplet Sach-Chid-Ananda of the supreme spirit. The triangle pointing upwards stands for the becoming aspect in the form of Mind-

Life-Matter--the triplet of the creation. Sach-Chid-Ananda is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. "Sach" is eternal spiritual existence which does not depend on the body; "Chid" is knowledge which is not confined to any one subject. It is knowledge of the totality. It is that by knowing which nothing else remains to be known. "Ananda" is eternal bliss, having no opposites like sorrow or misery. This is the nature of the "Self or Supreme Spirit". Aurobindo says:

God is Sachchidananda. He manifests Himself as infinite EXISTENCE of which; the essentiality is CONSCIOUSNESS, of which again the essentiality is BLISS, is self-delight. Sachchidananda is the manifestation of the higher PURUSHA; its nature of infinite being, consciousness, power and bliss is the HIGHER NATURE. It is the One with a triple aspect. It is one eternal Existence. . . . One eternal Consciousness which sees its own works in us and others, one eternal WILL or FORCE of that Consciousness which displays itself in infinite workings, one eternal Delight which has the joy of itself and all its workings. (LY 20:395)

Thus when Sachchidananda represents truth, knowledge, bliss, light, harmony, immortality and the highest positive expression of the Reality, in man's consciousness every involution means just a faint reflection of all these. Hence every stage of evolution would mean the graded recovery of all these in their pristine forms. Involution is the descending of the ladder and evolution is the ascending of the same ladder. Man is at a certain critical stage of evolution and is essentially capable of recognising the stage and of taking some steps to evolve upwards to the next stage, that of the Superman. "The Greater Plan", penned by the Rishi, voices that:

There is a need within the soul of man

The splendours of the surface never sate;

For life and mind and their glory and debate

Are the slow prelude of a vaster theme,

A sketch confused of a supernal plan,

A preface to the epic of the Supreme. (CP 147)

If through integral yoga man invokes the Supermind, the direct and operative agent in the matter of evolution, the process would be easier and the evolution speedier. Sri Aurobindo opines:

In all that is done in the universe, the Divine through his "Shakti" is behind all action but he is veiled by his

Yoga Maya and works through the ego of the Jiva in the lower nature. In yoga also it is the Divine who is the Sadhaka and the Sadhana; it is his Shakti with her light, power, knowledge, consciousness, Ananda, acting upon the Adhara and when it is opened to her, pouring into it these divine forces that makes the Sadhana possible. But so long as the lower nature is active the personal effort of the Sadhaka remains necessary. (LY 21:620)

The personal effort required is, a triple labour of Aspiration, Rejection and Surrender. Involution has taken time and Evolution also must take time. Yoga seeks to cut short that time, but it cannot be eliminated altogether. Sri Aurobindo says:

All teaching is self-revealing, all becoming is an unfolding, self attainment is the secret, self knowledge and an increasing consciousness are the means and the process. (SY 187)

Man's consciousness should be taken to a far higher level of sublime existence where truth consciousness, pure knowledge, great harmony and divine bliss shall reign supreme--the world represented by the Lotus-vision of the Mother. This vision of the "Yoga-Chakra" (Lotus Symbol) of the once Madame Richard, who later

became the Mother, was explained by Sri Aurobindo himself as the opening of the consciousness to the Divine.

Invoking the Truth consciousness, the Supermind to descend in order to lift up the aspiring spirit of man and for transforming matter itself to respond to the call of Divinity was the approach envisioned by Sri Aurobindo. He assured the Mother that the way to the divinization of man and the transformation of nature had been opened. The Mother and Sri Aurobindo were to march together towards the supramental summit calling the whole of humanity to participate in the Divine Venture. It was one of the most wonderful collaborative spiritual companionships between two highly evolved ardent souls. It ripened into a complementarity which was unique both in its endeavour and fruition, a combination of high level spiritual endeavour comprehending all life and the future of humanity, the result of which is a new way of life, lived by a growing brotherhood of aspirants active in working in a variety of ways for the Ashram. They live in a constant consciousness that they are but instruments of the Divine Will in transforming Life, Mind and Matter into fit channels for the manifestation of the Spirit, so that Life Divine does not remain a mere dream any longer. The Mother can be said to be the

"Shakti" the power, that comes down and leads the aspirant upto the higher world of truth consciousness. The inverted triangles in Sri Aurobindo's symbol parallels the interpretation of "Sri Chakra" representing the descent of "Shakti" and the ascent of "Siva"; Shakti in her eagerness coming forward five steps when the sadhak advances one step less. About the Ishwara-Shakthi Sri Aurobindo observes:

If in . . . the light of personality in impersonality, we see the biune aspects of Self and Selfpower, then in the Person Aspect a dual Person emerges, Ishwara-Shakti, the Divine Self and Creator and the Divine Mother and Creatrix of the Universe; there becomes apparent to us the mystery of the masculine and feminine cosmic Principles whose play and interaction are necessary for all Creations. (LY 18:356)

Mother the embodiment of "Shakti" was called upon to play an ever increasingly important role in the Ashram activities as well as in the great new collective sadhana of Integral Yoga, for invoking the Supramental power of the Divine for the elevation and illumination of the human race. When Sri Aurobindo found in the Mother a masterly collaborator, he felt safe to withdraw himself to

seclusion, but without losing touch with the sadhaks and the world. He believed their collaboration to be a pre-determined one:

To raise the world to God in deathless Light,
 To bring God down to the world on earth we came,
 To change the earthly life to life divine. (S XI.1.777)

He rightly said:

Every one who is turned to the Mother is doing my Yoga. The Mother's Consciousness and mine are the same, the one Divine Consciousness in two, because that is necessary for the play. Nothing can be done without her knowledge and force, without her consciousness. (OH 156)

The Ashram, its management, collective spiritual sadhana, the sole burden of giving guidance to sadhaks and conducting the various institutions, fell to the lot of the Mother. Like the veritable Mother Earth, the Mother not only carried on the work, but advanced it substantially. The Mother's symbol gives expression to her role in carrying out her life's mission--the elevation and illumination of the human race.

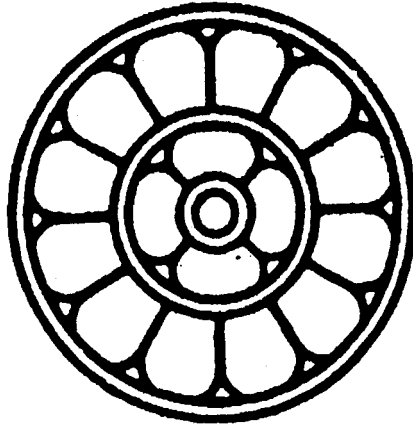


Fig.2. The Mother's Symbol; rpt. in towards tomorrow - An Introductory Booklet. (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Society, 1996) 17.

The central circle represents the Divine Consciousness. The four petals--the four power of the Mother namely, Wisdom, Strength, Harmony, Perfection--embodying Maheshwari, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi and Mahasaraswathi. The twelve petals stand for the twelve powers of the Mother manifested for her work. It is the symbolic design of the white lotus of Supreme Consciousness, with the Mahashakti--the form of the Mother as Universal creation--at the centre in her four aspects and twelve attributes (TT 17). In the words of Sri Aurobindo:

She gives us strength to do our daily task
 And sympathy that partakes of other's grief
 And the little strength we have to help our race,
 We who must fill the role of the universe

Acting itself out in a slight human shape
 And on our shoulders carry the struggling world.

(S VII.5.598)

While Sri Aurobindo was the medium of Divine consciousness and the Supermind, the Mother became the bridge between Sri Aurobindo and the world of the Sadhaks and Seekers. The symbol of the Sri Aurobindo society, which is an extension of Sri Aurobindo's Symbol, has lines joining the apexes of the two triangles forming a diamond.

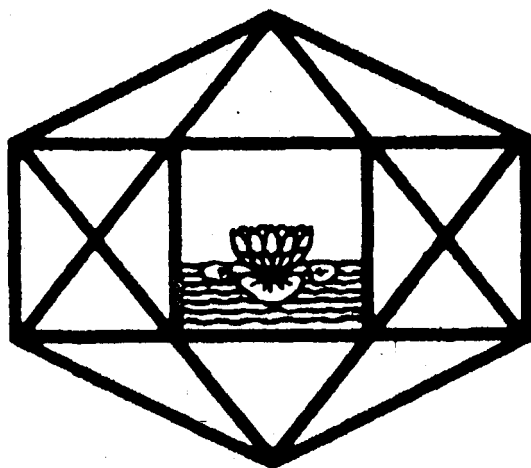


Fig.3. The Symbol of the Sri Aurobindo Society; rpt. in towards tomorrow - An Introductory Booklet. (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Society, 1996) 17.

The significance of the diamond, according to Aurobindo, is the Mother's light at its intensest (TT 17).

Sri Aurobindo and the Mother were the very embodiment of the innermost and inherent aspiration of man to rise to Divinity. They paved a new, total integral path for all humanity to follow and arrive at the realisation of Life Divine on this terrestrial globe. In "The Human Cycle" he prophesies the advent of a new age, when the world will be one and social conflicts and the bitterness of life will be no more, a future to which man can look forward with hope and faith. He observes:

A seed shall be sown in Death's tremendous hour,
 A branch of heaven transplant to human soil;
 Nature shall overleap her mortal step;
 Fate shall be changed by an unchanging will.

(S III.4.392)

The creation of a new world, a new humanity, a new society, expressing and embodying the new consciousness, was the work undertaken by Sri Aurobindo and The Mother. The Ashram--a spiritual laboratory--founded and built, has been the first step towards the fulfillment of this goal. The project of Auroville is the next step, "more exterior", a physical representation, seeking to widen the base of this endeavour to establish harmony between soul and body, spirit and nature, heaven and earth, in the

collective life of humanity, encompassing the entire globe. The symbol of Auroville reveals its unique ideal.

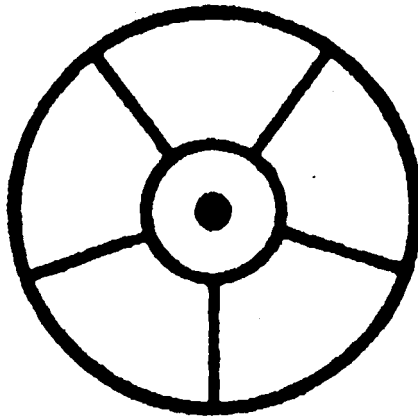


Fig.4. The Symbol of Auroville; rpt. in *towards tomorrow - An Introductory Booklet*. (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Society, 1996) 17.

The dot at the centre represents unity, the Supreme; the inner circle stands for the creation, the conception of the universal city; the petals are for the power of expression, realisation (TT 17).

Auroville, "The City of Dawn", is envisioned as the centre for various international movements, bringing together all those who would like to make a collective effort towards a new and better life for the whole world. It is a concrete representation of Sri Aurobindo's ideal. A spiritually elevated world amidst the material world. Spirit and matter being one and the same, one cannot exist

without the other. The Poet portrays this "Truth" in "Man The Mediator", thus:

Rooted in mire heavenward man's nature grows, --
His soul the dim bud of God's flaming rose. (CP 137)

The material world is the "mire" where man is "rooted". The mire offers anchorage, support and nourishment to man whose "nature grows heavenward". Man, in return to the help and service rendered by the mire, has to bring down the "flaming rose of god" to the mire, so that a total transformation can be brought about. Supramental manifestation is possible only through man, whose "soul is the bud of God's flaming rose." The bud of Divine Love can open with personal effort, since his innate trend is to grow heavenward. Once God's flaming rose blooms on earth, the mire changes to "Auroville", the "City of Dawn". The Dawn of a new epoch in human history, where Supramental beings, beyond the scope of Mental beings, make the world unique.

"Supramentalisation should be regarded as the fulfillment of God's working in the world, not as a personal chance or achievement," affirms Sri Aurobindo who proclaims his mission thus, "It is in a transformed consciousness here and not only

above where the Ananda always exists that I seek their base of permanence." (The Mother)

Only a transformed consciousness can be the base of permanent Ananda, and Auroville offers service for those who want to evolve consciously. The foundation of Auroville, named after Sri Aurobindo, was laid in a symbolic act of world collaboration, when boys and girls from all over the world came together and placed a handful of soil from their country in a marble urn shaped like a lotus bud. The Mother says, "Auroville will be a site of material and spiritual researches for a living embodiment of an actual Human Unity" (Integral Yoga 230). In its present state it may appear that it has "miles to go" before it reaches the ideal. Let us hope that the dream of the mother will be fulfilled.

The Human unity, she envisions, is brought about by "Love" in the true sense of the word, as seen in "Savitri", the incarnate of Love.

Love must not cease to live upon the earth;
 For Love is the bright link twixt earth and heaven,
 Love is the far Transcendent's angel here;
 Love is man's lien on the Absolute. (S X.3.711)

Sri Aurobindo, the master of the Poorna Yoga; the seer of a new mystical progression, aiming at a collective advance in consciousness from Mind to Supermind, visualises the whole world breaking all fetters and evolving Godwards, and transforming Earth-life into a field of the Divine Spirit.

In short, all the symbols mentioned in this chapter deal with the different aspects of this divine transformation. The two intersecting triangles depict the ascend of the involved spirit and the descend of the Divine Grace bringing about Life Divine on earth, the essence of the Integral Yoga advocated by the Yogi. The blooming of Divine Life is presented through the blooming Lotus in water. The multiplicity of creation is represented through water.

The triangles together take one to the world of involution and evolution of creation as well. The descending triangle represents the Sach-chid-Ananda aspect of the Para-Brahman that has manifested itself into matter. The ascending triangle represent the aspiring answer of Matter, Life and Mind under the form of life, light, love. The junction of both, the central square is the

perfect manifestation having at its centre the Avatar of the Supreme--the Lotus.

"Savitri", the Magnum Opus of the poet is itself a "Legend and Symbol" portraying the theory of evolution formulated by the epoch maker. Divine Grace will descend, in response to the aspirations of souls like that of Aswapathy, in the form of Savitri to help the Sadhak in his ascend and realisation of a Divine Life here on earth. Savitri is the creative force, the Mother, the Shakti that plays a major role in the evolution of consciousness. The Symbol of Mother with the circles and the petals shows her powers and missions. The central circle represents the Divine Consciousness and the four petals the four powers of the Mother. The twelve petals stand for the twelve powers of the Mother manifested for Her Work. Her power and light at its intensest is shown in the symbol of Sri Aurobindo Society. It is the symbol of Sri Aurobindo, with lines joining the apexes of the two triangles to form a diamond. The diamond signifies the reflecting, radiating power of the Mother at the very core of the realisation of Divine Life on earth. The "City of Dawn", the abode of

Divine Life, is brought to light through the symbol of Auroville. It symbolises the presence of Supreme in the Centre of Creation bringing about the realisation of the city. The consciousness of man in Auroville will awaken to the Wisdom, the Light, the Force, the Harmony and the Beauty that come flowing down from above, and become one with the Supramental Super Conscious Force. This results in Supramental Manifestations on earth implying the Dawn of a new age in Human Cycle, an era of Supermen on earth.

CHAPTER II

SYMBOLS OF A SUPERNATURAL ADVENTURE

There is nothing other than the "I", "Time" and "Space" are "my spirits" seeing. The "God", the "demon", the "ghost" and "elf", which appear to be separate in the seemingly dual world reconcile in the unity of the "Advaita". To a Rishi who can visualise this, the concepts of evolution--involution are a part of the dual processes of this Ultimate Reality.

The earth is nothing but "Brahman", "Annam Brahman", "Annam" is interpreted by Sri Aurobindo as Matter itself. The matter must return to the "Brahman". Only then will the true consciousness descend on it, as pictured in the Sonnet, "The Silver Call."

As rain-thrashed mire the marvel of the rose,

Earth waits that distant marvel to disclose. (CP 135)

The "marvel of the rose" is "disclosed" to the "mire" on being "thrashed" by the "rain". Rose, the divinity within the mire, eagerly waits to bloom when the mire prepares for the same. The "rain", the "Divine Grace", thrashes on the mire that aspires for the downpour, whereby the divinity within discloses its marvel and

blooms out. "Mire" and "Marvel" the alliteration expresses the respective status of Matter and Spirit. All that the matter has to do is to be aware of the divinity within and without and recognise that the sole meaning of life is to become aware of this "Truth" and grow into "It". Then the "distant" marvel becomes very near and "disclosed" to the waiting Earth. But for that the Earth also must play its part. The sons of Earth must respond to the "Invitation" of cosmic consciousness which says:

With wind and the weather beating round me

Up to the hill and the moorland I go.

Who will come with me? Who will climb with me?

Wade through the brook and tramp through the snow?

(CP 39)

The "brook" and the "snow" are as much physical as spiritual. Wading through the brook and tramping through the snow, one can reach the Truth, a physical, personal effort in the realm of the spiritual. The journey through "brook" and "snow" conveys the ascending of the soul through planes of higher consciousness. The earth is thrashed into action by Divine Grace, whereupon the sadhak with Faith, Aspiration, Renunciation and Surrender can identify himself with the Divine and bring about evolution of

consciousness. The personal effort needed for the much awaited disclosure is expressed through "wade through", "tramp through". The difficulties one can expect is made intense by the use of alliterations such as "With", "Wind", "Weather". The beating of the wind and weather doesn't halt the progress of the cosmic consciousness which goes through the "moorland" upto the "hill". Hill is the symbol of the path of Yoga with level above level, peak upon peak, leading one through brook and snow to the summits of splendour. The "moorland", the apparently infertile, sterile land waits for the "rain" to "thrash" upon it to regain its fertility, so that it can respond to the call to "come" and "climb". Climbing implies the evolution of consciousness from physical through vital, mental, and to the supramental planes of consciousness. This ascent is initiated and supported by Divine descent. Once the "climb" is done and the marvel disclosed, the "Contrasts" turn out and one sees that:

The world's deep contrasts are but figures spun
Draping the unanimity of the One. (CP 135)

The "One" is draped in a multitude of hues and figures. On being thrashed by the rain the superficial colourings are washed away and the unanimity disclosed. The Sadhak is surprised to see

that there is nothing other than the one, he himself being a part of it. In other words, he beholds the Marvel, he discovers to his utmost delight that the highest divine being is none other than himself. He exclaims to himself like the Vedic Rishi "Thou art He!".

The Dew drop is one with the shining sea. He realises that matter in various forms is nothing other than the "One" concealed in it, waiting to bloom out. Sri Aurobindo lays emphasis on the fact that behind the appearances of the universe there is the Reality of a Being and Consciousness, a self of all things, one and eternal. All realms of existence are contained in this system of worlds.

Planted on earth it holds in it all realms:

It is a brief commendium of the Vast. (S II.1.111)

"Commendium" is a summarisation, a condensation of the "Vast". An ignorance of this true Self and Reality in the Mind, Life and Body divide the beings which are otherwise united in one Self and Spirit.

In the voyage, "From Matter's abysses to the Spirits peaks", "Life" is the first step of the release of consciousness from what seems to be inconscient and "Mind" the second. The sons of

earth higher up the ladder of evolution is endowed with a "thinking mind" which has its origin in the "unthinking strife in the order of the electric elements" (CP 135).

The elements are "electric" signifying the power within. It is an unthinking power. But, it has the resources to give birth to a thinking mind. The involved is thus evolved. The highest triple world of the "Sachchidanand is really one, a triune being, not three different things put together but one that is three. It is Existence. "Sach," sheer existence which is supremely conscious. And this consciousness has a power, a force. It is "chid," chid-shakti. The nature of this consciousness is Delight. "Ananda". Thus the Absolute determines itself in these terms--Sach, Chid, Ananda. The one Being and Consciousness involved here "in the order of the electric elements," liberates itself through Evolution. Matter with Life is later endowed with Mind that can "think," that is conscious and this consciousness is impelled to grow higher and higher, enlarge and develop towards a greater perfection. The internal rhyme in "a thinking mind starts from the unthinking strife," lays stress on the process of evolution. The mind that evolved from Matter and Life, again is bound to evolve through higher mind, illumined mind, intuitive mind to over mind. A brief

glimpse of the regions under the sway of these minds is got in the imaginative flight of the poet in the following lines in "Thought the Paraclete."

As some bright archangel in vision flies
 Plunged in dream-caught spirit immensities,
 Past the long green crests of the seas of life,
 Past the orange skies of the mystic mind
 Flew my thought self-lost in the vasts of God. (CP 582)

The flight of thought as it takes off from the normal intellectual plane, sweeps across the illumined, intuitive and overmental regions and finally disappears bound for the ultimate is suggested by the poet through imagery and music. The limited human thought is compared to a "bright archangel". It goes from its ordinary level, "dream-caught spirit immensities" and passes through the "seas of life". The "long green crests" are of the seas of life. "Green" stands for fertility and life, indicative of the action of Life-force. Thought, then proceeds past the "Orange skies of mystic mind". Skies that represent higher consciousness is orange in colour, indicating the presence of the supramental in the physical. The consciousness goes further, transcends the mystic level and on reaching the supramental level it is "Self-lost in the vasts of God". The Self is left "lone,

limitless, nude, immune", after its flight from mind to overmind and beyond, through the regions of higher mind, illumined mind and intuition. Thought the Paraclete, merges with the Supreme, the ego is dead, the self escapes from the sheath of ignorance. It is left "lone", without limits, since it is one with the "limitless", "nude" of all sheaths of ignorance and "immune" to petty exigencies. This thinking mind of the self unlocks the "mystery of knowledge" carried by the "electric elements" in the cosmic play. The Poet says in "Contrasts" that:

A mystery of knowledge wore as sheath
 Matter's mute nescience. Its enveloped sense
 Or dumb somnambulist will obscurely reigns
 Driving the atoms in their cosmic course (CP 135)

Matter's mute nescience is the sheath worn by a "mystery of knowledge". Only a thinking mind can unravel the mystery, within the nescience of the "unthinking strife", the matter. The nescience is "mute" and Somnambulist will "dumb", speechless, expressionless state of "Will", waiting for its "enveloped sense" to be unfolded by sincere aspiration of the "thinking mind", man. It is this "Somnambulist Will" or "enveloped sense" that drives the atoms in their cosmic course. The Will or Consciousness is Somnambulist,

the epithet gives an inkling of the hidden power, working mechanically through man leading him through the tunnel to Light, the eternal Truth. It is the universal force that is ambulant, acting, moving in sleep, a creative sleep. This material force creates mechanically in a Somnambulist manner. The power and rule of the "Will" that "drive" and control the atoms in the order of the electric elements, is "obscure" to "unthinking strife". The "Will" awakens and arises when souls respond and follow the "call" of cosmic consciousness, in order to attain the pre-destined perfection. But the "climb" is not that simple. As one passes across the boundaries, something happens:

Opponent of that glory of escape,

The black Inconscient swung its dragon tail.

(S I.5.90)

The Inconscient hits with its huge tail at every spiritual seeker, who wants to rise beyond Nature's limits. He is "the black dragon" ever eager to engulf one to its evil kingdom. In spite of the dragon tail's lash, the seeker should go ahead aiming at the "Immaculate Delight." Then one feels "The Bliss of Brahman."

I am swallowed in a foam-white sea of bliss,
 I am a curving wave of God's delight,
 A shapeless flow of happy passionate light,
 A whirlpool of the streams of Paradise. (CP 158)

The ecstatic splendour when one is merged in ecstasy is suggested through being "Swallowed in a foam-white sea of Bliss." The abundance of Bliss is brought forth through the expression "foam-white sea of bliss." The sea is "foam-white", rich with white foams, bubbling with life, vigour, vitality and purity. White stands for psychic purity and the foam-white is part and parcel of the Sea of Bliss. Being swallowed in this sea is merging with the cosmic consciousness resulting in infinite Bliss, "Ananda", transforming the Sadhak to a "Shapeless flow of happy passionate Light." The Divine Light, the guiding force, is "happy" and "passionate". Happy to receive merging souls, and Passionate in hugging them closer lest they should fall apart. The "Light" indicates illumination of the consciousness, enlightenment of the Sadhak, resulting in Delight. Hence "Shapeless flow of Light" is also a "curving wave of God's delight" a "wave" in the "Sea of Bliss", curving towards "God's Delight". Delight of God is the Will of God to which one should surrender with faith and aspiration.

The total surrender takes one to the "Streams of Paradise", where one feels oneself to be a "Whirlpool" of the streams of Paradise. The rhyme scheme, abba, of the Quatrian and the consonance of the curving wave enrich the vision. "Bliss" and "Paradise" together takes one to a world of untold happiness. "Light" and "Delight" makes one aware of the inevitable presence of Light ensuring Delight, the true nature of "Sachchidananda". The Delight got through the Light of illumination is not Tamasic, but Sattwic delight brought about by the Sea of bliss, leading the seeker to Paradise. The Tamasic and Rajasic gunas inherent in the "unthinking strife" give way to Sattwic Delight, "Ananda", by the influx of "Light" transforming one to a "Shapeless flow of Light". The "curving wave", "shapeless flow" and "whirlpool" agrees well with the "sea" image. The sea of Bliss can very well be the sea of light, since eternal light gives delight. The harmony in the images directs one to the harmony of a world in and around matter. To be a "Whirlpool" of the streams of Paradise is no mean thing. The aspiring soul can be a part of this whirlpool through will, self surrender and self realisation through Works, Bhakti and Knowledge. Self perfection should be attained with a view to bring down Cosmic perfection, making a radical change in the earth-consciousness. Sri Aurobindo

strove to bring down a higher spiritual light, and power of a higher character to make the radical change a reality. He believed that it is possible for man to achieve this, and he says in the Sonnet "Electron" that man is capable of:

Widening his soul-spark to an epiphany

Of the timeless vastness of Infinity. (CP 141)

The "soul-spark" can be widened to an epiphany by self-perfection, initiated and accompanied by downward Divine Grace, "the rain thrashing the mire". The "epiphany", the manifestation of the Infinity in its triuneform kindles and afflates the soul-spark, if it willingly widens for the truth to descend. The Biblical allusion of "epiphany", the Magi being informed of the saviour's birth, holds good to represent the "sudden revelation" received by the soul-spark on widening to the Infinity, that saves one from the clutches of nescience.

Although externally man seems to be a helpless part of this great cosmic machine and a mere product of the inconscience, there is within him something that can change him from a mere instrument into the real Master. That something is the presence of the Divine in man. His soul is a "spark" of the "Light" that lights infinite souls. The soul-spark can, identify itself with "timeless,

vastness of Infinity", by breaking up the inconscience with the soul's force, the drive of the evolution force from earth's consciousness towards the Supreme. The inconscience is a "block on the immortals road", which is to be removed in order to allow the self to come forward and act. The self, being "Timeless" is able to act on time and snap the chain of the Law of Karma. He becomes a "Flaming Warrior" who prevails over Death and bursts "the bounds of Consciousness and Time". "The one devised innumerable to be" hides in "Time's tiny temples of eternity". This temple is by itself:

A spark from the eternal Energy spilt,

It is the Infinite's blind minute abode. (CP 141)

It is at once, the abode of Infinite and a "spark" of eternal Energy. Hence the drive towards the supreme, despite the fact that:

Two genii in the dubious heart of man,

Two great unhappy foes together bound

Wrestle and strive to win unhampered ground;

They strive for ever since the race began. (CP 55)

The two genii mentioned in the short poem "In the Moonlight," are powers that can do wonders, in the heart of man. They

"wrestle" and "strive" ever since the "race" began. The race of creation and evolution. Their aim is "to win unhampered ground". The soul-spark, not hampered by other forces, is the fertile ground for both the genii. The "unhappy foes" bound together are beautifully pictured thus:

One from his body like a bridge of fire
 Mounts upward azure-winged with eager eyes;
 One in his brain deep-mansioned labouring lies
 And clamps to earth the spirit's high desire. (CP 56)

The spirits high desire is clamped to earth by the "labour" of the "One" that lies deep in his brain. This genii is none other than the intellect, the reasoning power which fails to reason out the Truth behind the appearances. The "Scientists", who live in man-made mansions, "play with atoms and blow out the universe" before God has "time to shout". The God that warns is the "One" with "eager eyes" mounting upward on "azure-wings", like "a bridge of fire". His "body" the "flaming chariot" of "Shiva" harbours "Shakti", that is ever willing to rise through the various "chakras" or planes of consciousness and reach the Supreme. It's will is compared to a "bridge of fire". Agni is chid-shakti, which

bridges the gap between Spirit and Matter. The simile is most appropriate to present the upward thrust of the soul to join and become one with the Immanent. Fire rhymes with desire, implying their oneness, "spirits high desire" is the "bridge of fire". It mounts upward on azure-wings, the purple wings of vital power to the regions of illumination, intuition, into the over mind with eager eyes. This surge starts from deep down the physical where the "Shakti" lies dormant, coiled up in the "Muladhara". In "The Witness Spirit," the poet says:

This mute stupendous Energy that whirls

The stars and nebulae in its long train,

Like a huge Serpent through my being curls

With its diamond hood of joy and fangs of pain.

It rises from the dim inconscient deep

Upcoiling through the minds and hearts of men,

Then touches on some height of luminous sleep

The bliss and splendour of the eternal plane. (CP 143)

The Energy that "whirls" the cosmos, "curls" in the Individual being. It evolves to the height of luminous sleep to dissolve in the bliss and splendour of the eternal plane. The evolution of this

mute stupendous energy in the being is accelerated by will and aspiration. The Sadhak following the path of Yoga can channelise the Energy in him, so that it will rise from the dim inconscient like a huge serpent upcoiling through the minds and hearts of man. This energy is the chid-shakti, the force of consciousness that ascends through the centres of consciousness, six in number and reaches the seventh one to disappear into the Supramental planes. There it merges with the "single soul of bare infinities" resting "on the white summit of eternity". Shakti, the "bridge of fire", mounts to this height of luminous sleep like a serpent. The movement of the ascending force, its drive towards the supreme, is likened to that of a serpent, showing its affinity to the "Kundalini Shakti" of the Tantric discipline. In the physical form she is lying dormant and coiled up like a serpent in man in the lower most chakra called "Muladhara". Kundala means coiled, hence Kundalini is the serpent power that lies coiled. It upcoils from the "Muladhara" in the subconscient physical plane, passes to the "Swadhisthana", in the vital plane. From there through "Manipura" and "Anahata" reaches the "Visuddhi" in the mental plane. The "Ajnya" centre of this plane takes the sadhak to the centre of superconscient, the "Sahasrara". Thus curls the "mute stupendous

Energy" through the "minds and hearts" of man taking him to the bliss and splendour of eternal plane. The upraised hood and light of the serpent, the symbol of the Energy in Nature, indicate the illumination and victorious position of the emerged Energy. The "One" that puts shackles on the spirit's desire can be overpowered by the Serpent Power, "with its diamond hoods of joy and fangs of pain." It is possible, as the seer says in "Evolution," because man is:

. . . but a half-dark half-luminous sign

Of the transition of the veiled Divine

From Matter's sleep and the tormented load

Of ignorant life and death to the Spirit's light. (CP 136)

The "tormented load" of Ignorance and death can be lifted and removed by man, who is a half-luminous sign of the transition of the "Veiled Divine" from "Matter's Sleep" to "Spirit's Light". The Divine lies "veiled" in matter and life stirs from the Matter that sleeps, ignorant of the veiled Divine. Mind the next stage of transition is endowed with thoughts that are "hounds of light". The man with thinking mind is presented as a transitional being at a particular stage of evolution. Although he is half-dark due to

the load of Ignorance, yet he is half-luminous. Hence he is a "sign" of the transition of the involved Divine, that rises from the lowest level to the highest, to be one with the spirit's light. The transition is depicted as:

A ray returning to its parent sun. (S I.5.90)

The ray then merges with the sun to be a "shapeless flow of happy passionate light." The ancient force in man passes through the plane of Superconscient, the "Sahasrara" chakra and reaches the summit to regain its pristine state of pure consciousness, so that the Yogi enjoys Infinite Bliss in the presence of the Infinity "Shiva" who:

. . . looks across unending depths and sees

Musing amid the inconscient silences

The Mighty Mother's dumb felicity. (CP 150)

The parent sun looks across the world of creation with "unending depths". He is the "Hound of heaven" who takes care of his wards. "Amid the inconscient Silences", the Matter's sleep, the "Musing Spirit" sees the "dumb felicity" of the "Mighty Mother". The Mother is the Supreme Power, Para Shakti, who is the consciousness of the Lord himself. The world is the product of

that consciousness. She is not self-existent power apart from the Lord, but is the very nature of the Lords' Being. She is consciousness, static and eternally at rest, self-aware in the Lord. The Infinite soul enjoys the "felicity" of the Mother amid the darkness. The "Mighty Mother" awakes, uncoils and ascends the "aeonic road" to reach the Infinity.

Half now awake she rises to his glance;

Then, moved to circling by her heart-beats' will,

The rhythmic worlds describe that passion-dance.

Life springs in her and Mind is born; her face

She lifts to Him who is Herself, until

The Spirit leaps into the Spirit's embrace. (CP 150)

The "Shakti" rises to the glance of the "Single Soul of bare infinities". The Poet compares the mystic loneliness of the soul's nude ecstasy to the circling movement of the Mighty Mother according to her heart beats will. The rhythm of the dance is accentuated by the Mighty stillness of the single soul of bare infinities. The soul finds himself in the dumb felicity of the Mighty Mother amid the inconscient silences. The action of the Mother awaking to his glance is also rhythmic. The palpitation of the

Mother's heart is the moving force of the world. All these end up in the harmony of the spirit leaping into the spirit's embrace. Here all rhythms beat in unison with the rhythm of the creative silence of the soul and its unheard melody. The rhyming of "glance" and "dance", "face" and "embrace" emphasise the theme.

The spirit can thus leap into the spirit's embrace only when man "the half-luminous sign of the transition of the veiled Divine" aspires for the pristine union. He should make himself a fit instrument for the play of the Divine. The "cup" has to be made "clean and empty" for the divine liquor to be poured into it.

A breath comes down from a supernal air,
 A presence is borne, a guiding light awakes,
 A stillness falls upon the instruments:
 Fixed sometimes like a marble monument,
 Stone-calm, the body is a pedestal
 Supporting a figure of eternal Peace. (S I.4.54)

Man, "the half-dark sign", should free himself from the attacks of forces that render darkness. Only then can he be a fit receptacle for the downpour of strength and Ananda of the Divine. Considerable attention is to be paid to the physical side in the

Sadhana by the Yoga-force, as that is the basis on which the entire edifice is to be erected. The working of the Yoga force, "the guiding light", that awakes and settles on layers upon layers of Peace, makes the body strong and firm, perfect and harmonious. These layers of peace are the seven centres of consciousness or chakras which is paralleled with the seven worlds of creation. Each of the centres represent the five elements of the universe called "Panchabhuthas". These chakras, though situated in the subtle body, is believed to have corresponding centres in the gross physical too. The body that is fit to receive divine grace is compared to a marble pillar, which is cool, never excited and heated. The "marble monument" is blissful with the joy of delight running through its veins. Though constituted of inert matter the body gradually changes into a living figure of the calm; it becomes a solid embodiment of Quietude. It is fashioned into a "pedestal", a substantial base, that supports a "figure of eternal peace". The body arrives at the very core of its fulfillments only when it is turned to a fine vessel of the Peace. This transformation is possible with Divine interference, when a "breath comes down from a supernal air." With the coming of the "breath", the "guiding light awakes." The light that guides is the "ancient force"

that waits with "eager eyes." When the "presence of the divine is born" by the "breath from the supernal air", the light awakes and fills the instruments with a stillness, a prelude to "Ananda." This stillness can be achieved through Quietude. The first step for the ascension of consciousness is to quiet the mind by opening it to the impersonal. Thoughts can thus be pruned so that the unwelcome proliferation of the thorny weeds of vices are checked. Then comes silence; where thought is altogether banished making the mind totally clean and empty. This state is easily established by a Descent from above. It enters and occupies the personal consciousness which then tends to merge itself in the vast impersonal silence. This Descent from above, the descent of a "breath from a supernal air", is the unique feature of Sri Aurobindo's yoga and it is the fundamental difference between the Integral Yoga or Purna Yoga of the Poet-Yogi and other Yogas. Here the ascent is initiated and guided by the descending force, hence the claim for effective and smooth opening of the chakras. Since his Yoga aims at transforming life and matter, great importance is attached to the descending force. This higher force can descend and work in the Sadhak when peace is established. It calls for certain preparation on the part of the Sadhak. The inevitable change that goes before total "Transformation" is described thus:

My breath runs in a subtle rhythmic stream;

It fills my members with a might divine:

I have drunk the Infinite like a giant's wine.

Time is my drama or my pageant dream.

Now are my illumined cells joy's flaming scheme

And changed my thrilled and branching nerves to fine

Channels of rapture opal and hyaline

For the influx of the Unknown and the Supreme. (CP 133)

The preparation for the Divine descent on his person itself fills man's members with a divine that is powerful. The breath that runs in a "subtle rhythmic stream" fills the members with a might which is not earthly, but "divine". The rhythmic breath is one with the world rhythm, hence he feels no difficulty in absorbing this divine might. "A giant's wine" suggests strength of intoxication and plenitude. The Sadhak absorbs the "Infinite" as a giant would take in the wine. The unspeakable joy in the world of Infinity is the "Wine" that excites the very "cells" of the beings. The Sadhak, who has consumed this wine, feels one with the timelessness of the universal soul. "Time is drama" or "pageant dream" for him, who is free from the bonds of Time. Even his cells are illumined by the "flaming scheme" of joy. God's joy or

delight has schemes, for man, that are flaming. The cells being illumined indicates total transformation from the very base of existence. The rhythmic breath has changed his nerves to fine channels of crystal clear rapture. The nerves are thrilled by the very thought of the descent that brings about transformation and hence it branches towards eternal "Ananda". The branching nerves are now fit channels "for the influx of the unknown and the supreme." The Poet dances with joy while waiting for the influx of the unknown. The diction of the octave tends to be metaphorical, as in "I have drunk the Infinite", "Time is my drama or my pageant dream". The rhyme scheme and the rhythm goes with the experience. Abba Abba, the rhythmic stream of the rhyming words clarifies the vision. The "scheme" of the "supreme" has a rhythmic stream which is a long cherished "dream" of every sadhak. The "divine" might has the quality of "wine" which takes one to a "fine" world of "hyaline". It is the clear world of the superconscience, free from the bonds of nescience. The clarity of expression and choice of words and phrases make the spiritual illumination all the more illuminating. The "influx of the unknown and the supreme" makes the poet dance with an unspeakable joy, as can be seen through the following lines:

I am no more a vassal of the flesh,
 A slave to Nature and her leaden rule;
 I am caught no more in the senses' narrow mesh.
 My soul unhorizoned widens to measureless sight,
 My body is God's happy living tool,
 My spirit a vast sun of deathless light. (CP 133)

He feels free from the chains of Nature and her hard rules. He had been trapped in the narrow network of senses so long. The sensual pleasures of the gross physical had entangled him to such a state that he was inextricably caught in its "mesh". Now he is rescued from slavery, that had been tormenting him for long. The "vassal" frees himself from all traps of Ignorance, the python-coils of lower physical. He widens his soul-spark to the epiphany of the vastness of Infinity. Supreme knowledge has descended on him and made his body a "happy, living tool of God". It has been transformed to be the abode of God and its soul merges with the limitless eternal light. The rhyming words offer a clear picture of enslavement and emancipation. The "flesh" had enslaved him in its "mesh", but with the descent he has escaped from the "rule" of nature and elevated himself to the status of a living "tool" of the supreme. The transformation results in visions of "Truth", the

measureless "sight" of deathless "light". The Ignorance that had vitiated the true form has surrendered before his will, and now he is one with the luminous environment where everything is very clear at a higher level. His senses are opened out to something unearthly and his eyes are doors to heavenly sense and sight. The spirit identifies itself with the "deathless light" of Infinity. The light has no beginning and no end. It lights on for ever. The growth and establishment of spiritual consciousness, the "sun", is made felt by the poet, in unmistakable terms. The consciousness of the individual soul is totally transformed and such a soul is envisioned by the yogi to be the dwelling place of "Ananda". He seeks the base of permanence of Love, Beauty, Joy and Power in this transformed consciousness here on earth and not above. He believes that even a single individual soul can challenge the cosmic rule of ignorance.

One mighty deed can change the course of things;

A lonely thought becomes omnipotent. (S I.2.24)

The individual mighty will can wrought miracles. The consciousness of the "lonely thought" is something finer than that which prevails on earth plane. It is:

A finer consciousness with happier lines,
 It has a tact our touch cannot attain,
 A purity of sense we never feel;
 Its intercession with the eternal Ray
 Inspires our transient earth's brief-lived attempts
 At beauty and the perfect shape of things. (II.2.117)

It has happier lines, free from the jagged contours of the earth consciousness. It is endowed with a "tact", a skill, which the physical touch cannot have. It has also a purity, a purity of sense which is foreign to the nescient matter. It interacts with the "eternal Ray", the light that emanates from the eternal Being. This interchange inspires man's brief attempts on earth "at beauty" and "perfection of shape." Thus the inspiration behind every attempt, however brief, made by man on earth to create beauty and perfection of form comes from above through the divine descent. It comes through the interface of this subtle world with the eternal Ray. For that the ray here must return to its "Parent Sun". Then the "rain" will thrash on the "mire" to disclose the "marvel" within, whereby the "distant" marvel is "disclosed" and the waiting earth becomes one with the marvel. The "Rose of God" blooms

on earth, establishing a Divine Life here on the terrestrial, through the fine consciousness.

The images seen so far represent a call from above and a response from below. There is a mounting and a dismounting. The "rain" thrashes the "mire" that awaits the downpour. "Rain" is the descending grace that discloses the Marvel of "Rose" to the aspiring souls in the "Mire". "Rose" the divinity within is revealed by the divinity above so that the souls can respond to its call to climb the hill to reach the "single soul of bare infinities". The climb is an attempt to overcome countering forces like wind and weather beating round the Sadhak, who tries to wade through the brook, and tramp through the snow. The hill is the symbol of the path of yoga that leads the aspirant to the eternal plane of bliss and splendour. This plane is within the reach of Sadhaks with sincere aspiration, and an attitude of surrender. The ascent is initiated and guided by the descending force. "Brook" and "Snow" represent planes of higher consciousness to be traversed in order to reach the eternal plane. The "moorland" in the order of the "electric elements", harbours a "thinking mind". Man is at once the "thinking mind" and the "transitional being". He bears the "spark of eternal fire" and responds to the light from above. The

"Spirits Light" lights his way to the next stage of evolution from nescience to conscience. The involved spirit, with its "Somnambulist Will", in the Matter's sleep, awakes and arises to the call of the "timeless, Vastness of Infinity". The spirit within and without yearns to unite in the vast epiphany of the Infinity. The spark of the eternal Energy is like a "bridge of fire" that mounts upward with "eager eyes" on "azure-wings". This bridge of fire that responds to the call of the "Parent Sun" is the "Serpent" force that curls with its "diamond hood of joy and fangs of pain." It rises from the deep inconscience to the heights of luminous sleep. In this height which is the "White summit of eternity", the "single soul" waits and watches the "passion-dance" of the "Mighty-Mother". "Shakti", the power within, glances at the power without and leaps to the spirits embrace. Man provides a "tiny minute abode" for the alighting spirit. The power that has lighted on him makes him a "flaming chariot" that heads towards the vastness of Infinity. It shoots up to higher regions of consciousness to bring about a total transformation in Matter, Life and Mind.

The spirit embracing the spirit, the ascent and the descent, the call and the response, the downward flow and the upward

surge are depicted through a host of images that symbolise the whole process of involution and evolution. The connection of these with the symbols of intersecting triangles and circles mentioned earlier are obvious. The ascent and the descent are a call and a response. They are actualized by instinctive urges calling for self fulfillment. It is this urge which acts as the motive force behind all movements, mundane or celestial. It is this which makes the fire leap upwards to bring down heavenly grace and transform the physical world into something more divine. The lotus in water within the square at the junction of the intersecting triangles in the Aurobindonian symbol stands for the transformed divine world. The square represents the presence of the supermind, which accelerates the union between the three lower planes and the three higher planes symbolised by the two triangles. Both combined together in a single sign, effected by the supermind, give rise to Divine Life, the Lotus. The dynamic action represented by fire is behind the Divine Manifestations.

CHAPTER III

AGNI

Fire that travellest from immortality, spark of the Timeless,
 Why hast thou come to my night, unbearable Idol of Light,
 (CP 605)

"Death" thus interrogates the "Traveller Fire." Death, with its "Python-Coils of Ignorance" resists any invasion of "Light", lest he should lose his kingdom of "night". Sri Aurobindo's intuitive perception detects a pattern of meaning in the discourse between "Death and the Traveller Fire." Death, the Nescience, in a state of Inertia, enjoys the apparent bliss of Ignorance and questions Fire, "the spark of the Timeless", "Why hast thou come to my night?" One who reclines in darkness finds "Light", "unbearable". Fire, "the Idol of Light", travels from Immortality, traverses Time and Space and returns to the Ineffable. This spark of Immortality goes into the night of creation, the nescience of matter, to light its way through darkness to the dawn of Truth, the Infinite. "This nescience of matter", says Sri Aurobindo, "is a veiled, an involved or somnambulist consciousness which contains all the latent powers

of the Spirit. In every particle, atom, molecule, cell of matter there lives hidden and works unknown all the omniscience of the Eternal and all the omnipotence of the Infinite" (The Hour of God 17.15). This somnambulist consciousness wonders:

Ah, from what happier universe strayedst
 thou kindling my torpor?

and requests :

Pass, O spirit of Light, now perturb not my
 vastness of Night. (CP 605)

The perturbed soul doubts that the "Traveller Fire" is "straying" from some "universe" "happier" than that inherited by him. The "Spark of the Timeless" is able to "kindle" the "torpor" of Death. In his frustration at being perturbed, he appeals to the "Spirit of Light" to "pass" on, not disturbing his "Vastness of Night". The antonymical terms "Light", "Night", repeated in the verse helps one to visualise a world of Night being shattered by Light. Their rhyme stresses the theme. The Night is "vast". The epithet projects the wide world of Ignorance, Unconsciousness, Falsehood, the Kingdom of Death. But the "Spirit of Light" can easily "perturb" the "Vastness of Night".

This spirit is the Traveller Fire, a "Spark of the Timeless". The symbol "Traveller" at the core of the imagery gives the picture of a journey of the Spirit from Immortality to Mortality and vice versa. It portrays an inner journey too, guided by the inner Fire. "The Spark of the Timeless", lays stress on the Fire aspect of the Timeless that has involved itself into matter, the power within that enhances the process of evolution. The key note of Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga is this inner journey, initiated by a total surrender to the power within and without, kindled by a wilful aspiration. This aspiration is Agni, the divine Force, Power or Will-in-consciousness. This dynamic force within the beings directs the Becoming to the Being. The Soul has a natural seeking for its parent Godhead and this forms the principal thrust in its movement inward and upward. This intrinsic aspiration, the celebrated Agni, kindles the soul and up goes the spirit in search of the "Godhead of Immortality", which is again the "Eternal Agni". The seer-will, "kavi kratuh" hymned by the Rishis as the immortal in mortals, is Agni, the leader in front, "purohita", the captain of the human journey, the summoner of the Gods and the Godhead in man. The seven divine "Angirasas" of the Vedas are the sons or powers

of Agni, powers of the seer-will, the flame of divine force instinct with divine knowledge which is kindled for victory. Man kindles it on the altar of sacrifice, which is the giving by man of what he possesses in his being to the higher or divine nature, and its fruit is the further enrichment of Godhead in him by the lavish bounty of the Gods. The spiritual riches gained is itself a power for the journey, for the sacrifice is a journey, a progression. The sacrifice itself travels led by Agni up the divine path to the Gods the Eternal Agni. "Agni is manifested Brahman and Brahman is Agni", affirms the "Homa Mantra". Agni is also the tongue of the Gods, through which they accept the offerings, "Homa", "Yajna", of the aspiring individual, "Yajamana". The celebrated Agni shatters the "Vastness of Night" and leads the Soul to Light, Truth, Life. The death of Death, the death of Ignorance only can bring forth life.

Fire of God, I passioned for life and have

gathered but ashes –

Life so that Death might die. (CP 604)

The death of Death is inevitable, only then can Consciousness come into Existence and render eternal Bliss. Sat-Chid-Ananda,

the Triune aspect of the manifested Brahman can be retained only by the death of Falsehood and the birth of Truth. It is the Fire of Death that causes the death of Death, giving Life to Divine Truth. The Eternal Truth is the Eternal Fire of Truth, the "Fire of God" to whom the soul makes an appeal--" I passioned for life and have gathered but ashes . . . " The passion for Life, a living soul brimming with Life, is the passion for the Consciousness that makes one conscious of Eternal Truth. For that Death should die. The death of Death is Life. Earth must give birth to Heavens, Death must give birth to Life. Heavens must grow from below. The anguished soul walled by falsehood finds only "ashes", the dead remains, instead of the Life he passioned for, and doubts:

Yea, was it life that He gave me? (604)

"He", the Immortal, through rays of wisdom, lights the darkness and prompts the soul to reconsider his position on earth. In an earnest attempt to shatter the wall of Ignorance, the soul realises that the Fire God is the:

Glow of my darkness, reflex and nerve-beat

devoured the devourer,

Tortured by the flame an obscure will in

me kindled to save me. (604)

The "devourer" is "devoured" by the "Glow". The Ignorance that greedily eats on the soul, caging him in darkness, is "devoured" by the Glow, bringing about eternal Light. The repetition involved in the use of the derivatives "devoured" and "devourer" emphasises the meaning of the root word, and like a double edged weapon depicts the engulfing power of Agni and the "force of Ignorance". The strife between Truth and Falsehood goes on until the "flame" within "kindles" the "obscure will" to "save" the soul from darkness, the Death, to give Life. The "Will" is "Obscure" due to the "nescience of matter". It is upto matter to heed to the great, deathless voice that told Savitri : "Find out thy soul, recover thy hid self." The "flame", that "kindles" the "will" to save, can help one in the mission of "self-recovery". The flame "tortures" the "obscure will", so that it is forced to "recover the hid self". The hidden self can be sought out by the "God's Watch-Fires burning in the ignorant night." The ever burning Watch-Fires toil and moil to erase ignorance from earth's surface, so that

the Kingdom of Night will be surrendered to Light. The expression "God's Watch-Fires", explicitly depicts the watchful, ever alert nature of God, the Fire, to save humanity from the clutches of "ignorant night". It is ignorant of its own Ignorance. When once the nescience is unveiled, one beholds the Splendour and realises that:

A soul that is a spark of God survives
 And sometimes it breaks through the sordid screen
 And kindles a fire that makes us half-divine.
 In our body's cells there sits a hidden Power . . .

(S II.5.192)

The soul is a "Spark of God" and the Spark "survives" inspite of the nescience, hopefully expecting that one day or the other the soul will attain self realisation. In order to make the realisation speedy, it "breaks" at times through the "Sordid Screen" of Nescience, kindling a "Fire". This fire when kindled makes one half-divine. Man can become fully divine only when he fully realises the "hidden Power" in his "body's cells". The "Fire" that "kindles" "makes" one "half-divine", the "Power" that "sits" in the "body's cells" can set ablaze the kindled Fire,

and transform the body into a fully divine One. Hence Savitri says to Death:

I cherish God the Fire, not God the Dream. (X.2.691)

God the Fire is the "hidden power" that breaks all cramping shackles and makes the Dream of Divine Life a reality. Man should seek out this Power that gives him Life, makes him reach out, like the plant to the Sun. The mysticism which Sri Aurobindo proclaims through Savitri's lips is a dynamic mysticism opposed to the passive one, content with a Divine perfection shining elsewhere, a beautiful but issueless splendour. It holds God to be a Power Self-effectuating in the World of men, not merely a Light, but also a Fire, the Truth that conquers by consuming all imperfections. For that:

Our body's cells must hold the Immortal's flame,

Else would the spirit reach alone its source

Leaving a half-saved world to its dubious fate. (I.3.41)

The "Sordid-Screen" of Ignorance of the "half-divine" state is the "dubious fate" of the "half-saved world". The world is "half-saved" from the "Python-Coils of Ignorance", and its fate is doubtful because it fails to "hold" the "Immortal's flame" in

the body's cells. The flame is there even in the "electron" on which the "forms" and "worlds" are "built". The "Electron" is, says the poet,

A spark from the eternal Energy split,

It is the Infinite's blind minute abode. (CP 141)

The "cells" and "electrons" are the "blind abodes" of the Infinite. The minute abodes are unaware of the presence of infinity within, unconscious that they are "the small flaming chariots" that "Shiva rides". The indwelling infinity "Shiva" rides in the minute matter that flames with fiery eternal Energy. Man is at once a spark of the eternal Energy and an abode of the Infinite. When this "Divine Sense" invades the Sadhak, he cries out:

The body burns with Thy rapture's sacred fire,

Pure, passionate, holy, virgin of desire. (CP 166)

The imperishable bliss of Divinity crowds into this moment of Delight, when one feels one with the Sacred Fire of Divine rapture "Prajnanam Brahma". The "body burns" with that "virgin of desire", the Fire that is "pure", "passionate" and "holy". It is sacred and holy, hence pure and passionate. The body that burns with the rapture of the Sacred Fire, also

retains its virginity, keeping away all other untoward desires that check the "Fire". This Fire is the very inhabitant of the heart, heart's own substance. When God is Fire, He is an intense intimacy--Supreme Love, close and all consummating. With His Centre in the seat of longing, He becomes a "rapture" that can radiate forth into the physical world and make it rich with a wide and wonderful communion, a manifold infinite oneness. This Sacred Fire is the seed of the Universe, a Supreme Nectar, a Wine of Mighty Joy.

The Imperishable burn through Matter's screen

Making this mortal body godhead's robe.

(S II.2.124)

The fiery seed of the Universe, the Imperishable, "burns" through "Matter's Screen". The inconscience of Matter is transformed into a fit garment for the Godhead. Thenceforth, matter shall partake of the immortality of the divinity. The earth itself will be changed into something that partakes of a greater awareness of itself as the product of the creative Divine Being, a Becoming of the Supreme Being. The Imperishable in its creative poise is the Sat-Chid-Ananda. The universe issues out of the Delight of Existence and is uphold

by the same Delight, which underlies every form, every movement in the universe.

Thus "Fire" is the seed of the Universe. Fire is the consciousness which shall transform the world, Fire is the warmth of the delight that upholds creation. It is the upper Fire that holds the magical word that shall speed up evolution.

O word concealed in the upper fire,
 Thou who hast lingered through centuries,
 Descend from thy rapt white desire,
 Plunging through gold eternities. (CP 589)

Word, the Brahman, concealed in fire, is thus invoked by the Seer-Poet in the poem in new metre, "Musa Spiritus." Word is concealed in the upper fire lingering there for centuries waiting for a call from below. The "upper fire" is the higher world of rapture, ecstasy, pure desire. The word is requested to descend from its world of "rapt white desire", the world of "Divine Consciousness". The descent is a deep one. The "Almighty" has to "plunge" through "gold eternities", the eternal world of Truth Consciousness, before he reaches the terrestrial one. Word, the Fire, the power is invoked so that the streams of Truth may

flow, unobstructed, to earth, the riches of the divine Truth and Light may descend into life on earth awakening all forms into an awareness that they are the dream dialect of the delight of the Absolute.

"Form", the "dream-dialect of delight" is the "wonder-house of eternity" and also "a Cavern of the deathless Eremite." The Marvellous depths of God have a beauty and a miracle that "builds the universe for its abode". Any form is a "Cavern" and "Wonder-house" of "deathless Eremite". The Hermit is "deathless" and his hermitage is the "Form," the Cavern where he meditates, chanting "mantras" for the "wonder-house of eternity" to maintain its worth. Hermit, Eremite, the Fire; by inner sacrifice offering oneself to the flame within, and by the Word, by Mantras, the inspired speech expressing the thought-illumination of the truth, invoke the "Word of Upper Fire" to bring down Light and Truth. Fire is the spark of the soul calling out and yearning for the higher light to descend. The Agni, the power that is

The One, in His glory multitudinous,

Compels the great world-petals to uncloset. (CP 167)

The "Vivid-Infinite" in "His multitudinous glory" rises from the "Cavern" to discover its own mystery. The "world-petals unclosed". The metaphor of "world-petals" reveals how the world as a Flower, slowly opens disclosing to itself the secrets within, compelled by the "One". This self-realisation of the Vivid-Infinite, is a prelude to the Bliss of Identity. When once the reality is realised, the dichotomy of the soul and the psychic being ends and the soul becomes the lord of the instrumental personality. Sri Aurobindo describes this event in memorable words.

Here in this chamber of flame and light they met;
 They looked upon each other, knew themselves,
 The secret deity and its human part,
 The calm immortal and the struggling soul.
 Then with a magic transformation's speed
 They rushed into each other and grew one. (S VII.5.598)

Here is an image of a physical union as that of lovers. "Shiva's" creative force becomes one with the core of Spirit, merged in unconscious matter. The "calm immortal" and "the struggling soul", "the secret deity" and "its human part", rush into each other and "grow one" in the "chamber of flame and

light". "A magic transformation" speeds up the communion. It takes place:

In that diamond heart the fires undrape, (CP 573)

The "diamond heart" is the "chamber of flame and light". The undraping of the Fire is the rending of the veil of the "secret deity" revealing, itself to its "human part". The "calm immortal" the Fire "undrapes" itself to the "struggling soul". The word "undrape", with its hints of processes at once revelatory and creative, could not be bettered. It again goes along with the image of union seen above. But the undraping by Fire has nothing lascivious about it. It is a cathartic process by which all the dross is burnt out. The epithet "diamond" has a double felicity. Not only is it true to the inner sight to which the Divine's Will is a tremendous White Lustre just as the Divine Knowledge is a gold blaze and the Divine Love a crimson flare, it is also extraordinarily apt when the Spirit concealed in Matter is visioned, a presence holding material rigidity in a precious and transfigured form, a supreme strength dense with light and beauty. The "diamond heart", the "chamber of flame and Light" radiates Divine Knowledge, Love, Strength, Beauty, the true nature of the Spirit.

The Spirit shall look out through Matter's gaze
 And Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face.

(S XI.1.796)

When the "Fires undrape", the matter sensitive to the sight and sound of the source "shall reveal the spirit's face" giving inklings of the world of Sat-Chid-Ananda, the last high world where Night is not, nor sleep. There is no inconscience, no obscurity. All worlds meet there, it is the world of the "Ultimate". Everything finds its fulfillment in that high world. The "Light of the Supreme Trinity" "gleams" there. It is the world of the "Eternal Agni". Neither "Night" nor "Sleep" can find room there. This is the destination of the ascent in Sri Aurobindo's vision. The ascent to this high world brings about a Divine Life on earth. It is initiated by the Divine descent from "rapt white desire" through "gold eternities", world of Divine Consciousness through "Truth Consciousness, the supermind, to Earth." The "high world" is in contrast with the terrestrial world where there is a sort of refraction of the Divine Existence, Consciousness Force, Bliss and Supermind into Matter, Life, Psyche or soul and mind. The former terms constitute the higher world of pure Being, the "Supreme Trinity"

the Upper Fire and the latter terms the lower world of Cosmic Manifestation, the world of Concealed Fire.

The keynote of the Yogi's philosophy and the core of his Integral Yoga is made up of the way in which the inner fire rends the veil of its concealment, establishing the world of beauty and bliss on earth. In this Divine world forms are mere skeletons. Beauty exists by itself. Form is only an outline, the divine presence in all is that which matters.

The body illumined with the indwelling God,
The heart and mind feel one with all that is.

(S I.5.87)

The "indwelling God"; the Fire God, Agni illumines the body and the "heart and mind" "feel one with all". This Truth of spiritual realisation helps one to spontaneously respect others, which gives hope to Love. Divine Love cannot be practised at one go. It is only out of deep reverence, consideration, and a feeling of commonality with others that the path of Love is laid. The Fire of Love should burn out to redeem one of his sins. It was this warmth of compassion that burst out of Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner" which redeemed the protagonist of his sin of killing the "bird of good omen", the Albatross.

The compassion, fellow feeling and love that burned in him towards the sea-snakes, once held filthy, ugly and cursed, compelled him to bless them. This unitive consciousness is Divine Love. The Poet visualises in "The Ways of Spirit":

A tranquil heart in sympathy with all,
Its will vast-visioned, poised, imperial. (CP 139)

A calm, peaceful heart is that which has "sympathy with all". The "will" of such a heart is always "one-pointed". Pointed towards the "wide", "imperial" high world, the world of Truth and Light. True Love that conquers all world known and unknown reigns supreme here in the world of "Trinity Supreme". The Fire of Love is the "Guiding Star", the "Light House" of wandering souls. In its presence,

The heart and mind feel one with all that is,
A conscious soul live in a conscious world.

(S I.5.87)

The world environment must become conscious, and the soul that lives in these worlds must be conscious. When consciousness fails to establish itself, Love which necessarily implies oneness, remains a broken reflection of unity :

Love's broken reflexes of unity

Swim, fragment mirrorings of a floating sun.

(S I.5.88)

Love is "sun", the celestial Fire, the warmth of which is very essential for Existence. The unconscious world can boast of only "fragment mirrorings" of this sun, the Truth, the Divine Love. The expression "fragment mirrorings of a floating sun" gives the picture of a tattered world, with distorted vision, truth being crippled. The disunity is brought to light by the usage "broken reflexes of unity" and Love is equated with "floating sun". It is the "fragment mirrorings" of the sun that "swim" to save themselves from dissipation. They represent the earthy, imperfect Love which culminates in the feeling of "My Life is Wasted".

My life is wasted like a lamp ablaze

Within a solitary house unused,

My life is wasted and by Love men praise

For sweet and kind. . . (CP 125)

Life is wasted by "Love" praised by men as "sweet" and "kind". This much praised Love is the earthly Love which is transient and:

. . . leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd

A burning forehead, and parching tongue. (Keats 634)

The Keatsian revelations explicitly picture the plight of the miserable victims of the so called earthly Love. Life in the grip of this "breathing human passion far below" is compared to "a lamp ablaze within a solitary house unused". A lamp ablaze in a solitary house unused is wasted. A light-house or a lamp on a hill-top, on the other hand, is a blessing. There is no use lighting a lamp under a bushel. The image of a useless lamp is well suited to suggest the reluctance of men to share their merits and gifts with others because of the lack of the warmth of fellow-feeling. The Poet affirms in the sonnet "My Life is Wasted" that such men are forced to moan:

I burn and know not why; I sink to hell

Fruitlessly and am forbidden to rebel. (CP 125)

They "burn and sink to hell fruitlessly" and are "forbidden to rebel". This is the state of helplessness of the victims of fruitless, self Love, too indifferent to share the light of the "lamp ablaze within". They are even unaware of the cause of their fall. They are forbidden to rebel. Only Love in its true hue, can save them from their miserable plight. Love, the

child-god, seeks himself in many hearts and minds and living forms. He lingers for a sign that he can know. But he does not find it anywhere as people have grown forgetful of their divine moorings. Readiness to give oneself for a higher cause, than selfish pursuits, as the basis of an awareness of a common presence betokens divine love, visualised in the poem "Rose of God", which can:

. . . Make earth the home of the Wonderful
and life beatitude's kiss. (CP 584)

Earth can be made the "home of the wonderful" when the Rose of Love blooms in the "diamond hearts". Life, then becomes the "Beatitude's kiss", a sweet, happy, graceful existence instead of the pathetic, wasteful one. A Marvellous, Wonderful Life can be led on the globe with the help of "a blush of rapture on Eternity's face", the sign of Eternal Love. The Rose of Love is the Rose of God, that is again:

Rose of Bliss, fire-sweet, seven-tinged with the
ecstasies seven! (584)

The Fire of ecstasy is "seven tinged", having seven shades like that of a rainbow with enchanting beauty that bridges earth

and heaven. "Seven" the sacred number of Gods, is also the seven worlds of creation, the seven chakras in Yoga, the seven rays of illuminative thought, and the seven words which express it giving rise to "ecstasies seven". The expression "Fire-Sweet" may sound paradoxical, but it alone can describe the purifying ordeal of a great transformation. The "seven ecstasies" are got through the "seven tongues" of Fire. The Five senses along with mind and intellect form the "seven tongues". The Fire of Eternal Bliss, Ananda that renders one eternal ecstasy is requested to:

Leap up in our heart of humanhood,

O miracle, O flame, (584)

The soul loses its bonds and enjoys the thrill of Existence when the "Miracle" and "Flame" leaps in the human heart, and takes one to the "summits of being", where the great wisdom blooms. The Flame is the:

Sun on the head of the Timeless, guest of the

marvellous Hour. (584)

That Supreme Fire pierces the night of ignorance with its diamond halo. This Fire of Power is described as the Image

of Immortality and invoked to be "Ablaze in the will of the mortal", and "design" the wonder of thy plan, which is nothing but to cause the "outbreak of the Godhead" in man. This Godhead in man is the "Rose of Love, ruby depth of all being, Fire-passion of Grace!". Only the Divine Love, the Image of Immortality, can

Transform the body of the mortal like a

sweet and magical rhyme; (584)

The Blissful existence of "humanhood" when the Fire of Love blazes in the will of the mortal is wonderfully presented with the similie "like a sweet and magical rhyme". The whole body vibrates with the magical rhyme. It is no more a mere body but a sweet rhyme. The Bliss, the Power, the Life, the Love is invoked to:

Bridge our earthhood and heavenhood,

make deathless the children of Time. (584)

The Fire of Love soars up and bridges earth and heaven thus making man "the Child of Time", deathless. Man becomes fully conscious of the Truth, he frees himself from the "Python coils of Ignorance" which is death, and establishes "The mighty

Kingdom of the deathless Flame", on earth. The Kingdom of the deathless Flame is "mighty", so that only the spiritually "mighty" can survive in that kingdom of Divine Love. The "unbearable Idol of Light" is the Fire of Spiritual Love that blows like the "Flame-Wind."

A flame-wind ran from the gold of the east,
 Leaped on my soul with the breath of a sevenfold noon.
 Wings of the angel, gallop of the beast!
 Mind and body on fire, but the heart in swoon. (CP 559)

The breath of the Flame-Wind is seven-fold that of the noon. The heat of the sun, the "gold of the east" is at its intense at noon. But the flame-wind that comes from the east, the Truth, is hotter than the noon. The intense blaze of Spirituality gives it seven-fold strength, causing a spiritual noon. Even the heart, familiar with mystical Bliss, swoons by the heat of the spiritual Love, where there is no room for any kind of conventional conception of God in earthly terms. In the heat of spirituality, there is no room for a mystical attachment to God. The soul wonders:

O flame, thou bringest the strength of the noon,
 But where are the voices of morn and the stillness of eve?

Where the pale-blue wine of the moon?

Mind and life are in flower, but the heart must grieve. (559)

The strength of the noon is a high voltage intense kind of realisation which demands much preparation on the part of the Sadhak. The Mighty Kingdom of Spiritual Love can be built only on firm grounds. The unprepared souls find "the flame" unbearable and look back with a fondness to the mystic world and wonder "where are the voices of morn and the stillness of the eve." "The pale-blue wine of the moon" might have a lingering sweetness, but is no match for the seven-fold brilliance of the high noon. The number seven reminds us of the "Saptarishis" or the "Constellation of the Great Bear". The spirituality symbolised by the moon raised to the Illumined Mind, with a pale blue hue of the overhead plane, is the familiar ground of the Mystic. The region of the Higher Mind, the Kingdom of Upper Fire, where supramental consciousness reigns supreme is beyond it. The Poet says in "Flamewind" thus:

Gold in the mind and the life-flame's red

Make of the heavens a splendour, the earth a blaze,

But the white and rose of the heart are dead.

Flame-wind, pass! I will wait for Love in the silent ways. (559)

The red of the Life-Flame showing the presence of the Supramental in the physical, also the rule of Divine Love and the reign of Truth, Gold, in the mind sets "earth ablaze". The splendour of heaven is brought down to earth by the Flame--Wind. But in the seven-fold brilliance of spiritual Love, "the White and Rose" of heart, the Psychic Love, is dead. The soul rises from the physical, through the vital, and reaches the overmental planes beyond the psychic. One who is familiar with and enjoys the "silent ways" of Psychic Love feels the "Seven-tinged ecstasy" of Spiritual Love beyond his scope, and implores the Flame Wind to "pass". He feels lost in the wonder world of spirituality and longs for the known world of Mysticism. But the high world of spirituality has its own felicities and charms in the presence of which all other lesser pleasures will fade into insignificance. The sadhak cries out:

Now I have borne Thy presence and Thy light,

Eternity assumes me and I am

A vastness of tranquillity and flame,

My heart a deep Atlantic of delight. (CP 141)

He cries out again:

. . . in each cell I feel Thy Fire embrace,
 A brazier of the seven ecstasies. (141)

Thus, the poet asserts in "Now I have borne." The aspiring soul is a "brazier" of ecstasies, the vessel that holds burning coals, the fire of ecstasy seven. In order to be a "brazier" of such a Divine Love, the soul needs ample schooling. Sri Aurobindo lays much stress on moulding the receptacle. The fire of aspiration should spring up, to bring down the Fire of Divine Love. The Sadhak responds in affirmation to the sweet secret murmur of the "gold god", who comes in "The Dream Boat" made of "dream fires."

Do you come now? is the heart's fire ready? (CP 561)

When the heart's fire is ready to bear the seven-fold strength
 of Celestial Fire,

A secret harmony smites through the blind heart

And all grows beautiful because Thou art. (CP 164)

The Fire of Beauty burns through the blind heart, bestowing Divine Vision. "A secret harmony" hits him hard demolishing his identity crisis. The Poet concludes the poem "The Divine

Hearing" with this vision, and the opening lines of "Because thou art" confirms:

Because Thou art All-beauty and All-bliss,

My soul blind and enamoured yearns for Thee;

It bears Thy mystic touch in all that is

And thrills with the burden of that ecstasy. (CP 165)

The Fire of beauty gives rise to the Fire of Truth, the Eternal Wisdom. The cosmic process is magically sustained by this high-uplifted Beauty and Delight. Matter, Life, Mind and Soul are intended to arrive at a progressive expression of the Truth of themselves. "Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty." This Truth is the Fire of Truth, Wisdom, Knowledge, "The Hidden Power in the body's cells". This Power incinerates the "Sordid Screen" of Ignorance and the "Flame-Wind" of Love sweeps away the ashes. The Fire of Truth ingeminates the Fire of Love and vice-versa. Realisation dawns on the Sadhak:

This was the closed mute and burning source

Whence were formed the worlds and their star-dance;

Life sprang a self-rapt inconscient Force,

Love, a blazing seed, from that flame-trance. (CP 573)

NB 4949

"Shiva," "The Inconscient Creator" is the "mute and burning source" of Life, a "Self-rapt inconscient Force". The "Force" of the "Source" is Life. The rhyme brings forth the Power of the inconscient creator into play. Worlds and their star-dance originated from this creator. Star is always a promise of the Light to come. The "blazing seed" of the "flame trance", the creation, is Love. The Fire of Love blazed out of the flame-trance with the descent of the Light. Then the soul with wilful aspiration heeds to the call of the Inconscient Creator.

Soul in the Ignorance, wake from its stupor.

Flake of the world-fire, spark of Divinity,

Lift up thy mind and thy heart into glory.

Sun in the darkness, recover thy lustre. (CP 570)

"The Sun," the higher Truth light, "in the darkness" is the "soul in the ignorance." How can the sun be in the darkness? Where the sun is, there cannot be darkness. The expression only means that the lower sun is separated from the higher sun by a thick veil or cloud of ignorance, which makes it feel that it is a separate and lonely entity. The Poet's advice to "The Soul in the Ignorance" is:

One, Universal, ensphering creation,
 Wheeling no more with inconscient Nature,
 Feel thyself God-born, know thyself deathless,
 Timeless return to thy immortal existence. (570)

The God-born, should know itself. This is the highest stage that a born soul can attain. But Sri Aurobindo's philosophy insists that from that supreme state the human soul has to return to earth to share his light with his erstwhile fellow beings. Only then will his spiritual enlightenment be complete. At the supreme state of his self realisation, the soul cries one with the "Blue Bird".

I am the bird of God in His blue;
 Divinely high and clear
 I sing the notes of the sweet and the true
 For the god's and the seraph's ear. (CP 104)

"Bird", the symbol for soul, is "blue" in colour reminding us of an ascending pure flame. God also is in His "blue" the colour of space, and the colour of flame. The soul soars up from the higher mind, the spiritualised higher mind, to the truth consciousness, the Supermind. He sings "sweet and true" notes

for "God's and Seraph's ear", for he is "divinely high and clear." The Higher he soars the clearer his vision grows.

I measure the worlds with my ruby eyes;
 I have perched on Wisdom's tree
 Thronged with the blossoms of Paradise
 By the streams of Eternity. (104)

The Wisdom's tree "Thronged with the blossoms of Paradise" stays by "the streams of Eternity," which nurses and nurtures it. Revelations of the soul hewn from the silence of the Ineffable are "Sweet and true". Tree, the standing image of the Universe, is the Tree of Life. Soul, perched in the Tree of Life, is the ascending soul bearing the "Mystic touch" having "clear and high" vision. Aesthetics and Spirituality join hands here. The Blue Bird that soars "beyond Time and space into unfading Light" depicts the ascent of the soul in the act of self-realisation, and its descent for the upliftment of the earthly conditions.

I rise like a fire from the mortal's earth
 Into a griefless sky
 And drop in the suffering soil of his birth
 Fire-seeds of ecstasy. (104)

Apart from their lyric beauty the lines have considerable dramatic relevance, for their symbolic overtones reach out to the theme, the core of Sri Aurobindo's "Integral Yoga". The ascent of the soul from "mortals' earth" is to drop "Fire-Seeds of ecstasy", the descent of heaven, to the "suffering soil of his birth". Earth, the soil of mortal's birth, is suffering due to nescience. It is erased totally, not merely by the ascent of the soul into the "griefless sky" but also by a descent which follows, to sow the "Fire-seeds of ecstasy". The ascent of the soul is likened to the soaring of a Blue Bird, like a pure flame, to the God in His blue. The colour, as suggested earlier, is significant. Initiated by Divine grace, the soul rises from the lower level of consciousness and reaches the higher spiritual mind. From there it soars up to the "griefless sky", the truth consciousness. The soul is "a Spark of Eternity," hence the simile "like a fire" is apt. The wilful soul aspires to the Universal Godhead like a Fire to the Great Fire, to drop "Fire-seeds of ecstasy" in the suffering soil. The "griefless sky" contrasts with the "suffering-soil". The Fire, the individual soul aspiring for the descent, ascends and brings about the descent of the eternal Fire of Ecstasy, Bliss, the Ananda of the

Brahman. By this action every one can ultimately sing with the poet, as he does in the poem "The Blue Bird."

Nothing is hid from my burning heart;

My mind is shoreless and still;

My song is rapture's mystic art,

My flight immortal will. (104)

Once "The Kingdom of deathless Fire" is brought down, the Fire of Eternal Truth burns in the individual endowing Divine sight. The hidden realities open up before him, transforming his mind to a "shoreless, still" one. The mind that is "still" of all thorny thoughts, is "shoreless" in its awareness. The song of the Blue Bird is the "mystic art" of the rapture and its "flight" "immortals' will." The Bird symbol is richly associated with the Fire symbol, since both have an upward movement. Also the colour unites both. Fire, the will in man, is the power within that takes him high up to the "shoreless, still" state of consciousness, the Truth Consciousness, and higher up to the World of Divine Consciousness, so that the "Fire-seeds of ecstasy" could be brought down to mortal's earth. The effort in this regard is initiated by a desire of the soul for a union

with the divine, the essence of purity and all other virtues. None other can be representative of the purity than the fire. The longing of the soul is like a lover's longing for his beloved. The sadhak cries:

Bride of the Fire, clasp me now close, --

Bride of the Fire!

I have shed the bloom of the earthly rose,

I have slain desire. (CP 103)

Slaying desire and shedding the bloom of the earthly rose are the natural results of such a divine aspiration. A prayer and appeal is made to the "Bride of the Fire." Material pursuits are forsaken for ever, and the soul longs for the close clasp of the Bride, the Beauty of the Light.

Beauty of the Light, surround my life, --

Beauty of the Light!

I have sacrificed longing and parted from grief,

I can bear thy delight. (103)

The "Thejus", Light of the Fire is beautiful and that beauty is longed for by the Sadhak, to be his constant companion. He has sacrificed earthly longings. Desire, the cause of misery is,

given up for good and hence "parted from grief". Whence the "unbearable Idol of Light" becomes bearable. "Light" offers "delight", "Life" is free of "grief", wherein no other image of ecstasy finds room in his soul. "The Bride of the Fire" is the Image of ecstasy and the Image of bliss that thrills and enlaces. It is a sort of holy Love where the Sadhak affirms:

I would see only thy marvellous face,
 Feel only thy kiss. (103)

Visual and tactile images add to the beauty of the lines. The aural image in the final prayer finds its piercing note and the "Bride of Fire" changes into a living sun.

Voice of Infinity, sound in my heart, --
 Call of the One!
 Stamp there thy radiance, never to part,
 O living Sun. (103)

Sun the Eternal Truth, is living and illuminating, The soul prays that the sun "stamps" his radiance in the sadhak's "heart" never to "part". Truth should reign supreme in his Life, so that he can hear the "voice of the Infinity" for ever, and earth can no longer be the "suffering soil". The "Blue Bird", the "Bride

of Fire" is the Bird of Fire, the soul that ascends in search of the eternal soul, the "living sun".

Sri Aurobindo writes about the symbolism in "The Bird of Fire": The Bird of Fire is the living vehicle of the Gold fire of the Divine Light and the White Fire of the Divine Tapas and the Crimson fire of Divine Love and everything else of the Divine Consciousness (Sethna 367).

Gold-white wings a-throb in the vastness,

the bird of flame went

glimmering over a sunfire curve to the

haze of the west,

Skimming, a messenger sail, the sapphire-summer

waste of a soundless wayless burning sea. (CP 571)

The Bird of Fire goes glimmering to the west over the "sunfire" curve of the horizon, on his "Gold-white wings". The curve is lit by the Fire of the "living sun". The Bird is a messenger, on an errand, who skims his way through a "soundless, wayless burning sea". The plane of consciousness, Sea, is burning with the Fire of Truth, the sun over it. The plane of consciousness is lit by the Truth. The soul rises from

the sea of higher consciousness in search of Divine consciousness. It is equipped with Gold-white wings of Divine truth and pure conscious force. After the "messenger sail" it returns victoriously.

Now in the eve of the waning world the colour
 and splendour re-
 turning drift through a blue-flicker air back
 to my breast,
 Flame and shimmer staining the rapture-white
 foam-vest of the waters of Eternity. (571)

It drifts through "a blue-flicker air", the spiritual planes of Overmind, Illumined Mind, Intuition, back to the Higher mind, to my "breast". The purity and the power of the divine Truth, the white Foam-Vest rapture of the waters, the planes of consciousness of eternity, is "stained" by the "flame and shimmer" of the Bird of Fire on his descent. The living vehicle of Divine Light and Power brings down the ecstasy of Divine Love, the Crimson fire of Divine Love.

Gold-white wings of the miraculous bird of fire,
 late and slow

have you come from the Timeless. Angel,
 here unto me
 Bringst thou for travailing earth a spirit silent
 and free or

His crimson passion of love divine, -- (571)

The messenger, the Angel, is thus interrogated by the Sadhak, who realises his soul. He wonders whether the miraculous bird of Fire has come from the Timeless unto the Sadhak to bring a silent and free spirit to earth. He believes that the Bird of Fire is bringing down, "His crimson passion of love divine". Sri Aurobindo insists: "One can love divinely only by becoming divine in nature, there is no other way". The divine love brought down enters, purifies and transforms the very nature of man to something divine. The Ancient Mariner experienced this transformation by Divine Grace. Divine love, essentially the unitive consciousness, filled him and his personal consciousness changed into a wide universal one, free from attachment and ignorance, whereby he blesses the sea snakes.

O happy living things! no tongue
 Their beauty might declare:

A spring of love gushed from my heart,
 And I blessed them unaware! (Coleridge 645)

The spring of Divine love adds beauty to all beings, and one is filled with compassion and fellow feeling.

The self same moment, I could pray;
 And from my neck so free
 The Albatross fell off and sank
 Like lead into the sea. (645)

The redeeming force of Divine Love is thus brought to light by Coleridge through his Ancient Mariner and the sea bird Albatross. The blazing of the Fire of Love within oneself, towards one's fellow beings is prayer in the true sense of the word Sri Aurobindo upholds:

The Divine Love, unlike the human, is deep and vast and silent; one must become quiet and wide to be aware of it and reply to it. He must make it his whole object to be surrendered so that he may become a vessel and instrument, leaving it to the Divine Wisdom and Love to fill him with what is needed. (Sethna 353)

The Crimson passion of Divine Love evokes a beautiful image in the readers by the Yogi-poet, through the following lines:

White-ray-jar of the spuming rose-red wine
 drawn from the vats
 brimming with light-blaze, the vats of ecstasy,
 Pressed by the sudden and violent feet of the
 Dancer in Time
 from his sun-grape fruit of a deathless vine? (CP 571)

The Divine Love fills the soul with a passion that transforms it to a "White-ray-jar" brimming with the "rose-red wine" of ecstasy. Psychic love or surrender is rose-red, it is aptly presented as the "rose-red wine". The vats of ecstasy are blazing with light. The Light of Truth gives added vigour to the wine that is pressed by the Dancer of Time, the source of the Timeless. The Creator of Time and Space creates the same through his dance. The dance of Siva, the sudden and violent movements of the creator, presses the rose-red wine of ecstasy out from his "sun-grape fruit" of a deathless vine. Siva, the King of Dance, Nataraja, as the God of destruction and creation dances the world into being and nothingness, again

and again, as he forcefully stamps out the rhythm of the "tandava" dance. His earth-bound foot holds down the dwarf of the selfish ego while one of his hands is held in the mudra of benediction, the second in the gesture of wisdom. His other hand hold a bowl of fire, which represents the blaze of wisdom, and a tiny drum which symbolizes the voice that speaks forth from that fire. This Dancer in time intoxicates the sadhak, who feels drunk by Divine Love, and forgets himself in the ecstasy, and merges with the infinity, appealing to the revealing flame:

White-rose-altar the eternal Silence built,
 make now my nature
 wide, an intimate guest of His solitude,
 But golden above it the body of One in her
 diamond sphere
 with Her halo of star-bloom and passion-ray! (571)

White-rose is pure spiritual surrender, the altar of love surrendered to eternal silence. The aspirant puts forth an entreaty to make his nature "wide, an intimate quest of His Solitude". The "quiet and wide" nature is the condition for Divine Love to descend on the willing soul. Even in the

silence, one should be aware of "the golden body of One" above in her "diamond sphere". The force of Divine Truth, "Mahakali force" working in the body, directs the soul to eternal Truth. Stars, the points of light in the ignorant mental consciousness bloom signifying a creation or formation. With the creation of wisdom, knowledge, the soul attains enlightenment. It gets the vision of Truth. The seer-poet in the plane of the illumined physical consciousness visualises the Bird of Fire, rich and red, as the soul climbing higher and higher to the plane of Truth consciousness. The Bird is:

A ruby of flame-petalled love in the silver-gold altar-vase
of moon-edged night and rising day. (571)

Agni takes the shape of a petal when in a vase, hence the metaphorical expression of the Fire of Love as "flame-petalled" at once evokes the image of a lighted lamp. The precious stone ruby, is in the altar-vase of silver-gold, truth consciousness, of moon-edged night. Night, ignorance, is edged with Moon, spiritual Light, Truth, hence the promise of the rising day. The Bird of Fire at once Divine Love, Light and Tapas is invoked thus :

O Flame who art Time's last boon of the sacrifice,
 offering-flower
 held by the finite's gods to the Infinite,
 O marvel bird with the burning wings of light
 and the unbarred
 lids that look beyond all space,
 One strange leap of thy mystic stress breaking
 the barriers of mind
 and life, arrives at its luminous term thy flight;
 Invading the secret clasp of the Silence and
 crimson Fire
 thou frontest eyes in a timeless Face. (571)

The flaming soul is the "offering-flower" held by the "finite's gods to the Infinite." Flame is the last boon of the sacrifice offered by Time. Sacrifice, Yajna, is the central theme of the Rishis in the vedas--a total self-giving to the higher powers. Our whole life is a Sacrifice offering oneself to the flame within to reach the flame without, so that one can invade the secret clasp of the silence and Crimson Fire of Divine Love. Total Wilful Surrender of all that one is and has to the Divine Master of the being is a precondition in the Integral Yoga

propounded by the Yogi-Poet. The Rishi distills and offers to the Gods Soma, his essential delight of life; the Integral Yogin consecrates all activities of his life, on all planes, and offers them to the Divine. His life is a continual "Yajna" to the Divine. Sri Aurobindo demands an absolute overcoming of the limitations of desire and ego; an opening to a wider, vaster consciousness; an unsullied purity in the being free from the lower dross, so that the soul can break the barriers of mind and life and arrive at the luminous term of its flight. The human mind is pulled up towards the summits of the Divine Mind. The glorious Sun of Truth, the Supramental Sun extended on the Meridian like an Eye, is the "luminous term" of the Flight of the Fire-soul, the Bird of Fire. But the Sight of the Sun is veiled by a sub-ordinate configuration of lights. "The Face of Truth is covered by a golden lid". It is the Over-mind of Sri Aurobindo, the highest reach of the Mind, that is the Lid. This cannot be opened by human effort alone. The Divine Will and Grace of the Supramental Purusha is to be waited upon to remove it so that one may behold the unveiled splendour. The blessed soul, the marvel bird with burning wings of light, by Divine Grace, has unbarred lids and

"frontest eyes in a timeless Face". Thus the Bird of Fire, the Agni-bird, psychic and tapas, becomes the bird of eternal Ananda. He becomes the voice of the Yogi who is bent on being the Eternal's worker in time and space, and does not rest satisfied with liberation into Eternity. The Seer says in "A God's Labour":

Heaven's fire is lit in the breast of the earth
 And the undying suns here burn;
 Through a wonder cleft in the bounds of birth
 The incarnate spirits yearn.

Like flames to the kingdoms of Truth and Bliss:
 Down a gold-red stair-way wend
 The radiant children of Paradise
 Clarioning darkness's end. (CP 102)

"The habit of intuitive sight", the persistent trait of Sri Aurobindo's poetic character is revealed here. It gives a lofty, haunting evocation of a spiritual reality and experience. The "incarnate spirit", the Rishi-Poet yearns "like flame, to the kingdoms of Truth and Bliss" to establish Divine Life on earth. The end of darkness, and the beginning of an era of

light is the main concern of Sri Aurobindo. The purpose of this creation, for the Maharshi, lies in the unity of Nature, Man and God, one Eternal Fire burning through the whole universe.

The varied renown of "the Godhead of Immortality", Agni is beyond measure. It is at once the will in man that aspires for infinity and the soul that aspires. The "Spark of Fire", the soul, ascends to bring down the "Eternal Fire", like Prometheus, to build heaven on Earth. Infinity is the glowing sun, of which Creation is but the "minute abode" of the Immanent. The soul is the "Flaming Chariot of Siva" wherein Shakti, the Will, longs for union with Siva. The descending Fire, the Power above, kindles and ignites the power below, the "Fire-soul", blazing it so that it thrills and radiates divine rapture. Thus the Fire is Power as well as "Ananda" bringing about self realization. The Identity with the "Eternal Fire" generates Eternal Bliss. Fire is both Life and Death. It is the living soul throbbing with "Life", ever active, enjoying the Bliss of Brahman. At the same time it is the Death of death, so that Life may reign, Death of ignorance so that truth may establish its Kingdom on every individual, and "truth consciousness" may

direct the soul to lead a Divine Life here on earth. It is the Life-giving force behind creation. It is involved in involution and evolution. It is the Brahman that involves, travels through matter, and evolves to the Ineffable and brings down the grandeur, peace and bliss to build heaven on Earth. Hence it is Fire-the Traveller, it is also the messenger who talks for and instead of the "suffering soil". Once the Kingdom of Truth is established on the material world, "Beauty boundless" is enjoyed by the whole creation. Truth is Beauty, Beauty Truth and Fire is both Truth and Beauty, the realization of which floods love in the beings for all Beings. This Love is the redeemer of all Sins. It is the divine love, Agni which is highly inflammable. It spreads and aflames burning down the "sordid screen of ignorance". The soul, the "Spark of Fire" soars high like the "Blue Bird", "the Bird of Fire," to scan and invade the world of Divine Consciousness so that he can drop "fire-seeds of ecstasy" to the "suffering soil". The Sadhak supplicates to the "Bird of Fire" to be his "Bride of Fire", to be his constant companion. The passionate enfoldment by the Image of ecstasy, the Bird of Fire, is the very embrace entreated by the aspirant "clasp me now close", the clasp of Divine Love. Then the veil

is rent and the Fire of Knowledge burns itself into all the passive and fading smiles, the wounding joy and the crumbling triumphs, into man's knowledge, endless knowledge. Then it is another Fire, yet always the same, which sheds its blackness or changing colours. It is Crimson like the pomegranate flower. It represents the rational faculty, with its flames always leaping from one thing to another with an unquenchable thirst and hunger. The fire of the rational mind glorifies truth like the fire that purifies gold, and turns straws and dry wood to ashes. Ignorance and falsehood are swallowed within no time while truth is illuminated in the same flaming crucible.

Agni is "the Immortal in man", says Sri Aurobindo. And that is what has power over everything, even over death. It is the gift of the Ancient One of all these Ages. The Fire God proclaims:

I have been digging deep and long

Mid a horror of filth and mire

A bed for the golden river's song,

A home for the deathless fire.

I have laboured and suffered in Matter's night

To bring the fire to man; (CP 99)

CHAPTER IV

BLOOMS AND HUES

Forget the future, leave the past,
 The little hour thy life shall last.
 Learn rather from the violet's days
 Soft-blooming in retired ways
 Or dewy bell, the maid undrest
 With creamy childhood in her breast,
 Fierce foxglove and the briony
 And sapphire thyme, the work-room of
the bee. (CP 3)

The intimations of Immortality bloom through the blooms in Sri Aurobindo's "Songs to Myrtilla". The violet has much to convey in her soft-blooming way, also the maid "dewy bell". The melody of words makes them gems of pure delight. Foxglove, Briony, Thyme and a host of blossoms of the Greek and English world influenced the young poet, whereby he gets glimpses of:

The green spring with its flowery truth
 Creative and the luminous heart of youth. (2)

The creative heart urges one to concentrate on the present and accept nature as one's guide. The violets, soft-blooming in retired ways, and the dewy bell have much to impart. "The maid undrest with creamy childhood in her breast" personifies the flower with all its innocence and purity. "Her" stands for "dewy bell" portrayed as a child within, though a grown up maid without. The fierce Foxglove, Briony and Thyme serves as the "work-room of the bee."

Lured by thy rose of lips the bee
 To woo thy petals open, O sweet,
 His flowery murmur here repeat,
 Forsaking all the joys of thyme. (3)

The "work-room" is also the lovers abode, the "rose of lips" lure the bee. The petals open to "woo" the lover. He, the bee, repeats his "flowery murmur" in each and every flower. The ineffability of the mood is conveyed by the nuances of physical nature in the frame of the garden, with opening petals and murmuring bee. This "flowery truth" of the green spring reminds the poet that:

Summer has pleasant comrades, happy meetings
 Of lily and rose and from the trees divinest greetings. (2)

"Happy meetings", gatherings, take place between the lily and the rose. "Divinest greetings" are extended by the trees. Being a part of the divinity, the greetings offered by them is sure to be the divinest of all greetings. The seed of spirituality that sprouts and grows, sooner or later in the Yogi-Poet, can be seen through the "divinest greetings" and the "happy meetings" of the "pleasant comrades". In the pleasant, sunny atmosphere everything is sweet.

Sweet when the flowers have fallen asleep

.....

But day is sweeter; morning bright

Has put the stars out ere the light,

And from their dewy cushions rise

Sweet flowers half-opening their eyes. (1)

A beautiful morning cannot be better pictured. The rich suggestive images take one to the world of bliss, which later turns to be the bliss of solitude. The sweet flowers, sweet by themselves and sweet to the senses, half open their eyes; as though reluctant to leave their cosy, dewy cushions.

Sweet water hurrying from reluctant rocks,
 And all sweet hours and all sweet showers
 And all sweet sounds that please the noonday flowers.
 Morning has pleasure, noon has golden peace
 And afternoon repose and eve the heart's increase. (1)

The noon day flowers, wide awake from the dewy cushions, are pleased by the sweet sound of sweet water and sweet shower. A general atmosphere of peace, pleasure and repose prevails all through the day, inducing one to be one with nature and divinity. Thus one wonders:

How various are thy children, earth!
 Behold the rose her lovely birth,
 What fires from the bud proceed,
 As if the vernal air did bleed. (3)

Among the "various" children of earth the "rose" has a "lovely birth". The Fire of Bliss, Light, Power, Life and Love proceed from the bud. The exalted poet goes on glorifying the beauty of Rose, the "bond maiden of Love".

Breezes and sunbeams, bees and dews
 Her lords and lovers she indues,

And these her crimson pleasures prove;
 Her life is but a bath of love;
 The wide world perfumes when she sighs
 And, burning all the winds, of love she dies. (4)

The sweet smell of the flower is conveyed through the olfactory image of the wide world being perfumed by the maidens "sigh." The unique position of the rose as the flower of beauty, love, bliss and pleasure is thus established in clear terms by the mingling of auditory, visual and olfactory images. The Poet then proceeds to pay tributes to other bond-maidens of love namely the lily, the snowdrop, the cowslip, crocus and honey suckle before winding up.

Thus the sweet children of the earth
 Fulfil their natural selves and various birth. (4)

He believes "the most enchanting birth" on earth to be that of the flowers. He says in his poem, "To a Hero Worshipper."

For me the daisy shines a star,
 The crocus flames a spire,
 A horn of golden fire,
 Narcissus glows a silver bar:

Cowslips, the golden breath of God,
 I deem the poet's heritage,
 And lilies silvering the sod
 Breathe fragrance from his page. (CP 9)

The Poet's heritage is the rich world of the "sweet children of earth". Lilies "breathe fragrance from his page". The cowslips, "the golden breath of God," is his legacy. Thus the creative world is enriched by the golden fire from the Divine World of Flowers. These bits and pieces of flower imagery conveying the Intimations of Immortality got through nature are significant indices of the blossoming of the mystic poet who opines: "Flowers indicate a blossoming in the consciousness sometimes with special reference to the psychic or the psychicised vital, mental and physical consciousness. Thus it indicates a psychic activity (LY 955). The world of colours has gone a long way in enriching the world of the poet's heritage. Gold the sparkling colour typifies the Divine World, also the world of Divine manifestations, the truth consciousness. "The golden breath of God," Cowslips, is deemed the poet's heritage. His page is perfumed by lilies that "silver the sod." Gold and silver, the colours indicating bright light, ever sparkling, stand for the

presence of Divine in the sod. The Poet, made rich by the golden breath of God, extols unblemished love thus, in his "Songs to Myrtilla."

Not from the mighty sea
 Love visited me.
 I found as in a jewelled box
 Love, rose-red, sleeping with imprisoned locks;
 And I have ever known him wild
 And merry as a child,
 As roses red, as roses sweet, (CP 5)

Love was found as, "red" and "sweet", "roses" sleeping with imprisoned locks. The very same rose is equated with beauty.

Thy beauty as the gorgeous rose
 To privet by the lane that blows, (5)

Love and beauty together take the poet to the world of inexplicable pleasure, as expressed in "O Coil, Coil"

O me! for pleasure turned to bitterest tears!
 O me! for the swift joy, too great to live,
 That only bloomed one hour! O wondrous day,
 That crowned the bliss of those delicious years. (CP 10)

"Swift joy" is a blossom that is short lived. The vernal radiance of "lovers lips" is shut like a red rose. Rose is love, beauty, radiance, everything at the same time. Joy is yet another bloom that sprouts on the flowery bed. It is "Ahana", the Dawn of God, descending on earth amid the strife and trouble of mortality.

". . . joy's delicate blossom

Sleeps in thy lids of delight;" (CP 524)

It prompts the poet to envy the flower in "Songs to Mystilla"

Flower and most enchanting birth

Of ten ages of the earth! (CP 6)

The enchanting birth also "lights" the "dim repose" as seen in "Night by the Sea"

In this garden's dim repose

Lighted with the burning rose, (CP 16).

Rose is burning, fire like, emitting light and heat. It lights up the dim repose, and brightens the lover's soul. The love theme captivated the poets imagination strongly. Pangs of love, its trials and tribulations, and its joys were not alien to him.

Earthly love later merges into the love of the Ineffable. Divine love is conceived in human or earthly terms as forms. The "burning rose" illuminates the world of love. The much praised rose, the symbol of love, the red rose, is degraded by Death, when he admonished Savitri who worships ideal and eternal love. He says:

It is a conscious yearning of thy flesh,
 It is a glorious burning of thy nerves,
 A rose of dream-splendour petalling thy mind,
 A great red rapture and torture of thy heart.

(S X.2.685)

Transient, futile earthly love is the "rose of dream-splendour petalling thy mind." It is a dream full of splendour but not to be realised. It is only a conscious yearning of the flesh, and a glory of the burning of nerves, which ultimately is a torture of the heart. The red rapture of the red rose is pictured as a torture. Red, the symbol of beauty, tends to be a symbol of danger and torture. Savitri the incarnation of divine love is not disillusioned by the remarks made by Death. She retorts:

I cherish God the Fire, not God the Dream. (X.2.691)

Savitri, the truth consciousness, is well aware that the kingdom of the deathless Rose, the passion-flower of the Sacred Heart, rules one side of the eternal stairs and the other side is governed by the deathless flame. Both aspire to reach the pale-sapphire ether of God-Mind, the imperishable beatitudes, where the Rose and Flame are one. Hence she cherishes God the Fire wherein, the Rose, the symbol of eternal love, is no more a dream but a fire that blazes in each and every soul. Red flowers, for Sri Aurobindo, indicate an opening of the consciousness either in the physical or some part of the vital, according to its shade. When deep red stands for divine love, reddish pink indicates psychic love or surrender. Total surrender urges one to visualise thus, as seen in the poem, "The Lover's Complaint".

The wild weed now has wed the rose,
 Now ivy on the bramble grows;
 Too happy lover, fill the lamp of bliss!
 Too happy lover, drunk with Nisa's kiss! (CP 20)

The surrender becomes all the more pure only with spiritual surrender represented by the white rose. In "Love in Sorrow", the poet says:

I saw you mid the rose-trees, O white rose,
 Linger a moment, then the dusk defeat
 My eyes, and, listening, heard your footsteps fade
 On the sad leaves of the autumnal glade. (CP 23)

The white rose addressed here has a different connotation. It stands for a departing beloved. The lover laments over the loss of his sweet heart whose footsteps fade "on the sad leaves of the autumnal glade." The sadness of the lover is transferred to the leaves, hence the "sad leaves" is a transferred epithet depicting the thoughts of the young soul. A stylised fancy and melancholy tone typical of love poems are frequently seen on such occasions as in the sonnet, "Rose, I have loved."

Rose, I have loved thy beauty, as I love
 The dress that thou hast worn, the transient grass,
 O'er which thy happy careless footsteps move,

The yet-thrilled waysides that have watched thee pass. (CP 127)

The way sides are thrilled to see the "rose" pass by. The thrill and happiness of the lover, at the sight of the loved one "rose" is shared by the way sides. The "happy careless footsteps" of the "rose" move over the "transient" grass. The

indescribable quality of love is intimated by the juxtaposition of varying attributes ranging from the melancholy of the "sad leaves" to the gaiety of the "happy careless" footsteps and "thrilled waysides."

Because thy flame is spent, shall mine grow less,
O bud, O wonder of the opening rose? (CP 126)

asks the poet in "Because thy flame is spent" and adds:

What I could give, I gave thee, to my last breath
Immortal love, immovable by death. (126)

The bud, the wonder of the opening rose, bears the flame of love. The lover affirms that his "flame" can never grow less even when his "rose" has it "spent". The love he believes in is "Immortal love," "immovable by death." True love is by nature, impersonal, it is divine. Though the love is impersonal, it can focus itself in the form of grace and compassion, flowing towards an individual. It has no reason to exist, no object in a limiting sense. It is a wave from the ocean of love that underlies this manifestation. One is mistaken, when this divine entity is understood in a limiting sense. In "Thou didst mistake", he says thus:

Thou didst mistake, thy spirit's infant flight
 Opening its lovely wings upon the sun
 Paused o'er the first strong bloom that met thy sight
 Thinking perhaps it was the only one. (CP 126)

The spirit in its infant flight is easily carried away by appearances, not knowing that

. . . all this fragrant garden was beyond. (126)

The fragrant garden, the abode of Immortal love, is the end of the spirits flight, "opening its lovely wings upon the sun." The spirit, the soul, is metaphorically presented as a young butterfly in search of blooms. The flight of the soul is beautifully depicted as opening its lovely wings upon the sun. Bloom, the symbol of love, is sought out by the soul. From the personal soul one moves to the universal soul as the soul is described in terms of a general atmosphere. The universal soul; a reflection of the individual soul, is evoked to go in search of the "fragrant garden" beyond, where one gets abundant intimations of Immortality inculcating a sense of oneness. In the short poem "The Spring Child":

Of Spring is her name for whose bud and blooming

We praise today the Giver, -- (CP 29)

The Poet here expresses fond thoughts of a child who is equated with spring, a season of colour, flower and abundance. The "bud" and "bloom", the child, is a god given gift, a much cherished one.

O dear child soul, our loved and cherished,

For this thy days had birth,

Like some tender flower on some grey stone portal

To sweeten and flush with childhood immortal

The ageing earth. (29)

The association of the "child" with the "tender flower" provides one with the most tender feelings that one can experience "Our loved and cherished" child soul is analogous with "some tender flower on some grey portal." It corresponds to any tender flower that adds colour and beauty to any stone portal that is "grey" to look at. The "grey stone portal" is not in itself attractive, but it is made colourful and bright by the tender flower that adorns it. Similarly, the child soul is born to "sweeten and flush" with its childhood, the ageing earth. Colour

and beauty is given by the child soul to the earth that is ageing, due to the tear and wear inflicted by immature souls. The child being the father of man, as cited by Wordsworth, the "child soul" is the innocence, purity and the like virtues that should "father" man to help earth decelerate her ageing process. Thus the "child soul" is to be borne "to sweeten and flush" the ageing earth with immortal childhood. The immortality is there in childhood that is immortal. When one slips away from the "immortal childhood" in search of other seemingly more adorable appearances, he loses his contact with "The Immortality" resulting in the ageing of Mother Earth, who longs for the immortal presence of childhood. The lines are musical and rich, of course, with hints of the occult.

There are flowers in God's garden of prouder blooming
 Brilliant and bold and bright,
 The tulip and rose are fierier and brighter,
 But this has a softer hue, a whiter
 And milder light. (29)

The "child soul" has a "softer hue" which is "whiter" and hence "milder" than the other flowers in the "fragrant garden"

of God. Beauty is revealed here in its most impersonal and universal aspects, in its utmost intensity through the flower image. The colour white gives a visual image that is soft to the eye and "mild" to look at. White here implies purity, serenity and peace. White rose stands for the soul subjected to spiritual surrender. It is the "dear child soul" with its "soft hue" that "sweetens" Mother earth.

Long be thy days in rain and sunshine,
 Often thy spring relume,
 Gladdening thy mother's heart with thy beauty,
 Flowerlike doing thy gentle duty
 To be loved and bloom. (30)

The long life of the spring child is longed for, by the poet, so that the child can render gentle duty, "Flower like" and be "loved" and "bloom". The duty done by the child with the "soft hue" is bound to be "gentle" and therefore "Flower like." The "tender Flower" is again brought to the mind's view by the simile "Flower like doing thy gentle duty." It is convincingly real. It is the yogi vision revealing a picture of absolute Beauty perceived impersonally and yet with intensity. The child "gladdens" his mother's heart with her beauty. The notion

throbs with life and overflows with delight. The mother can very well be mother earth, more particularly the Motherland, for whom Sri Aurobindo dedicated his life. A patriot is brought to view, performing his gentle duty to gladden his mother's heart; who believes that there is something to be done for the mother land.

As if the flitting Zephyr knew a lovelier word
 Than it had spoken yet, and flower and bird
 Kept still some grace that yet is left to bloom,
 Had still a note I never yet have heard,
 That, blossoming, would the wide air more illumine, (CP 34)

It is his conviction that the flower and bud had kept still some "grace" yet to "bloom" as expressed in "Perigune Prologues." "Grace" is yet another flower whose blossoming would "illumine" the wide air. The grace that emits light is nothing but the divine grace which blooms to give the aspiring soul its opening to the Light.

Such flowering ease I have and earth's sweet shapes;
 And riches, and the green and hived springs.
 Ah then what longing wakes for new and lovelier things!

"Ease" flowers and one is aware of the sweet shapes, riches and the green springs of earth. The longing for "new" and "lovelier" things of the Divine world instigated by Immortal love Immovable by "death" makes him indifferent to Death. The Poet says in "The Fear of Death",

Death wanders through our lives at will, sweet Death
 As busy with each intake of our breath.
 Why do you fear her? Lo, her laughing face
 All rosy with the light of jocund grace!
 A kind and lovely maiden culling flowers
 In a sweet garden fresh with vernal showers, (CP 54)

The "flowering ease" helps him to view death as a "sweet" "being" busily carrying out its duty. She is all "rosy" says the poet "with the light of jocund grace." "Grace" is rosy and adds beauty to the "kind and lovely maiden", death, engaged in "culling flowers" in a "fresh" and "sweet" garden. The "fragrant garden" of god is always fresh with vernal showers, and the "enchanted children" of the garden are the sweet flowers that sweeten and flush the ageing earth. They are being "culled" by death. The most telling attribute about the expression is that

death is delineated in terms of gardening and plucking flowers from the garden earth. Beauty is not divorced from Death, affirms the poet, who wonders:

Is it because the twisted stem must feel
Pain when the tenderest hands its glory steal?
Is it because the flowerless stalk droops dull
And ghastly now that was so beautiful? (54)

Likening the Dead to a "flower" culled by a "kind and lovely maiden" is done all along. The "twisted stem" of the culled flower, the "tenderest hands" that "steal the glory" of the flower and the "flowerless stalk" that "droops dull", drive home the flower-image of the Dead. The "tenderest hands" belong to the "kind maiden" called Death. The Death of the day is also portrayed in a similar vein in the long poem, "The Vigil of Thaliard."

The rose-lipped golden-footed day,
A flower by maiden culled,
Beneath star-blossomed arras lay
In Evening's bosom lulled. (CP 174)

Day is pictured as "a flower" culled by "maiden". Again Death is the "maiden" and "dead", the "flower". But here, Death is a temporary one likened to a sleep. Hence the "flower" is "lulled" in the Evening's bosom. She lies beneath the sky that has blossomed with stars. The flower image is here associated with the day that is being lulled to sleep by the evening. It also stands for the stars that flower in the sky, giving added beauty to the Night. The day is "rose-lipped" and "golden-footed", the epithets lend beauty to the day. One can visualise Divine beauty with Divine Grace that blossoms. The "Fear of Death" is erased forever and one realises that:

Death is but changing of our robes to wait

In wedding garments at the Eternal's gate. (CP 54)

A perception of beauty is attained since it is wedded to passion and interfused with it. The "wedding garments" which is one's changed wear, as a result of Death, takes one to the Eternal's gate to wait with the hopeful expectations of a bride or bridegroom waiting at a new threshold of life. Wedding is something divine and a cherished state of existence ending in bliss. The changing of robes implies a new turn in the being.

Here the turn is for a better one, since it is changed to "wedding garments." Association of Death with "bridal" is seen again in, "An Image", where Paris is moving to battle, fresh from meeting Helen. To him both are like bridals, a dream or a dance, "red with the beauty of blood."

Round him the spears of the Argives sang

like voices of maidens

Trilling the anthem of bridal bliss, the chant hymeneal;

Round him the warriors fell like flowers strewn at a bridal.

Red with the beauty of blood. (CP 595)

Sound and sights of the war field appear to a patriot as those of a wedding ceremony. Sound of spears remind him of the "voices of maidens Trilling the anthem of bridal bliss". For him, battle is a sacred ceremony like a bridal. Voice of maidens, anthem of bridal bliss, and hymeneal chant are the echoes he hears in the battle field. To add beauty to the auspicious occasion, he sees warriors falling around him as beautiful as red flowers strewn at a bridal. The comparison of warriors to flowers may appear paradoxical, but is real in the sense that they are the true, beautiful flowers, dear and near to their country. They are the sweet flowers in the "sweet garden" of

God, culled by the "kind and lovely maiden." Now they decorate the bridal giving it added beauty with the reddish tinge of blood, their life blood given to their motherland, to "gladden" her with their "beauty". The lines bear the chiselled classicism of the Greeks and romanticism, rarely equalled in its exuberance and intensity and colour. The yogic consciousness of the patriot is reflected in the image of dead warriors as "red flowers strewn at a bridal." The red flowers stand not only for beauty but also for power, strength, the colour of "shakti". The warriors are born with this power to save their mother land. This power helps one in their inner voyages, the exploration of the inner world, a pre-requisite to the blissful yogic experiences. This is seen in the voyage of "Thought the Paraclete."

As some bright archangel in vision flies
 Plunged in dream-caught spirit immensities,
 Past the long green crests of the seas of life,
 Past the orange skies of the mystic mind
 Flew my thought self-lost in the vasts of God. (CP 582)

The yogic consciousness is exploring other fields of awareness. It flies in vision "as some bright archangel," plunging into the

immensities of the spirit. The voyage of the soul is through "long green crests of the seas of life." Green is associated with Life and a generous emanation or action of forces--often of the emotional life-force. The soul passes through the seas of life, and traverses the orange skies of the mystic mind. Orange colour denotes the presence of the supramental in the physical. The Mystic mind has orange skies, through which the soul flies, self-lost in the vastness of God, where he finds the wind bearing the "gold-red seeking of feet." Gold stands for the overmentalised supramental i.e., the supramental light passing through the overmind, Intuitive mind, Illumined mind and becoming the Light of Truth in each plane. The Overmental planes are covered by the soul, before it reaches the Supermind. The golden red signifies the modified supramental physical light--the light of the Divine Truth in the physical. Then he meets the "pale-blue lining of the hippogriff Eremite", daring over the "world-bare summits of beings." The pale-blue lining indicates a level of consciousness much higher than the human intelligence. It is there that the Divine Light and Power come down to be transmitted to the human consciousness, and from there they work and prepare the transformation of the

human consciousness and even the physical nature. Blue light of different shades indicate the overhead planes, Higher mind, Illumined mind, Intuitive and Overmind. "The bright archangel" passes through these planes and reaches the "crimson-white mooned oceans of pauseless bliss", that takes him to the uncounted secrets, "white-fire-veiled Beyond." Moon indicates spirituality in the mind or the spiritual consciousness. It also indicates the flow of spiritual Ananda. Crimson-white or white indicates force of purity and also divine consciousness. Crimson-white mooned oceans, no doubt, will be ocean of pauseless bliss. It is the divine consciousness which renders the flow of spiritual Ananda, unraveling the secrets beyond. Thus

Crossing power-swept silences rapture-stunned,
 Climbing high far ethers eternal-sunned,
 Thought the great-winged wanderer paraclete
 Disappeared slow-singing a flame-word rune.
 Self was left, lone, limitless, nude, immune. (582)

The explorer, the poetic consciousness, explores the worlds of experience and opens a world of vaster self. The colours suit the purpose and give colour to the vision. Green, orange, gold, red, pale blue, crimson white, and white together colour the

world of Higher mind, Illumined mind, Intuitive mind and Over mind, and take one to the world of Self realisation. The transformation of the self is effected through the inward journey from Mind to Overmind. The journey is from Existence to Consciousness, from Consciousness to Bliss and from Bliss to Supermind. This journey is done by the "Bird of Fire" who has "Gold-White wings." The yellowish tinge added to white stands for the "satwa" guna--the pure soul--Shiva. It is the flight of the pure soul to reach the "rapture-white foam-vest waters of Eternity." The breast of the aspiring soul is "rich and red", "a ruby of flame-petalled love in the silver-gold altar-vase of moon-edged night and rising day." The moon-edged night is a promise of a rising day, the spiritual consciousness giving rise to Divine Consciousness, that helps to invade the "secret clasp of the silence and crimson Fire". The Light and Love both in the vital and physical is the Crimson Fire, that helps the Bird of Fire to arrive at its luminous term of its flight. The pure soul reaches the eternal world of wisdom and strength, and brings it back to the earthly abode, to make it heavenly. Gold-white, white, red, and crimson are the colours that shade the world of the Flight of the "Bird of Fire," the pure soul. Symbolic mode

of perception helps one to accompany the Bird in its flight. The Bird of Fire becomes "The Blue Bird," the Higher mind, who proclaims:

I am the bird of God in His blue;
 Divinely high and clear (CP 104)

The "bird of God in His blue," the bird of Divine Consciousness, is Divinely elevated and clear, a symbolic intermediary, an agent of grace, whose role is to:

. . . bring the bliss of the Eternal's face
 And the boon of the Spirit's sight. (104)

The boon of the "spirit's sights" helps the Blue Bird to boast thus:

I measure the worlds with my ruby eyes;
 I have perched on Wisdom's tree
 Thronged with the blossoms of Paradise.
 By the streams of Eternity. (104)

The "immortal will" is his flight that helps him to measure the worlds. The Divine Consciousness of the wilful spirit is brought forth through the Tree image. The Blue Bird is perched on "Wisdom's Tree" that stays by the stream of Eternity, thronged with the blossoms of Paradise. Wisdom's tree bears the

blossoms of Paradise. The picture enables one to participate in a ritual in which aesthetics and spirituality join hands. The aspiring soul, the Blue Bird that drops "Fire-seeds of ecstasy" in the "suffering soil of his birth" longs to be the Bride of Fire so that "the bliss of the Eternal's face' shall never be divorced from him. A prayer to the "Bride of Fire" is put forth through the lines of a Holy love.

Bride of the Fire, clasp me now close, --

Bride of the Fire!

I have shed the bloom of the earthly rose,

I have slain desire. (CP 103)

The willful soul declares itself to be eligible for the divine clasp, since it has shed the bloom of the earthly rose. "The Earthly rose," is the flower that stands for material pursuits, the worldly aspect of life on earth. Shedding the bloom of the earthly rose, is symbolic of the act of renouncing pleasures and desires once and for all. He further affirms "I have slain desire." Killing of desire is done for a better state of affair to establish itself on him. Desire, the cause of misery, is done away with for good, and the final prayer is made:

Image of ecstasy, thrill and enlance, --

Image of bliss!

.....

Voice of Infinity, sound in my heart, --

Call of the One!

Stamp there thy radiance, never to part,

O living Sun. (103)

The eternal association with the "living sun" doesn't suggest any escapism whatsoever. The Yogi believes that :

Escape, however high, redeems not life,

.....

Escape cannot uplift the abandoned race

Or bring to it victory and the reign of God.

(S VI.2.508)

The reign of God is brought by the dropping of "Fire seeds of ecstasy" by the Blue Bird. The seeds give rise to "The Rose of God" to which one makes an appeal:

Rose of God, vermilion stain on the sapphires of heaven,

Rose of Bliss, fire-sweet, seven-tinged with the ecstasies seven!

Leap up in our heart of humanhood, O miracle, O flame,

Passion-flower of the Nameless, bud of the mystical Name.

(CP 584)

The Passion-flower of the Nameless is also the bud of the mystical name that should bloom in the heart of humanhood. Rose of God is that great "wisdom-bloom" that blooms on the summits of being. It is the "Rose of Light", the immaculate core of the ultimate seeing. "The golden Mystery flower" is the "guest of the marvellous Hour" that is invoked to reside in the mind of our earthhood. Rose of God is the "Rose of Power", "the red icon of might" that is "Ablaze in the will of the mortal". This "Image of Immortality" is the "Rose of Life, crowded with petals, colours lyre!" The "outbreak of the Godhead in man" will

Bridge our earthhood and heavenhood, make deathless

the children of Time. (584)

The term and end of Aurobindonian poetry as well of his yoga, is defined here. The poem is vision, invocation and action all at once. The Rose of God is "like a blush of rapture on Eternity's face" and a "fire-passion of Grace." The Rose of Bliss, Light, Power, Life and Love is invoked to:

Make earth the home of the Wonderful and life beatitude's kiss.

(584)

Life transforms into the Beatitudes kiss with an evolutionary change or the laws of our inner becoming. The Poet of transformation looks forward to, and also makes possible, "the marriage of Earth and Heaven," when matter shall be the spirit's willing bride. Then Rose of Bliss, "Ahana," the "Dawn of God" leans to the earth to raise earth to Heaven and prompts one to raise a query, as seen in "The Descent of Ahana"

Taking the earthly rose canst thou image not Heaven
in a flower? (CP 538)

Heaven can be imaged in a flower by shedding "the bloom of the earthly rose," with the descent of the "Dawn of God". "Ahana" descends into the world, where amid the strife and trouble of mortality, the Hunters of joy, the Seekers after knowledge, the Climbers in the quest of power, are toiling up the slopes to wait in the valley (CP 523).

Flower of beatitude! living shape of the bliss of Brahman!
Art thou not she who shall bring into life and time the Eternal?
(CP 534)

The aspiring soul prays in anguish and adoration to the Dawn of God addressing her as the flower of Beatitude, who is the living shape of the Bliss of Brahman. Flower is Bliss that

brings Eternal Bliss into Life and Time. The passion to divinise manhood, the evolving theme in the Aurobindonian concept, projects through "Ahana." With the "Descent of Ahana":

Trembling like flowers appeared in the void the
immense constellations;
Gods grew possessed of their heavens, earth rose with
her joy-haunted nations. (CP 540)

Immense constellations tremble like flowers, and earth rises to receive the Dawn of God; with her joy--haunted notions. Since "Man" is a "Despot of Contraries," constant, wilful aspiration is highly warranted. In spite of the "joy-haunted notions", at times he believes himself to be:

A helpless flower that quivers in the breeze,
I am weaker than the reed one breaks with ease.
(CP 168)

Man is a helpless flower, as long as he is a "transience of the eternities." When he moves "in an ocean of stupendous light" joining his depths to "His eternal height," as depicted in the sonnet "Light," he cries out:

Light, burning Light from the Infinite's diamond heart

Quivers in my heart where blooms the deathless rose.

(CP 160)

The "burning light" "Quivers" in the Sadhak's heart which has the "deathless rose" blooming all the while. The light descends from the "diamond heart" of the Infinite. The heart that is ever ready to radiate the Divine Light that helps to "bridge our earthhood and heavenhood." The labour to bring the light into life has to be continued till the "adversary Force" is "slain in its own home," and "light invades the world's inconscient base" (S X.2.508). Fluency and finesse, the Intense vision and rhythm, the sheer spirit touch is seen here in the "burning light" and the "deathless rose". The Image of Immortality, The Rose of God, "Crowded with petals, colours lyre" is Savitri, the Creative Mediatrix, who raises earth to Heaven. The redeemer, the symbol of love and compassion, journeys into the inner countries in search of her true self and the realisation comes to her:

What seemed herself was an image of the Whole.

.....

She burned in the passion and splendour of the rose,
 She was the red heart of the passion flower.

(S VII.7.632)

This rose of love burned in the passion and splendour of the Eternal Rose, she was the "red heart" of the "passion flower", the "deathless rose". Red stands for power, strength, shakti, dynamic action, everything put together. The "red heart" is the Force of the "passion flower" utilised to build heaven on earth. Savitri asks for His peace, His oneness, His energy, His joy--but not for herself. She wants them for earth and men. The Power and glory, the bliss and the love, the oneness and the peace of the "Mystic Rose", is longed for, to blossom here on earth, Savitri was:

. . . like a rose of Marvel, worshipping,

The fiery sweetness of the son of Heaven.

(S VI.1.475)

The "rose of Marvel" worships and brings down the "Fiery Sweetness of Heaven" to men. Then like the chosen Sathyavan, brought to life by the "Rose of Life," man becomes:

A living knot of golden Paradise,

.....

A star of splendour or a rose of bliss. (VI.1.488)

The helpless flower, man, is elevated to a "star of splendour," and a "living knot of golden paradise". Gold the colour of Divine Truth, also indicates the Mahakali force which is the strongest force working in the body. The living knot is live with this Force, hence it is transformed to a Knot of golden Paradise. Body is converted into a Paradise of Divine Truth, which in turn is the rose of Bliss, rose of Eternal Ananda. The rose of bliss can bloom only on a condition suggested by the Divine Mother of Might to Savitri:

But not by showering heaven's golden rain

Upon the intellect's hard and rocky soil

Can the tree of Paradise flower on earthly ground.

(VII.4.591)

The "tree of Paradise" can flower on earth only with the Divine grace brought down by wilful aspiration. The Mind, the intellects hard and rocky soil, is not a fertile ground for the tree to grow and flower. The "showering of heaven's golden

rains" cannot help much in the sprouting and growing of the tree. Only the descent of the Divine, can bring perfection in life. The toils of men should be speared to bring down the "Dawn of God", "Ahana" into the "lotus-heart of love" which "sleeps veiled by apparent things." One day that love will bloom "in the garden of the spouse." When the Rose of Love is seized by her discovered Lord," then one experiences:

Hushed breath of ecstasy, honey of lotus-depths

where the bee sinks,

Timeless expanses too still for the voice

of the hours to inveigle, (CP 529)

The bee sinks, drowns and loses Itself in the honey of Lotus-depths. The Hushed ecstasy and silence, at the rapture of Timelessness, is seen in the "honey of lotus-depths." The lotus-heart of love has lotus-depths that engulf the self and takes one to the shores of "golden paradise". Lotus, the flower dear to Men and God, is well known for its mysterious "depths" that suck in the honey seeking bee. The intelligent bee fails to pierce and free itself from the soft, smooth, sweet clutches of the closing petals. The unraveled Mystery remains a mystery till

date. Like the sinking bee, man is also taken in by the Lotus-depths of Divine Love when he is able to bear the "fiery sweetness of the sun of Heaven."

I carry the fire that never can be quenched
And the compassion that supports the suns.

(S VII.4.573)

The compassionate being is none other than the lotus flower, the central figure in the symbol of Aurobindo. The lotus in water, inside the square, seen at the junction of the two intersecting inverted triangles, represent the aspiring soul of man longing for the Dawn of God. It also indicates Divine Manifestation among the multiplicity of creation, that manifests itself in a conducive atmosphere; namely the presence of the supermind, typified by the square. The Divine descent and the earthly ascent, presented by the two triangles are behind the "Divine Manifestation." Lotus or Padma is both a symbol of the sky as well as of water. As a sky symbol, it stands for the wisdom of the Guru. As the flower of the water-plant, it represents the best blossom of Bhakti. With its roots buried deep in the mud it provides a silent message for humanity, whose roots are lost in the mud of "earthly splendour."

Though the stem of the Lotus flower is shaken and tossed by the waves, the flower stands far above the reach of mud and water. Likewise man who is subjected to the emotional fluctuations of "samsara" should not be carried away by the petty exigencies of day to day life. The flower opens its bosom to the glory of the benign sun, suggesting that, man should keep the lotus of his heart unaffected by the dualities of life, and must offer it to the Absolute.

But now the half-opened lotus bud of her heart
 Had bloomed and stood disclosed to the earthly ray;

(S VII.5.598)

Savitri, "the Symbol Dawn and Meridian Noon," leads creation out of the dark night of death and despair, by opening the lotus bud of her heart to the earthly ray. Offered to the daughter of infinity,

Her passion-flower of love and doom she gave. (I.1.9)

She offers her "passion-flower" to infinity, so that the bloom shall bloom for ever, radiating eternal Bliss here on earth. The "passion-flower", Lotus, symbolises the opening of the centre to the light. It is the open consciousness. Red Lotus is the

presence of the Divine on earth, the sun being the Divine Truth. It indicates the Divine manifestation on earth, raising earth consciousness towards the Truth. The white lotus is the symbol of the Mother's consciousness. The Red Lotus and White Lotus are much honoured by Toru Dutt in her poem addressed to the "Passion-Flower," where a meeting between Love and Flora, the goddess of spring, is presented in an exquisite manner. Once Love went to Flora and asked for a flower, which would be the undisputed queen of all flowers. The lilly and the rose had been rivals for the high distinction for long. A quarrel took place between the factions of flowers in the bower of psyche. Love requests Flora:

Give me a flower delicious as the rose
 And stately as the lily in her pride -
 But of what colour? Rose-red,
 Love first chose,
 Then prayed--"No, lily-white, or both provide.
 And Flora gave the lotus, "rose-red" dyed
 And "lily-white",--the queenliest flower that blows.

(Dutt 35)

Love's request was thus granted by the goddess, offering her Lotus the "queenliest flower that blows". Lotus, "rose-red" or "lily-white," is the flower sacred to nature and her Gods and represents the abstract and the concrete universes, standing as the emblem of the productive powers of both spiritual and physical nature. The lotus flower, represented as growing out of Vishnu's navel--the God resting on the waters of space and on his serpent of Infinity--is the most graphic allegory ever conceived; the universe evolving from the central sun, the "Point", the ever-concealed germ. The "Mystic flower" is the flower of offering dear to God, it is also the flower used by God and Goddess as a throne, weapon and jewel. Lakshmi, the female aspect of Vishnu, also called "Padma", the Lotus, is shown floating at Creation on a lotus flower.

. . . Then seated on a lotus

Beauty's bright goddess peerless sri, arose

out of the waves . . . (Blavatsky 380)

Sings an English Orientalist and poet Sir Monier-Williams. When used as a "weapon", it shows the power of the flower, as a Jewel it indicates the blessing showered on the Bhakta by the deity. It also stands as an integral part of the human body

pointing out its shape and nature, the shape of the heart is likened to the inverted bud of the Lotus-flower. The spinal cord is the long stalk of the flower which has thousand petals that open at the top of the head. The various "chakras" or padmas mentioned in the Tantric discipline are situated in this long stalk. The underlying idea in the symbols is very beautiful and it shows, further more, its identical parentage in all the religious systems. It signifies one and the same philosophical idea, namely, the emanation of the objective from the subjective, divine Ideation passing from the abstract into the concrete or visible form. It was this divine Ideation that lured the Yogi-Poet to the "Southern sea". In "Envoi", the young poet bids adieu to the foreign fields, the Hellenic muses, and announces his return home from the world of violets, lilacs and cowslips.

Me from her lotus throne Saraswathi
 Has called to regions of eternal snow
 And Ganges pacing to the southern sea,
 Ganges upon whose shores the flower of Eden blow.

(CP 28)

The "regions of eternal snow" stands for pure spiritual wisdom, the pacing "Ganges", for the majestic flow of the wisdom

touched soul through life's lands until it joins the ocean of the Infinite. The "flower of Eden" indicates the perfected, happy details of those soul-fertilised places. The great and high work in store for the Rishi, is symbolised by the call of Saraswathi who is the Goddess not only of poetry but of all learning, spiritual and secular, and of perfection in life's organisation. The Goddess of wisdom is the expressive counterpart of the immanent aspect of becoming. She is a feeding reservoir of perennial inspiration to the artists and writers. Saraswathi, the stream of Inspiration is also one of the seven rivers of the early Aryan world. As an actual stream of flowing water, it is the river of inspiration flowing from the Truth consciousness. It is a natural name both for a river and for the goddess of Inspiration, since Saraswathi means "the flowing movement." Aurobindo opines, in this regard:

Saraswathi by the constant action of the inspiration awakens the Truth to Consciousness in our thoughts, this truth liberates the life and being from falsehood, weakness and limitations and opens to it the doors of the supreme felicity. The Goddess brings into active consciousness in the human being the great flood or

great movement, the Truth-consciousness itself and illumines with it all our thoughts. It proceeds from the hidden plane of the Supramental Truth. (The Secret of the Veda 95)

Saraswathi in her Lotus throne is the manifestation of the Devi who is accepted as the all pervasive effulgence of knowledge, which is at once creative and eternal. The Lotus flower symbolises the purity of Being that rises up out of the watering, worldly mud by which it is nourished but never blemished. Floating on the water's surface, the lotus flower opens expansively to the sun and the light of knowledge. The Poet addresses "Saraswathi with the Lotus" to bless, and pays a tribute to the dear departed "Bankim Chandra Chatterjee." He laments over the sudden demise thus:

Thy tears fall fast, O mother, on its bloom,
 O white-armed mother, like honey fall thy tears;
 Yet even their sweetness can no more relume
 The golden light, the fragrance heaven rears,
 The fragrance and the light for ever shed
 Upon his lips immortal who is dead. (CP 26)

The "immortal who is dead" is also a bloom sacred to the Goddess whose "tears fall fast" like "honey". Saraswathi with the lotus blesses the "Immortal flower".

The Lotus Bloom that is the throne, the weapon, the jewel, the Divine manifestation, is also the planes of consciousness encountered by any voyager in his "inner journey" to reach the Divine Consciousness. In Savitri--the legend and symbol-- one finds Aswapathy, the voyager upon uncharted routes, undertaking his immense journey into the occult kingdom of the spirit, fronting the dangers of another space and time.

Ascending and descending twixt life's pole
 The serried kingdoms of the graded Law
 Plunged from the Everlasting into Time,
 Then glad of a glory of multitudinous mind
 And rich with life's adventure and delight
 And packed with the beauty of Matter's shapes and hues
 Climbed back from Time into undying Self,
 Up a golden ladder carrying the Soul,
 Tying with diamond threads the Spirit's extremes.

(S I.5.100-101)

Aswapathy records his magnificent vision of the occult Kingdoms of the spirit with an unflinching realism. Sri Aurobindo imparts a contemporary urgency to Aswapathy's spiritual quest, ordeal and discovery, by identifying him as modern man in search of the soul. Aswapathy's transcript and testimony of the mystic experiences provide an exact, comprehensive and profound record of the Yogic climb of the "Kundalini" from the "Muladhara" to the "Sahasrara" through the involuted spiral of the various "Chakras" and "Mandalas" as described in Patanjali's great works. The "Chakras" also known as Lotuses or "Padmas" are six in number. These are independent units carrying on their assigned function. Each "Padma" has "Shakti" controlling its own activity. In addition to these independent Shaktis of each "Chakra" there is a universal shakti, "Kundalini," which has the power of controlling all these chakras. In the physical form she is lying dormant and coiled up like a serpent in an individual. The excitement of all the Lotuses, takes place always through Kundalini. It is the lever of consciousness by which the individual realises his oneness with the Absolute. The creative impetus, emanating from the divine, is communicated through "Kundalini," the serpent power to the

six Padmas. Normally, "Kundalini" is sleeping a trance-sleep "Yoga Nidra", coiled three and a half times round the linga, covering with her head the "Brahma-dvara"--entrance to the Susumna. Shakti is denoted by a triangle because of its threefold manifestations as Will, Action and Knowledge. The corners represent Fire, Moon and Sun. Swami Vivekananda, in his book "Raja Yoga", defines Kundalini as follows--"The Centre where all residual sensations are as it were, stored up is called "Muladhara-chakra," and the coiled up energy of actions is kundalini, the coiled up."

The lower most Chakra, with which Kundalini forms a connection and through which it is able to send 'impulses, is the Basic-plexus called the "Muladhara-Chakra" having four "Dalas." It forms a connection with the "Swadhisthana," the Lotus in the pelvic region, with six petals; still higher up, "Kundalini" forms herself into a plexus called "Kundalini-Chakra" or "Manipura-Chakra," red in colour with ten petals. It is called the Lotus of Happiness. After passing through these Chakras the Kundalini forces its passage through "Anahata-Chakra" with twelve petals, located in the region of the heart. Then comes the lotus of purification with sixteen petals situated in the

throat region, known as "Vishuddhi-Chakra." Kundalini then joins the "Ajnya-Chakra," with two petals, situated between the eye-brows. It is the spot which is contemplated while undergoing the process of "Pranayama." It is called the third eye and is the plexus of command. Hereafter "Kundalini" ascends to the "Sahasrara," the thousand petalled Lotus (Appendix).

Aswathy's yogic climb from "Muladhara" to "Sahasrara" has its roots in the Integral Yoga propounded by the Yogi-Poet. The process involved in this discipline is a little different from the well-known Indian yoga. The power of Shakti of the Divine, "Kundalini", sleeping coiled in the lotus like circle in the subtle body is here awakened not directly from below by yogic concentration and special breath-exercise, but by the descent of an over head Force into the lotus situated in the heart region, through which the evolving soul gets most directly into contact with the rest of man's complex nature organised round it.

A wide God-knowledge poured down from above,

A new world-knowledge broadened from within.

(S I.3.51)

The Integral Yoga targets a healthy body; senses under control; a clear, calm, well disciplined mind; a sharp intellect; a heart full of unconditional love and compassion; a pure ego and thereby a life filled with peace and joy. Aswapathy is blessed with success in his sadhana, with the birth of "Sakthi" the Eternal Feminine, the World Mother, cast in a new role. "Fate shall be changed by an unchanging will," the World Mother had assured the aspiring Aswapathy. And to Death Himself, Savitri, her deputy, throws the deathless challenge. When Savitri faces Death, he says:

Let deathless eyes look into the eyes of Death,
 An imperishable Force touching brute things
 Transform earth's death into immortal life. (X.4.745)

The veritable is urged to show the face of the supreme Mother if she be that. Savitri looked at Death and answered not. "A mighty transformation came on her", and

In a flaming moment of apocalypse
 The Incarnation thrust aside its veil. (X.4.745)

She leads creation out of the dark night of death and despair, through her parallel journey. She invokes the power to descend

into the centres of her body. She waits for the word to come from the Infinite, and starts her ascent towards her soul. In her "Spirits upward route" she reaches a house all made of flame." In the living Fire she meets "The Spirits Conscious representative." It is the Being, her soul that "puts forth a small portion of herself." This projected part of the soul is the human personality in Nature which can be seen acting in life. It is supported by the unwounded and immortal self from behind, "Like quiet waves upon a silent sea" (VII.6.617).

Savitri's human personality, in her upward ascent, meets her true Being "the secret deity," then she returns to her human surroundings, and invokes the Secret Deity to establish her Kingdom in the earthly soil.

In its deep lotus home her being sat
 As if on concentration's marble seat,
 Calling the mighty Mother of the worlds
 To make this earthly tenement her house.

(S VII.5.599)

She sat in the "deep lotus home" in her own natural being, calling on the "Mighty Mother" to descend into her.

As in a flash from a supernal light,
 A living image of the original Power,
 A face, a form came down into her heart
 And made of it its temple and pure abode.
 But when its feet had touched the quivering bloom,
 A mighty movement rocked the inner space
 As if a world were shaken and found its soul:
 Out of the Inconscient's soulless mindless Night
 A flaming serpent rose released from sleep. (VII.5.599)

The divine Mother descended into her heart and there was "a mighty movement", when the higher power touched her heart-centre, "the quivering bloom". "A flaming serpent rose released from sleep," Kundalini is awakened by Divine descent, the unique feature of the "Integral Yoga". Then every centre of her being, from top to bottom, become "surcharged with light and bliss" as the Serpent Power climbed "mightily" and "stormily" upwards. Then at the crown, it joined the Eternal space. Thus through out the string of forts that guards the human being from world-contacts, the higher Power brought about a great change. In Savitri "all underwent a high celestial change," "powers and divinities burst flaming forth."

In the country of the lotus of the head

.....

In the castle of the lotus twixt of the brows

.....

In the passage of the lotus of the throat

.....

A glad uplift and a new working came. (VII.5.600)

The Chakras situated in the head, between the eyebrows, and in the throat are uplifted by the serpent power, climbing to meet the ineffable Beyond. Then a transformation of nature follows and every act becomes an act of God.

Each thought is a ripple on a sea of Light. (VII.5.602)

In this way:

A first perfection's stage is reached at last;

Out of the wood and stone of our nature's stuff

A temple is shaped where the high gods could live.

(VII.5.602)

This attainment of perfection is the promise for all mankind.

One man's perfection still can save the world, (VII.5.603)

because by such an attainment:

A camp of God is pitched in human time. (VII.5.603)

The "camp" shields the helpless flower, man, even from the breeze, and helps him in his evolution. The innate nature of man is to grow upward.

Rooted in mire heavenward man's nature grows, --

His soul the dim bud of God's flaming rose. (CP 137)

The "flaming rose," "the red icon of Might" budding in the soul of man, helps him in his heavenward flight. The roots in mire provide anchorage and the "dim bud" blooms into the "flaming rose" with the establishment of the "camp of God", in the "mire." The Involution and Evolution behind creation are also brought to light by the Image of man in "mire" bearing the bud of God's flaming rose and growing heavenwards. The "bud" is the involved divinity manifesting itself as life, and the "upward growth" is the evolution of the involved spirit, of Divine consciousness, "the flaming rose", effecting supramental manifestation. The Divine descent and the soul's ascent involved in the Integral Yoga is also portrayed through the "bud" and the "flaming rose". Ascent of the soul is its opportunity to renew its connection with the Absolute, the

"flaming rose". The knowledge revealed by the Descending Grace releases the soul from ignorance, and everything ceases in a "truth which lives in its own light."

Thus the "enchanted children" in the "fragrant garden" of God are the Images of Ease, Grace, Joy, Love, Beauty, Bliss and Divine Consciousness. Death the lovely maiden "culls" flowers from the "fragrant garden". But the Blooms are the "Images of Immortality" symbols of "Immortal Love", Immovable by "Death." The Immortal Love helps the "Passion-flowers" to "sweeten and flush" the "ageing mother." The "grey portal" is coloured by the colourful hues of the pure souls. The "loved and cherished" dear child soul has a "softer hue", a "whiter and milder" light than the other flowers in God's garden of "Prouder blooming." White rose is the soul subjected to spiritual surrender that "gladdens the mother's heart" with its beauty. The child soul carries out its gentle duty, "Flower-like". Red rose is "fierier and brighter." It stands for Love, strength, power and vitality. It indicates an opening of the consciousness either in the physical or some part of the vital. The warriors who "fell" fighting for their motherland are like "flower's strewn at a bridal.' They are "red with the beauty of blood." The soul

of man is a "dim bud" of "Gods" flaming rose." The rose of power, beauty, love, knowledge, light, bliss everything put together "flames" indicating the fiery nature of the Ineffable. But the "bud" is "dim", since it is veiled, and fail to radiate the light within. Once the veil is rent, the dim bud, brightens and emit the flame of the "flaming rose". Though "rooted in mire" his nature grows "heavenward". So the veil is sure to be rent with the wilful aspiration of the Sadhak, who is like the Lotus flower rooted in mire and opening to the Divine Truth, Sun. Lotus indicates the open consciousness. It represents the Divine Manifestation in the multiplicity of creation, the water. It also indicates the opening of the centres of consciousness in man to the Divine Consciousness. The various "chakras" in the Tantric discipline are typified by Lotus or Padma. The petals of the "passion-flower" adorn the "Sri-Chakra", the Yantra of Meditation. The sacred flower is precious to man and God alike. It serves as the throne, weapon and jewel of Gods. It is a much loved and cherished offering flower of the aspiring Bhakta. Savitri, the "Legend and the symbol" sits "in the deep lotus home" and invokes the "Mighty Mother," "The Presence Chambered in Lotus Secrecy", to descend to her Lotus centres

and establish her kingdom on earth. The power "glided into the Lotus of her heart" and charged it with "Sunrise splendours." The "Creative Mediature" is thus well equipped to redeem mankind. She is:

The dream-white of the lotus in its pool. (S VII.7.632)

"White lotus is Mother's Consciousness," says Sri Aurobindo. Red Lotus proclaims the presence of the Divine on earth. It also symbolises the eternal smile, meaning the self-existent joy and gladness of the spirit, due to the vital intimacy with the Divine on the vital plane.

"Colour and Light are always close to each other", opines Sri Aurobindo:

Colour being more indicative. Light more dynamic. As for the exact symbolism of colours, it is not always easy to define exactly, because it is not rigid and precise, but complex, the meaning varying with the field, the combinations, the character and shades of the colour, the play of forces. Gold indicates at its most intense something from the supramental, otherwise overmind, truth or intuitive truth deriving ultimately from the Supramental Truth--Consciousness. (LY 959)

Deep red indicates Divine Love, while purple stands for vital force, and Crimson for the physical. Violet is the colour of benevolence or compassion, also more vividly of the Divine Grace. Orange represents occult knowledge, occult experience. The thinking mind is shaded by yellow and psychic purity is brought to light by white. Thus goes the world of colours colouring the world of consciousness. The flight of the spirit, Paraclete, is mapped through the colourful planes of consciousness from Highermind to Overmind. Aurobindo writes on the conceptual Image of the voyage of "Thought the Paraclete":

As thought rises in the scale, it ceases to be intellectual, becomes illumined, then intuitive, then overmental and finally disappears seeking the last beyond. "Paleblue" is the colour of the higher ranges of mind up to the intuition. Above it, it begins to become golden with the supramental light. Gold-red is the colour of the supramental in the physical. The poem describes Thought in the stage when it is undergoing transformation and is about to ascend into the Infinite above and disappear into it. The "flame-word rune" is the word of the higher Inspiration,

Intuition, Revelation which is the highest attainment of Thought. (Sethna 364-65)

The Blue Bird is the "God in his Blue" that drops "Seeds of ecstasy" to "the suffering soil." The Bird of Fire, whose breast is "rich and red", "Like blood of a soul" "climbing the hard crag-teeth world, wounded and nude", is the marvel bird that invades the secret clasp of the silence and crimson Fire. On its "Gold-White wings", it makes the "messenger sail" to break the barriers of mind and life. It invokes the Rose of God, the immaculate core of the ultimate seeing to:

Make Earth the home of the Wonderful and life

beatitude's kiss (CP 584)

The "Passion-flower of the Nameless" is the "sun on the head of the Timeless" and "guest of the marvellous Hour" that which,

Bursting into shape and colour like a rose,

The One, in His glory multitudinous,

Compels the great world-petals to unclothe. (CP 167)

CHAPTER V

SOME OTHER SYMBOLS

"Sun in the darkness, recover thy lustre." (CP 570)

The admonishment of the nonpareil poet is targeted at Man--The Thinking Animal. In his poem, "Soul in the Ignorance," man, the "Sun in the darkness," is urged to recover its lustre. The word "recover" implies some thing that is lost, which was once, one's own. The "Lustre" is the innate quality of the "Sun". It is born with lustre since it is part of a greater Lustre. The darkness, the ignorance, the inconscience that engulfed the Sun, hides its original lustre. It is up to the Sun to strive hard to get rid of the darkness and to regain its pristine Lustre. The soul can achieve this by invoking the Rose of God to:

Live in the mind of our earthhood;

O golden Mystery, flower,

Sun on the head of the Timeless,

guest of the marvellous Hour. (CP 584)

Sri Aurobindo's Rose of God, the golden mystery flower, is the "Sun" on the head of the Timeless. The "Sun" of the Time,

the soul in darkness, is part and parcel of the "Sun" on the head of the Timeless. Aspirants supplicate to the golden flower "to live in the mind of our earth-hood", so that the "Sun in darkness" can recover its lustre. A succession of vibrant images unfolds a mystical metaphysics. Reality is invoked to reveal itself by evolution in human consciousness. The Sun of Timelessness is asked to shine anew in time and space in order to become progressively a part of earth or rather, to make earth progressively a part of it. When light swallows darkness, knowledge invades ignorance, the soul recovering its lustre, is enlightened, as seen in "Descent".

Swiftly, swiftly crossing the golden spaces
 Knowledge leaps, a torrent of rapid lightnings;
 Thoughts that left the Ineffable's flaming mansions,

Blaze in my spirit.

Slow the heart-beats' rhythm like a giant hammer's;
 Missioned voices drive to me from God's doorway
 Words that live not save upon Nature's summits,

Ecstasy's chariots. (CP 563)

The culminating speech of mysticism, the mantra, reverberates through the sound-strokes of words that are "Ecstasy's Chariots". Vedic and Upanishadic in its symbols, the impulsion of the Supreme Spirit is poetised in language and rhythm with an immediate direct play of superhuman immensities. The poetically receptive receives the overhead inspirations that convey the yogic process undergone by the Rishi. The spirit's substance comes from remote altitudes into the human mould giving birth to a unique piece of art. The poem "Descent" of Sri Aurobindo with its suffused overhead tone symbolises a climax of spiritual creativity. Knowledge that leaps from God's doorway is a "torrent of rapid lightnings." "Ineffable's flaming mansion's have "thoughts" that leave to "blaze" in one's spirit, and the rhythm of the ensuing heart-beats is like that made by a "giant hammer." The Ecstasy of the soul that receives the "Words" that cross the "golden spaces", the overhead planes, is portrayed magnificently. The soul is no more in darkness, it is now one with the "Sun on the head of the Timeless." The leaping knowledge, the "Sun", the Truth, plunges deep into the very core of its existence, "blazing" the spirit with "Thoughts"

"beyond Nature's Summits". The illumined soul takes pride in the fact that it is:

A living centre of the Illimitable. (S I.5.90)

It can go on expanding to an unbounded wideness. It is ever living, throbbing with life, the living centre of the vast. It believes itself to be:

A pilgrim of the everlasting Truth, (I.5.91)

who has set out on a long journey which is apparently endless. It is in search of the Truth, which alone is everlasting. The transience of earthhood, limited by Time and Space, offers it enough schooling in its mission.

"It journeys to meet the Incommunicable." The pilgrimage of the soul is not an easy, smooth endeavour since the earthly hurdles form stumbling blocks. The soul knows fully well that it is "The Pilgrim of the Night."

I made an assignation with the Night;

In the abyss was fixed our rendezvous:

In my breast carrying God's deathless light

I came her dark and dangerous heart to woo. (CP 144)

The Pilgrim soul carries God's deathless light in it's breast, hence the "rendezvous" with the "dark" and "dangerous" heart of Night, Ignorance, cannot be that dangerous and risky.

I left the glory of the illumined Mind

And the calm rapture of the divinised soul

And travelled through a vastness dim and blind.

To the grey shore where her ignorant waters roll. (144)

The ignorant waters of life roll along the grey shore of earth. The journey through "dim" and "blind" vastness, the descent from the illumined mind, the Eternal sun of Timelessness, takes one to the grey shore. The descent of the involved spirit to the "mire" is hinted at. The involution demands an evolution in its stride. The involved spirit travels through the "dim and blind" vast world of creation. The relatively dull nature of earthhood, a preparatory stage for heavenhood, is exposed through the epithets dim, blind, grey and ignorant. The "glory" and "calm rapture" is its legacy which is to be restored by the soul that has involved itself into matter.

I walk by the chill wave through the dull slime

And still that weary journeying knows no end;

Lost is the lustrous godhead beyond Time,

There comes no voice of the celestial Friend. (144)

Now it is the Sun in darkness, the Soul in ignorance, who has lost the "lustrous godhead beyond Time." The weary journey through the dull slime seems to know no end. The voice of the celestial friend, the godhead, fails to reach the grey shore. But the sadhak continues wilfully to aspire:

And yet I know my footprints' track shall be

A pathway towards Immortality. (144)

This is his hope, prayer and belief. This is the strongly rooted faith that stands him in good stead despite the weary journey by the "chill wave" and through the "dull slime". The petty exigencies of earthly existence are imaged in "chill wave" and "dull slime". The aspiring soul debunks and resurges to respond fully to the call of the "divinised soul."

"The progressive growth of the finite consciousness of man towards this self, towards God, towards the universal, the eternal, the infinite, in a word his growth into spiritual consciousness by the development of his ordinary ignorant natural being into an illumined divine nature, this is for Indian thinking the significance of life and the aim of human existence . . ." observes Sri Aurobindo, in an aphorism, who foresees the whole universe undergoing a kind of universal yoga. In the process, the Universal Consciousness has to undergo an

extensive period of churning to separate the poison from the nectar. If in the course of this action the poison rises to the top, it is for being thrown out once and for all, so that man can resurge to his pristine lustrous state and move on to the yet unrealised planes of evolution.

The Pilgrim of the Night has a firm conviction that his "foot prints" trace shall be "a pathway towards Immortality." Though in the play of creation he might be:

A thinking being in an unthinking world,
 An island in the sea of the Unknown,
 He is a smallness trying to be great,
 An animal with some instincts of a god, (S I.5.89)

Man, the thinking being, is an island surrounded by the sea of the unknown. He being a smallness trying to be great,

. . . even the highest rapture Time can give
 Is a mimicry of ungrasped beatitudes . . . (I.5.88)

The "Sun of Timelessness" offers ungrasped beatitudes that are beyond the reach of the "Sun in the darkness."

His life a story too common to be told,
 His deeds a number summing up to nought,

His consciousness a torch lit to be quenched,

His hope a star above a cradle and grave. (I.5.89)

Man is thus presented as a thinking being that is an animal with the instincts of God. His life, deeds, consciousness and hope are metaphorically expressed in clear terms to denote a futile existence. Yet consciousness, the torch, can be lit for ever, "the world of ungrasped beatitudes" can be fashioned by him if he wills, because "his truth" is "the eternal spirit."

And yet a greater destiny may be his,

For the eternal Spirit is his truth.

He can re-create himself and all around

And fashion new the world in which he lives: (I.5.89)

Thus asserts the Rishi and he visualises the new world being "fashioned" by the potter, the "Viswakarma", the man with some instincts of God. He "fashions", kneads, matter like the potter, giving shape and form to a new world; taking shape not under the impact of a mechanical and unconscious kneading, but with the potter's own conscious collaboration and under the impact of the Energy of divine Life.

As a sculptor chisels a deity out of stone

He slowly chipped off the dark envelope, (I.3.42)

"Chipping off the dark envelope" is exactly what is being done in the whole body of the Earth by the awesome Energy, the descending Force, the divine Grace, which is a new principle of life on earth. The "Sun" chips off the "darkness" and regains its lustre buttressed by the "Sun of Timelessness." Men can respond to this Energy by:

Lifting our finite minds to his infinite, (I.4.77)

There is a plan of the godhead, an ideal into which man has to rise; because his base is there in the eternity. And the poet says, all this recasting,

This transfiguration is earth's due to heaven: (I.4.77)

It is the responsibility of the earth to co-operate to assent to this transfiguration. Fanning happiness while journeying along the grey shore, is not what is expected from man who carries god's deathless light. He should be the "ecstasy's chariot", in response to the favours received from Heaven which come down and work out their plan through the mask of imperfection. Hence Sri Aurobindo advocates this:

I rend man's narrow and successful life

And force his sorrowful eyes to gaze at the sun.

(VIII.4.579)

"The Sun" is the light of the Trinity supreme, the Sat-Chid-Ananda. There is no inconscience, no obscurity, there is the ultimate. Everything finds its fulfillment in its presence. "The Sun-God rides across the skies in a three-wheeled chariot, drawn by seven horses with white hooves," says the ancient lore of India. As the three wheels of the chariot move on, the three dimensions of time--past, present and future--are created in Timelessness. The seven horses--the seven colours of the spectrum--gallop forth creating the colourful universe. Their white hooves, the culminating points of their speed, symbolise the blending of the spectral colours into the colourless rays that energise, support and actuate the whole world. The Rishi prompts man to "gaze at the sun", so that his "sorrowful eyes" will be energised, illuminated and rendered the vision of the Truth. The Sun is the symbol of the concentrated light of Truth, the Supramental Truth, the divine Gnosis, opines the Yogi (LY 957). It is also the symbol of the supermind, the grace of which is a prerequisite to widen man's vision to face the vision of divine Beauty. Without the Divine lead:

Sunbelts of knowledge, moonbelts of delight

Stretched out in an ecstasy of widenesses

Beyond our indigent corporeal range. (S I.5.103)

The human range of comprehension is not wide enough to accommodate these "sunbelts of knowledge" and "moonbelts of delight" of no limit. The Sun indicates "Truth" and also "Knowledge of Truth," the fountain of Knowledge and Energy. The Moon indicates spirituality, spiritual Ananda, hence it also stands for peace, delight and bliss (LY 957). The Sun is the light of the Truth, the Moon reflects the light. The absence of the light gives man only fragmented joys and pleasures. He fails to reach anywhere near heavenly bliss. He remains:

An old disvalued credit in Time's bank,

Imperfection's cheque drawn on the Inconscient. (I.5.88)

The doubtfulness of things here on earth, the incertitude of the self-sure thought of man, the transience of his works, are brought to light through the powerful current idiom of credit from banks and dishonouring of cheques. Man faces failure in almost all his efforts, and

In each success a seed of failure lurks. (I.5.89)

He is after all a "smallness trying to be great," a thinking creature in an unthinking world. But it should be borne in mind that he is:

An animal with some instincts of god, (I.5.89)

He can aspire for a greater destiny.

For the eternal Spirit is his truth. (I.5.89)

The light of Truth, the Eternal Spirit, the God among the gods is to be invoked thus, as in "Bride of the Fire".

Stamp there thy radiance, never to part,

O living Sun. (CP 103)

The radiance of the living sun lights his way to the greater destiny where:

There is a wisdom like a brooding sun,

A Bliss in the heart's crypt grown fiery white. (148)

Wisdom, knowledge is equated to a brooding sun, in the sonnet, "The Universal Incarnation." The sun that broods, lost in thoughts, completely immersed in oneself is the wisdom that broods to create Bliss in the hearts of the aspirants. Whence the Sadhak puts forth a claim in these expressive words, as voiced in "The Island Sun".

I have sailed the golden ocean

And crossed the silver bar;

I have reached the Sun of knowledge

The earth-self's midnight star. (CP 106)

The ascent of the aspiring soul, prompted by Divine grace is depicted through the "Island sun." "Earth-self's midnight star" is this sun, the sun of knowledge. The midnight, the depth of ignorance is made shallow by the presence of the star, the sun of knowledge, shining in the midst of the ocean of life. The soul sails through the "golden ocean" the elevated consciousness, to reach the sun, which has "fields of flaming vision," "mountains of bare night," "peaks of fiery rapture" and "air of absolute light." The attributes bestowed on the sun of knowledge more than serve the purpose. The Ineffable, Omnipotent, Blissful state of the Sun is highlighted. It is the "Island of the Blest". Only the blessed one can hope to reach and enjoy repose in such an island, after wading through the oceans of life in search of an anchorage or footing. The "Blest" one can bring back to earth the "absolute light" got by way of his ascent to spiritual consciousness. He who ventures in this regard can say:

The Light was still around me
 When I came back to earth
 Bringing the Immortal's knowledge
 Into man's cave of birth. (106)

Only the spiritually elevated can thus light "man's cave of birth." It is their duty and function to bring the "Immortals Knowledge" to earth. The light they carry within is explored and realized through the discipline of yoga. Their consciousness wades through different levels of experiences through seas and oceans, and reaches the pristine illumined state. Thus they are able to shed the light around them to light other aspiring souls willing to tread the untrodden path, and alight on heavenly shores. Eventually, the heavenly bliss is brought down into "man's cave of birth", establishing Divine Life here. The "cave" through the constant effort on the part of the aspirants turns out to be heaven. Earthhood is transformed into heavenhood and man to superman, the next evolute. This was the boon given to "Savitri" by the Mighty Mother, when the "Creative Matrix" strove to build heaven on earth. She conceived that:

Earth must transform herself and equal Heaven

Or Heaven descend into earth's mortal state.

(S VIII.2.552)

The Divine descent that saves the world prompts the spirits ascent. The "redeemer" Savitri, ascends in search of the descending grace to save the world. She is:

The fiery sweetness of the sun of Heaven. (VII.1.475)

Also,

An ocean of untrembling virgin Fire. (I.2.19)

"The Sun of Heaven" is an "Ocean of Virgin Fire," the Fire not consummated by Time and Space because,

A portion of the might Mother came

Into her as into its own human part. (VII.2.552)

The mission undertaken by the human part is:

To mould humanity into God's own shape

And lead this great blind struggling world to light.

(VII.2.552)

The untrembling "Ocean of Fire," endeavour to lead the "great", "blind", "struggling" world to "light". The "God's Labour" becomes fruitful only when:

Heaven's fire is lit in the breast of the earth

And the undying suns here burn; (CP 102)

"Man's cave of birth is lighted by the Sun of Heaven, the "Heaven's Fire". The "living sun", rather "the undying sun," burn here on earth, stamping his radiance on earth never to part. In the short poem "Who", the seer confirms that:

It is He in the Sun who is ageless and deathless,
 And into the midnight His shadow is thrown;
 When darkness was blind and engulfed within darkness,
 He was seated within it immense and alone. (CP 41)

He is at once the "midnight star" and the "shadow", thrown into the midnight. He resides inside the inconscience that is "engulfed within darkness." The state of total ignorance, the hallmark of the manifested world, is emphasized by the statement "darkness was blind and engulfed within darkness." The hyperbole instantly delivers the message. The Poet consoles the earthly lot reminding them about His "immense" presence "within". There is no need for regret, since all the while, "He" is reclining within the matter "immense" and "alone". The gravity of his posture is conveyed through the word "immense". He waits "alone" to be joined with Eternity, in earnest.

The World-Force, the Force behind the creation, who guides the whole cosmic act, draws the images from the formless stuff of the Eternal. From there, this Force has drawn the strength to exist and the will to last.

The protean images of the World-Force
 Have drawn the strength to be, the will to last
 From a deep ocean of dynamic peace. (S II.3.136)

An "ocean of peace" supports everything. It is a dynamic peace, not a static one. The dynamism doesn't tarnish the quality of this peace--rather it enhances its ambit and its depth. The Imagery points out that the World-Force draws upon the "One" for enacting her caprice, in the form of the Universe.

It is his wisdom that steadies her action, provides a rigid base for her creative dance and makes stable this miracle of creation. He is "ageless" and "deathless" and is seated within the creation bearing "His Shadow". The "Ocean of dynamic peace" unites with the "Ocean of untrembling virgin Fire" in their attempt to build heaven on earth. The involved spirit within the thinking matter feels the "Ocean oneness" in his ascent.

Silence is round me, wideness ineffable;
 White birds on the ocean diving and wandering;
 A soundless sea on a voiceless heaven,
 Azure on azure, is mutely gazing. (CP 557)

The white birds, says the poet, pure souls in search of the "Real" behind the appearances, are "diving and wandering" on the Ocean of Life. The "Samsara Sagaram", the World, the Life on earth is the "Ocean," in which the aspirant strives hard to reach the pristine heights from where Divine Nature has descended. Ocean is also the level of consciousness, that takes one up in his ascent. The Poet speaks of Nature's climbing to deity and the hopeful expectation on the part of the "ageless and deathless" sun. The aspiring souls are being "mutely" observed by the universal consciousness, the descending grace hoping against hope that the souls should reach their heights which is:

A soundless sea on a voiceless heaven, (557)

The Godhead, the Eternal Truth rules the world sans sound. It is beyond all transience. The calm, serene, peaceful air prevailing in and around the Ineffable is depicted by way of alliteration. Sound and Fury, typical of the terrestrial world is absent there. The "soundless sea" prevails on a "voiceless heaven."

When the spirit "Identifies" itself with the "silence" and "boundlessness", it widens "clasping the universe." It is an

eternal clasp with the Eternity. Then realization dawns on him, the clasp lasts:

Till all that seemed becomes the Real,

One in a mighty and single vastness. (557)

The mighty, single, vast ocean contains everything that is "Real." Till date, it remained as something that "seemed", appeared, not real. Now the veil is rent, rendering a clear vision of the Truth. Ineffable wideness, boundlessness, and single vastness are the epithets that equate the "oneness" to ocean. The Godhead, the cosmic head is presented thus:

Someone broods there nameless and bodiless,

Conscious and lonely, deathless and infinite,

And, sole in a still eternal rapture,

Gathers all things to his heart for ever. (557)

The "Ocean oneness" cannot be better portrayed. The "Sun of Heaven" seated within the darkness "immense" and "alone" is also the "one" who "broods" there "nameless" and "bodiless". The "sole power" gathers all things to his heart for ever in a still eternal rapture. The soul held in eternal clasp feels that:

A force came down into his mortal limbs,

A current from eternal seas of Bliss; (S I.5.90)

By virtue of his disciplined enlargement of consciousness, he is able to hold the current of Bliss. The Force that comes down takes him into the "eternal seas of Bliss". His consciousness widens to a sea of Bliss which urges him to face the ups and downs of life in a stoic manner. The sonnet, "In the Battle", brings the ascetic forward:

Often, in the glow ages' wide retreat

On Life's long bridge through Time's enormous sea,

I have accepted death and borne defeat

If by my fall some gain were clutched for Thee. (CP 156)

A total surrender before and to the Almighty helps him bear defeat. The gain for the "one", be it even by man's fall is acceptable to him. The "Sea of Bliss", leads him through the "Sea of Time". "Life's long bridge" across the "Sea of Time", offers him death and defeat. But the sea of Bliss gives him total deliverance.

All-Knowledge wrap one mind in seas of light,

All-Love throb single in one human heart.

(S III.4.391)

Then the "seas of light" "wrap" the mind that "throb" with "all-love". Knowledge, the sea of light, enlightens the "human

heart" and "ocean oneness" pours into it. The throbbing of love in one human heart that wilfully aspires, discloses the hidden Truth. The pilgrim soul is now able to accept "death" and "defeat" and take it in good stride. "All-Knowledge" wrapping the mind gives rise to "All-Love", helping one to see the Divine in all beings. It can now firmly declare, as the poet does in "The Inner Sovereign":

Now more and more the Epiphany within

Affirms on Nature's soil His sovereign rights.

My mind has left its prison-camp of brain;

It pours, a luminous sea from spirits heights. (CP 155)

Enlightenment, realisation pours from the "Spirits heights". The Light flowing down, the Truth, is the "Luminous Sea" that frees one from shackles. The "prison-camp of brain", the narrow confines of the intellect without any vision of Truth, is left for ever. The free mind states:

My senses change into gold gates of bliss;

An ecstasy thrills through touch and sound and sight

Flooding this blind material sheath's dull ease:

My darkness answers to His call of light. (155)

Senses help one to feel pleasure and pain. They are the gateway to the reactions of "touch, sound and sight." Now, they have been transformed to "gold gates of bliss." The "sea of bliss" flows in through the senses whence the sadhak thrills with an "ecstasy". The "luminous sea" "floods" and carries away the dull ease of the "blind material sheath." The earthly material covering of ignorance, preventing the entry of light, is carried away by the luminous sea. This relatively passive and peaceful state of ignorance in the absence of wisdom is named as a "dull ease". It is dull sort of ease, inactive, stagnant, non-productive and hence not bright. Truth dawns in the prevailing "darkness" which responds to "His call of Light." The "Epiphany within" slowly helps the sadhak to affirm "His" "Sovereign rights" on "Nature's soil". He hopes that the Divine Nature will confirm its right on him in the very near future.

Nature in me one day like Him shall sit,

Victorious, calm, immortal, infinite. (155)

The Divine Nature establishing its hold on him in clear terms buttresses him in his eternal search for Truth. Wading through the Sea of Life, he finds an answer to his quest. He apostrophizes the grey wild sea of Life as seen in the short poem "To the Sea," thus:

O grey wild sea,

Thou hast a message, thunderer, for me. (45)

The thundering message can be elicited from the sea of Truth, of Eternity by constant effort.

I sink below

The bottom of the clamorous world to know. (45)

Only daring souls can reach the bottom of realities. The victorious, calm, immortal, infinite nature residing in him backs him in his endeavour. He believes:

On the safe land

To linger is to lose what God has planned

For man's wide soul,

Who set eternal godhead for its goal. (45)

Lingering on the safeland of ignorance without plunging into the Sea of Life to explore the Sea of Truth is rejecting the eternal godhead which is the goal "set" for man's "wide" soul by God. The soul of man is as wide as the sea encompassing the creative world of the almighty who:

. . . arrayed Danger and difficulty like seas and made

Pain and defeat, (45)

"Danger and difficulty" are also like seas. They are to be challenged and overthrown. They form an integral part of the Sea of Life. One has to buffet through the soaring seas with strong sinews empowered with Divine grace which urges one to outbillow the sea.

Take me, he

My way to climb the heavens, thou rude great sea. (46)

The "grey, wild sea" carrying a message for humanity, aids man in his climb to the heavens. The "wide, great sea", sea of light, lights his "way". He longs to be one with the sea of bliss.

I come, O Sea,

To measure my enormous self with thee. (46)

In his attempt to "measure" his "self" with the sea of light, he becomes "The Yogi on the whirl pool."

On a dire whirlpool in the hurrying river,

A life-stilled statue naked, bronze, severe,

He kept the posture of a deathless seer,

Unshaken by the mad water's leap and shiver. (CP 140)

In the "hurrying river" of life he keeps "the posture of a deathless seer". He sees everything, but never gets blemished

with anything. He sees the eternal Truth, "unshaken by the mad water's leap and shiver." The muddy waters of life carry him to a "dire whirl pool," where he remains unaffected like a "statue, naked, bronze, severe." The qualities attributed to the statue speak for themselves. Naked of all cares and worries that life has in store, bronze in texture, and severe in attitude, the Yogi maintains his posture. "The mad water's leap and shiver" implies the struggle for existence.

Waters, be it ocean, sea or rivers represent life, emotional, spiritual as well as physical. It has a horizontal surface and a vertical depth. The horizontal surface depicts the countless sentimental and emotional upsurges, and the vertical depth represent values. "Water is the symbol of a state of consciousness or a plane," says Sri Aurobindo, for whom the river represents some movement of the consciousness. The ocean is often a symbol of the spiritual consciousness in the higher Mind, one and indivisible. The sea can be the ordinary consciousness or higher consciousness, depending on the context, explains the yogi, who affirms the close relation of water with life in general (LY 969).

From the period of the early vedas water has been considered as a tangible manifestation of the divine essence "In the beginning, everything was like a sea without a light," declares an ancient hymn in Rigveda; and to this day, one of the most common and simple objects of worship in the daily ritual is a jar or pitcher filled with water, representing the presence of the divinity, and serving in the place of a sacred image. The water is conceived, for the period of the worship, as a residence or seat of the god.

Waters are regarded as a primary materialisation of the Life-Force. They are the life-maintaining element that circulates through nature in the forms of ocean, sea, river, sap, milk and blood. They are the substance endowed with the power of fluidal change. Therefore, in the symbolism of the myths, to dive into water means to delve into the mystery of Maya, to quest after the ultimate secret of life. Thus water is the element of initiation.

Boundless and imperishable, the cosmic waters are at once the immaculate source of all things and the dreadful grave. Through a power of self-transformation, the energy of the abyss puts forth, or assumes individualised forms endowed

with temporary life and limited ego-consciousness. For a time, it nourishes and sustains them with a vivifying sap. Then it dissolves them again, without mercy or distinction, back into the anonymous energy out of which they arose. That is the work, the character of the all-consuming universal womb. The Energy manifesting as creation is "Parabrahman," says the poet.

He is not anything, yet all is He;

He is not all but far exceeds that scope.

Both Time and Timelessness sink in that sea:

Time is a wave and Space a wandering drop. (CP 62)

The "Saguna" and "Nirguna" aspect of the Parabrahman are hinted at, "He is not anything, yet all is He". He is limitless, boundless like the "Sea", in which Time and Timelessness "Sink". Time is only a "wave", a movement in the sea, whereas "space" is just a "wandering drop." Man, the transitional being awaiting transformation, is yet another drop in the vast sea of Brahman. He is limited by Time and Space, yet he is aware of the "brooding sun", that is also the sea containing "Time" and "Timelessness." "The Dual Being," The Godhead, is portrayed thus:

Tranquil and boundless like a sea or sky,

The Godhead knows himself Eternity's son. (152)

In the presence of the Eternity's son, who is "tranquil" and "boundless" like a sea or sky:

All turns from a wideness and unbroken peace

To a tumult of joy in a sea of wide release. (151)

Says the seer, in the sonnet "The Word of the Silence." The Godhead is like a sea, and the Sadhak turns to a "sea of wide release" by the grace of the Godhead. "The sea of wide release" is "the sea of bliss" into which Time and Timelessness sink. The Sea is the Image of Godhead and Life alike. Souls at various levels of consciousness are the seas of life, wandering drops, craving to be one with the vast sea of bliss, the Godhead. It is the destination of the "hurrying rivers", souls striving to lift their consciousness to become a drop of the vast sea. The Poet addresses "The River,"

Wild river in thy cataract far-murmured and rash rapids

to sea hastening, (560)

"The River" is "hastening" to the sea leaving behind its birthplace amidst mountains and valleys where "green orchards with fruit leaning stood imaged in its waves."

Vast now in a wide press and a dense hurry
 and mass movement of thronged waters
 Loud-thundering, fast-galloping, might, speed is
 the stern message of thy spirit,
 Proud violence, stark claim and the dire cry
 of the heart's hunger on God's barriers
 Self-hurled, and a void lust of unknown distance,
 and pace reckless and free grandeur. (560)

The mass movement of thronged waters give out a stern message of speed and might. In "wide press" and "dense hurry", "self-hurled" with a lust of unknown distance, the soul cries out at "God's barriers," in its hurry to reach the Eternal Source. The urgency of the wilful soul is brought to light in a language forceful and powerful. It has the "free grandeur" of the soul moving in "free grandeur", free from the "brain's prison-camp". The reckless pace takes him to the sea of bliss where:

Calm yet shall release thee; an immense
 peace and a large streaming of white silence, (560)

He can share the peace with his fellow being. Life on Earth, its toils and moils no more affect him, yet he is a part of all,

raising it to heavenly bliss or rather bringing heaven to earth. "Calm," "peace" and "white silence" carries one on imperatively to what it qualifies. The developing disclosure of the one divine entity is established by means of the epithets. An ever present sense of the "Inconscience" in which everything is occurring is kept constantly before the view of the reader.

Long thou wilt befriend, human delight
 help with the waves' coolness, with ship's furrows
 Thrill, -- last become, self losing, a sea-motion
 and joy boundless and blue laughter. (560)

Each phrase gives a feature of the Ineffable proper to its place and context. It is the entrance of the "lonely splendour" into an otherwise inconscient, obstructing and unreceptive world. The inconscience loses itself in a "sea-motion", "Boundless joy" is his share in the noble venture. The Sadhak is the herald of deliverance from Inconscience. He becomes one with the Omnipotent, as conceived by the poet in "Transiit, Non Perit"

As when a sacred river in its course
 Dives into ocean, there its strength abides
 Not less because with vastness wed and works
 Unnoticed in the grandeur of the tides. (CP 123)

The wandering drop, the sacred river, is the pure soul delving into the mystery of creation to get to the bottom of Truth. The "free grandeur" of the hurrying river mingles with the "grandeur of the tides" since it is wedded to the "vastness" of the ocean. The individual consciousness merges with the universal and is above any demarcation, and says one with the yogi:

Now I have borne Thy presence and Thy light,
 Eternity assumes me and I am
 A vastness of tranquillity and flame,
 My heart a deep Atlantic of delight. (CP 141)

The Sadhak is transformed to a vastness of "tranquillity and flame". Peace and Fire is the dual aspect of the World-Force. Eternity "assumes" him and his heart is a deep ocean of delight. He states:

My mind is made a voiceless breadth of Thee,
 A lyre of muteness and a luminous sea; (141)

The silent grandeur of the ocean of delight is brought forth through the expressions, "voiceless breadth," "lyre of muteness"

and "luminous sea." The Sea of Light nourishes and nurtures the Tree of Life.

Earth shall be my work-chamber and my house,
 My garden of life to plant a seed divine.
 When all thy work in human Time is done,
 The mind of earth shall be a home of light,
 The life of earth a tree growing towards heaven,

(S XI.1.784)

The divine assurance given by the Eternal to Savitri, implies a new dawn on Earth, the work-chamber and house of the Godhead. It is the garden of life where a divine seed is planted. "The home of light," "the mind of earth," gives rise to the "tree of life." The divine seed sprouts and gives rise to the Tree which is sure to be divine. It is the responsibility of the "Tree" to maintain its divinity. The "Tree" is also the soul of men. Both the Tree of Life and Tree of Soul are nurtured by the sea of light. The Poet portrays "A Tree" thus:

A tree beside the sandy river-beach
 Holds up its top most boughs
 Like fingers towards the skies they cannot reach,
 Earth-bound, heaven-amorous.

This is the soul of man. Body and brain

Hungry for earth our heavenly flight detain. (CP 47)

The tree with boughs turned up towards the skies is "the soul of man" longing to reach heavens. But his "flight" is detained by his hunger for earth. The worldly desires hold him back. The "divine seed" planted in the garden of life is much obliged to the heavens. He has to bring down the "Heavens-Fire" to the "Sandy river-beach", the Earth. This Divine mission can be carried out aided by Divine Grace, the Brahman.

In his upanishadic citations in Life Divine, Sri Aurobindo says:

"This is the eternal Tree with its root above and its branches downward; this is Brahman, this is the Immortal; in it are lodged all the worlds and none goes beyond it. This and That are one" (The Life Divine 765).

The Brahman is the Tree with its root above and branches downward, the soul of man is the Tree with its root deeply rooted on earth and branches pointing upward. The Brahman and the soul of man is one and the same. "This and That are one." The roots of the manifested Brahman are in the Heavens, but they have a firm hold on earth too, to bring heaven to the cave of man. The two trees taken together form

the world of vision of the Yogi-Poet who speaks of two triangles, the Sat-Chid-Ananda pointing down, and Matter-Life-Mind pointing up. Their intersection is symbolic of the Divine Supramental Manifestation. The soul of man is groomed by the evolving consciousness, the waters, the Seas of Light. The soul thus evolved to its pristine state can face any evil force typified by Tiger. The soul, the Deer, though gentle and meek to look at, is all powerful as it has evolved to the Ineffable. The poem "The Tiger and the Deer" gives voice to the intuitive visions and dreams of the Yogi-Poet about the future of humanity. It is remarkable not only for the vividness of description and the aptness of imagery, but also for the prophetic vision.

Brilliant, crouching, slouching, what crept
 through the green heart of the forest,
 Gleaming eyes and mighty chest and soft
 soundless paws of grandeur and murder. (CP 569)

The "soft soundless paws of grandeur and murder," the tiger, represents the brutal power of nature. The sight and insight have parallels in Blake's "fearful symmetry" "burning bright" in the "forests of the night." The "Songs of Experience" of William Blake, present "The Tyger" as a symbol of power, not

The evil forces are sure to be curbed by wilful souls, endowed with power within and without.

. . . then shall the beautiful wild deer drink from the
coolness of great pools in the leaves' shadow. (569)

The cool, pleasant atmosphere during the reign of the Immanent is beautifully presented. The "Coolness of great pools" appeals to the senses. Once the brutal forces retreat, the beauty and bliss reigns supreme and then:

The mighty perish in their might;
The slain survive the slayer. (569)

The "slayers" tend to be short lived since they are bound to "perish in their might." The meek will inherit the world as prophesied by Jesus in the "Sermon on the Mount." Sri Aurobindo inspires mankind "to strive, to seek, to find and not to yield" (the concluding lines in Tennyson's Ulysses). The resplendent picture of the morrow conjured up by the Seer compels even the meekest to take stock of his position, and struggle to realise the prophetic vision.

When he succeeds in over powering the evil, brutal forces within and without he says, as maintained by the poet in the short poem "In the Moonlight":

The wine of life is sweet; let no man stint

His longing or refuse one passionate hope. (CP 58)

The bounty of Nature bestows hopes and longings on the beings. They are free to enjoy the abundance and relish the sweet wine of life as seen in "Silence is all."

I am drunk with the wine as I sit at Wisdom's portal,

Waiting for the Light beyond thought and the

Word immortal. (107)

The sadhak enjoying the "wine of life" is drunk with the "wine of Thought" as he sits at the portals of wisdom.

Thought is the wine of the soul and the word

is the beaker; (107)

"Thought" the "wine" is there in "word" the beaker. The soul drunk with the "wine of thought" is waiting for the "light" that is "beyond thought" and the "immortal word." That light, from the world of silence pregnant with meaning, convey hitherto unrealised truths, experiences. It is beyond thought and word. The eager waiting is not without a reward. The soul experiences a "Transformation," as portrayed by the Rishi.

My breath runs in a subtle rhythmic stream;

It fills my members with a might divine;

I have drunk the Infinite like a giant's wine. (133)

The Sadhak enjoying the Bliss of Identity is like the giant drinking wine. It consumes the drink in plenty with relish, without wasting a single drop. Likewise, the aspirant engulfs the Infinite, and gets totally "drunk". This ecstasy state, free from all chains, the "wide sea release" enjoyed by the soul is pictured most powerfully. The veil is rent for good and "ocean oneness", flows into him. He glories in the unusual experience, voiced in "Life-Unity":

I housed within my heart the life of things,

All hearts athrob in the world I felt as mine;

I shared the joy that in creation sings

And drank its sorrow like a poignant wine. (146)

The soul "houses" the life of things within his heart. The "Life-Unity" quivers within, enrapturing him. He feels one with the whole creation. It's joy is his, the sorrow, too. He drinks "its sorrow like a poignant wine." He accepts sorrow not with regret or by any compulsion. He consumes it as an intense, piercing "wine". Both Joy and Sorrow are accorded a warm

welcome, since he is able to perceive life in toto, with all its "hills" and "valleys". Discrimination is alien to one who knows the realities, the Truth, of the all in one and the one in all-- "Ekam Sat."

All eyes that look on me are my sole eyes;

The one heart that beats within all breasts is mine.

The world's happiness flows through me like wine,

Its million sorrows are my agonies. (CP 142)

"The Indwelling Universal" reveals itself. The Enlightened Sadhak discerns the manifested world. The Divine Manifestation promptly delivers its presence in the created world. "The one heart that beats within all breast is mine."

The light that lights all, the world of creation with all its happiness and sorrow, is part of the Infinite. The Involved Spirit cherishes the happiness of the world like wine. It, in fact, "flows" through him. He feels miserable at the world's million sorrows. The agony of the "universal" at the sorrow is limitless since there are "millions" of them. The "Indwelling universal", the involved spirit, has no escape from the sorrows and happiness, the hurdles offered by Time and Space, as they are

the grounds for the spirit to evolve to its pristine state of "Lustre". The "sun in darkness" that identifies itself with the Sun of Heavens exclaims, enjoying the "Bliss of Identity" revealed by the Yogi-Poet.

It is Thy rapture flaming through my nerves

And all my cells and atoms thrill with Thee;

My body Thy vessel is and only serves

As a living wine-cup of Thy ecstasy. (CP 142)

"Nerves," "cells" and "atoms," even the minutest part of the body thrill with the "flaming" divine "rapture". No part is set apart from the "thrill". The sadhak's surrender before the universal within and without is complete, when he asserts "My body is Thy vessel." He is only an instrument through which the Infinite has its play. A wilful, total surrender is an essential pre-requisite for evolution of consciousness through the integral yoga of the Maharishi. The soul becomes a "living wine cup of Thy ecstasy"; the wine cup that holds the ecstasy of the Infinite is very much alive. It is always "living", existing, active, throbbing with life, for it is the wine-cup that bubbles with the wine of Immortal ecstasy. This wine is Infinite and everything related to it. It is life, thought, happiness, sorrow and the ecstasy of the Godhead.

The "Sun in darkness", man, is a "Pilgrim of Night." He journeys to the "Sun on the head of the Timeless" transforming himself into the "Pilgrim of the everlasting Truth." "The Sun of knowledge" is invoked to stamp his radiance in the "Man's cave of births." The brooding sun, living sun and undying suns represent the ageless, deathless, nameless, bodiless Parabrahman. The sun of bliss, the sun of light initiates the souls ascent and prompts the divine descent. Though he is "the invalid cheque", man carries the seed of divinity within him. The Sun of Truth dawns on him giving rise to the Moon of spiritual Ananda, when he--the river--flows through the Seas of Life and reaches his destination, his erstwhile abode, the Ocean of Divinities. Then the "wandering drop" merges with the plenitude, "As one drowned in a sea of Splendour and Bliss," (S XI.1.761) and gets transformed to the much awaited, much cherished Supermanhood, the next evolute, the next rung in the ladder of evolution, that establishes once and for all the Life Divine on Earth. "Rajaswa Deiva Samrajya Prathishtaye dharathate" (Shastri n.pag). He is the "Tree" with its roots dug deep in the Mire, nourished and

nurtured by the waters of life, and branches spreading out above to the Sun of Truth. Eternal Truth descends into the aspiring soul and reigns Supreme on the "Mire," resulting in the creation of heaven on the terrestrial globe. The waters, be it river, sea, ocean or rain, nourishes the tree, the sap of which rushes forth in search of the life force, the Divinity within, to unite with the "One" without. In its struggle to meet its end, Titanic forces, the tiger, place on the way stumbling blocks to be fought against by the mute "deer" within. Though calm, the Deer is a powerful being, instigated by the All powerful, Omnipotent, as it is the aspiring soul "single pointed" to reach its goal. The so called symbol of strength, the Tiger, falters at the defence offered by the meek being, and succumbs to its fate. He lies prostrate before the ardent seeker of Truth. Then the Sadhak drinks the wine of ecstasy, rather he becomes the wine cup of "his" ecstasy.

The images that reverberate with the poetic vision are innumerable and stamp marks on the creative mind to relive the thoughts as they are symbols of the yogic vision.

Thus it can be seen that, in all the poetic works of SriAurobindo, particularly the later ones culminating in the magnum opus "Savitri", it is the adventure of the consciousness, of the evolving soul, guided by "Thought the Paraclete" that forms the central theme. This pilgrimage is described in a series of superb soul-elevating images that inspire, and draw the seeking soul to collaborate in the divine game of absolute self-fulfillment and total transformation of Man into the "Hiranmaya Purusha" of our sacred texts, whose "Spirit" is "like a sea of living fire" (S VII.1.534)

CONCLUSION

The attempt here has been to analyse the various images in the poems of Sri Aurobindo for their beauty, appeal and significance in the context of their spiritual content. An aesthetic appreciation is the sine qua non in any consideration of poetic figures. But much of this is dependent on the intellectual content inherent in them. That is what gives Sri Aurobindo's poems their characteristic quality.

However, a quest for the intellectual element in poetry should not be unmindful of its inherent, artistic qualities. A balance has to be struck between the two, for a true holistic appreciation of the poetry, which expresses through its revelatory images, the vision of the poet. It is in this perspective that the present thesis analyses the Aurobindonian symbols. Some of them, such as the bridge of fire and the lotus inside the intersecting triangles are more abstract mental structures appealing mainly to reason. The images belonging to the category of Agni are not only physical but also of great tantric and mantric significance. Agni is Brahman, the traveller, the messenger, Truth, Beauty, Love, Knowledge, Ananda, Life

and Death. It is the living soul throbbing with life, enjoying the Bliss of Brahman. At the same time it is the Death of "death", so that life may reign; Death of Ignorance, so that Truth may establish it's kingdom in every individual and "Truth Consciousness" may direct the soul to lead a Divine Life here on earth. It is the life giving force behind creation. Agni is the immortal in man.

Images such as Agni will yield their secrets only to meditative minds. In Sanskrit an insightful reader is called a "Sahrudaya." In other words, the heart of the reader is similar to that of the writer, and an instant rapport between them can be established. As meditation is the proper mind set of a Rishi, in the case of Sri Aurobindo, his reader cannot but be meditative. That does not mean that he should ignore the physical qualities of Agni like its heat, ascending nature, colour etc. They also are worth meditating upon. They are also a part of its spirituality. That is how Sri Aurobindo's poems assume the qualities of a "mantra."

The chapter on flowers lingers on a variety of sensuous appeals of those beautiful objects before passing beyond these effects. The eye is allowed to rest on their colours and the

nose on their fragrance. Regarding the spiritual qualities attributed to the scents and colours of flowers, there could be differences of opinion, as there are no objective criteria applicable in this case. Deep red has been associated with Divine Love, while purple has been made to stand for the vital force, and crimson for the physical. Violet is called the colour of benevolence or compassion, and orange that of occult knowledge and experience. It has been stated that the thinking mind is shaded by yellow, and psychic purity is brought to light by white. In making these associations, I have mainly followed the instructions of the Mother and of Sri Aurobindo himself.

The images in the poem called "A Dream of Surreal Science" have an obvious modern touch as they deal with many wrong parallels drawn by certain pseudo scientists, one such parallel being the claim that a man is a product of the Chemistry of his make up. Images of this nature are in plenty in the poems included in the collection under scrutiny. A broader survey of such images is found in the introduction to the study of Savitri by A.B. Purani. Sri Purani quotes from Sethna thus:

Sri Aurobindo outdoes the ancient scriptures in the aspiration to suffuse and transform earth's life with

the golden Immortal the Rishis saw everywhere passing for manifestation. And in his care to get the acting externals into harmony by some power from within, his concern about the poor unfulfilled trivialities that are divorced from the deep springs of our consciousness, he outdoes also the modernism of Eliot no less than Jung. (Purani 115-16)

Connecting the external realities "with the deep springs of our consciousness" is what this thesis is all about. And that requires deep contemplation on all the reading materials available. Sri Aurobindo's intellectual stature as a man and a yogi who could absorb all the knowledge available at his time and upto his time, has in a way made the task of this nature challenging and more edifying, as it entails serious research in areas above the tangible and the perceptible. In the sonnet the "Indwelling Universal" he, for example, tries to contain the whole world in his soul's embrace saying that in him "Arcturus" and "Belphegor" burn. In the poem the "Discoveries of Science", he claims the occult mysteries of nature lie safe, protected from the crude handling of the empiric Mind. "Our truths discovered are but dust and trace of the eternal Energy in her race" (CP 138). If one has to understand Aswapathy's thrilling

experience in the Paradise of the Life Gods (S II.9.264), one has to have a basic knowledge of the quantum theory, "robot" and "atomic parcellings of the infinite". The possibilities consequent on the breaking up of the atom are hinted in the following lines of Savitri:

Alone a process of events was there
 And Nature's plastic and protean change
 And, strong by death to slay or to create,
 The riven invisible atom's omnipotent force.

(S II.10.289)

In pursuing the study of Sri Aurobindo in such contexts, I have reaped the findings and fruits of the vast exploratory work done by such great scholars as Sethna, M.P. Pandit, A.B. Purani. My gratitude is to all of them.

Sri Aurobindo's poetry portrays a cosmos of multiple worlds acting and reacting upon the growing consciousness of the earth. It moves towards planes of consciousness so far unattained by man, by pursuing a subtler spiritual light that is visible only to the inner vision. The future of man is redesigned and redefined in his poems. The rarefied and topmost summits of the MIND have been already reached by Man; but beyond that, says the Poet-Seer, there is a hitherto

undiscovered even unimagined higher creative principle which alone can release the supreme Truth to create the new world of the future. This is the destined goal for humanity--a new world, a new race of the Supramental. The Evolution of consciousness effected by Supermind, resulting in Supramental Manifestations, and the Integral Yoga, the means to reach the end, is convincingly depicted in his poems. The yogic climb in "Savitri" and other poems has its roots in the Integral Yoga, where the soul's ascent is initiated and accelerated by Divine descent. The aim of his Yoga is an inner self-development by which each one who follows it can, in time, discover the One Self in all and evolve a higher consciousness than the mental which will divinise human nature giving rise to the new race of the Supramental. Sri Aurobindo sings of this glory in the distance, his poetry being the medium to convey his supreme discovery. His songs therefore become:

The odds that shape the universal thought,
 The lines that tear the veil from Deity's face,
 The rhythms that bring the sounds of wisdom's sea.

(XI.1.760)

WORKS CITED

- Aurobindo, Sri. Collected Poems. 5th ed. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1994.
- . Integral Yoga. ed. Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Society, 1993. 230.
- . Letters on Yoga. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1995. 356-969.
- . On Himself. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1972. 64-265.
- . Savitri. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1954.
- . Synthesis of Yoga. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1948. 120-187.
- . The Future Poetry. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1973. 33-36.
- . The Life Divine. 12th ed. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1997. 765.
- . The Mother. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1953. 35.
- . The Riddle of the World. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1933. 201.
- . The Secret of the Veda. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1987. 95.

Blavatsky, H.P. The Secret Doctrine: The Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy. Vol.1. Cosmogogenesis. Madras: Theosophical Society, 1888. 380.

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. Rime of the Ancient Mariner - Library of World Poetry. Int; William Culler Bryant. New York: Avenal Books, 1870. 645.

Diwakar, R.R. Mahayogi. Bombay: Bharathiya Vidya Bhavan, 1988. 202.

Dwivedi, A.N. Sri Aurobindo. Bareilly: Prakash Book Depot, 1984. 50-69.

Dutt, Toru. The Golden Treasury of Indo-Anglian Poetry 1828-1965. ed. V.K.Gokak. New Delhi: Sahitya Academy, 1978. 35.

Keats, John. Ode on a Grecian Urn. Library of World Poetry. Int; William Culler Bryant. New York: Avenal Books, 1870. 634.

Light for Students. ed. Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Society, 1978. 8.

Prasad, S.K. The Literary Criticism of Sri Aurobindo. Patna: Bharati Bhawan, 1974. 334.

Purani, A.B. Sri Aurobindo's 'Savitri' - An Approach and a Study. 3rd ed. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1986. 115-16.

Satprem, Sri Aurobindo or The Adventure of Consciousness,

Trans. Luc Venet. New York: Institute for Evolutionary
Research, 1984. 130.

Scott, Wilbur. Five Approaches of Literary Criticism. 4th ed.

New York: Collier Books, 1968. 26.

Sethna, K.D. Sri Aurobindo - The Poet. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo

International Centre of Education, 1970. 353-367.

Shastri, Sri Kapali. Prayers. ed. Sri M.P. Pandit. Pondicherry:

Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1956. N.pag.

The Mother, Auroville Charter, 1968. N.pag.

Towards Tomorrow - An Introductory Booklet, Pondicherry:

Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1996. 17.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aurobindo, Sri. Complete Works. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1972.
- . Social and Political Thought. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1970.
- . The Supramental Manifestations upon Earth. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1950.
- . The Hour of God. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1993.
- . Essays, Divine and Human with Thoughts and Aphorisms. 2nd ed. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1996.
- . Evolution. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1994.
- . Hymns to the Mystic Fire. 4th ed. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1991.
- . The Message of the Gita. ed. Anil Baran Roy. 5th ed. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1993.
- Aspiration. ed. Vijay. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 2000.
- Baliga, R.R. The Very Signature of God. Mangalore: Sharada Press, 1977.
- Balea, Bangali. The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali. Delhi: Motilal Banarasi, 1982.

- Baran, Nirod. Twelve years with Sri Aurobindo. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1988.
- Bhagawan. A Peep into Spirituality. Ahmednagar: Sri Tarame Foundation, 1970.
- Bhattathiri, Narayana, V.K. Vethantha Vicharam. Calicut: Mathrubhoomi Printing & Publishing Co. Ltd., 1984.
- . Veda Swarupam. Calicut: V.K. Narayana Bhattathiri Smaraka Trust, n.d.
- . Vedasandesham. Thrissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, 1993.
- Bhooshan, Acharya Narendra. Vedic Literature. Chengannur: Vaidic Sahitya Parishad, 1961.
- Boulton, Marjoria. The Anatomy of Language - Saying what we mean. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Bradley, Preston. Meditations and My Daily Strength. New York: Prema Books, 14 West 49th Street.
- Brunton, Paul. A Search in Secret India. London: Reder and Company, 1964.
- Chadwick, Charles. Symbolism - The Critical Idiom. London: Mathew, 1971.

Contemporary Criticism - An anthology. Edited by V.S.

Sethuraman, New Delhi: Macmillan India Ltd., 1989.

Contemporary Relevance of Sri Aurobindo. ed. Kishore Gandhi,

Delhi: Vivek Publishing House.

Coombes, H. Literature and Criticism. Jaipur: Raj Book

Enterprises.

Danino, Michal. The Gita and Integral Yoga. International

Seminar on Bhagavad Gita and Modern Problems.

Thiruvananthapuram: Abstract 2000.

Dwivedi, A.N. Indian Writers Series. Vol. XV. Toru Dutt. New

Delhi: Arnold Heinemann, 1977.

Gokak, V.K. Sri Aurobindo Seer and Poet. New Delhi: Abhinav

Publications.

---. An Integral View of Poetry - An Indian Perspective. New

Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1975.

Gupta, Nolini Kanta. Poets and Mystics. Madras: Sri Aurobindo

Library, 1951.

---. Words of the Mother. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1912.

Gurukulam. Varkala: Narayana Gurukulam, Vol. XVI. 2000.

- Hariswamikal, Acharyan. Sanathana Pratheekangal. Analytical Research. Mannar: Sri Brahma Vidya Gurukulam, 2001.
- Hawthorne, Jeremy. Studying the Novel - An Introduction. New Delhi: Universal Book Stall, 1991.
- Health and Healing in Yoga. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram.
- Heels, Peter. Sri Aurobindo - A Brief Biography. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Joshi, Kireet. The Veda and Indian Culture. Delhi : Motilal Banarsidas, 2003.
- Kermode, Frank. Romantic Image. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966.
- Krishnan Namboodiri, K.N. Vedantharangam. Thrissur: Krishnan Namboodiri, 1999.
- Kumar Sing, Amar. Enlightening Studies in Indian English Poetry. Manak Publications, 1993.
- Lewis, C. Day. The Poetic Image. London: Jonathen Cape, 1968.
- Mody, Rajanikanta. Poetic Imagery in Savitri. Deshpande: Perspective Vol.I.

- Nalbantian, Suzanne. The Symbol of the Soul from Holderlin to Yeats: A Study in Metonymy. London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1977.
- Nataraja Guru. The Search for a Norm in Western Thought. Varkala: Narayana Gurukula, 1986.
- Pandit , M.P. Where the Wings of Glory Brood. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1961.
- Paxson, Ruth. Called Unto Holiness. Chicago: Moody Press, 1982.
- Prabhu Pada. The Journey of Self Discovery. Bombay: The Bhakti Vedananta Book Trust, 1991.
- Protebnaya, Alexander. Notes on the Theory of Language. Khakov, np, 1905.
- Radhakrishnan S. Indian Philosophy. Vol. I Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1940.
- Rele, G. Vasant. The Mysteries Kundalini. Bombay: D.B.Taraporevale Sons and Co., Horaby Road, 1927.
- Sarma D.S. Hinduism through the ages. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bharan, 1973.

- Satprem. The Veda and Human Destiny. Mysore: Mira Aditi, 1996.
- . The Tragedy of Earth. From Sophocles to Sri Aurobindo.
Trans. Michel Danimo. Mysore: Mira Aditi. 1998.
- . The Mind of the Cells. Mysore: Mira Aditi, 2002.
- Shklovsky. Art as Technique. Trans. Lee T. Lemon and Marion.
J. Reis, n.p. 1965.
- Singh, R. K. Emily Dickinson and Sri Aurobindo: An Overhead
Confluence of Love, Life and Death. Littcrit 9.2, 1983.
- Sreekantaiye, T.N. Imagination - In Indian Poetics and Other
Literary Studies. Mysore: Geetha Book House, 1980.
- Srikant. Alphabet of Reality - 2 Soorya. Payyannur: Integral
Books, 1996
- Swami Chinmayananda. The Holy Geeta. Mumbai: Central
Chinmaya Mission Trust, 2002.
- . Sri Sankaracharya: Bhajagovindam. Bombay: Central
Chinmaya Mission Trust, 1991.
- . Meditations and Life. Bombay: Central Chinmaya Mission
Trust, 1982.
- . Discourses on Mandukya Upanished. Delhi: Delhi Yogva
Committee, 4 Kashmere Gate, 1953.

Swami Gambhirananda. The Apostles of Sri Rama Krishna.

Delhi: Advaita Ashram, 1983.

Swami Nityananda. Symbolism in Hinduism. Mumbai: Central

Chinmaya Mission Trust, 2003.

Swami Thapasyananda. The Philosophical and Religious Lectures

of Swami Vivekananda. Kolkata: Adwaitashrama, 2001.

Swami Thejomayananda. Satyam Sivam Sundaram. Mumbai:

Central Chinmaya Mission Trust, 2001.

---. Major Poetical Upanishads. Kerala: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1989.

Truth Cures. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

The Vision. Dedicated to Universal Love and Service,

Anandashram, P.O. Kanhangad, S. India.

Varghese, Paul C. Essays on Indian Writing in English. New

Delhi: N.V.Publications, 1975.

Vethathiri Maharshi. Yoga for Modern Age. Tamil Nadu:

Vethathiri Publications, 1989.

---. Journey of Consciousness. ed. Thomas Fitzgerald. New

Delhi: Macmillan India Ltd., 1992.

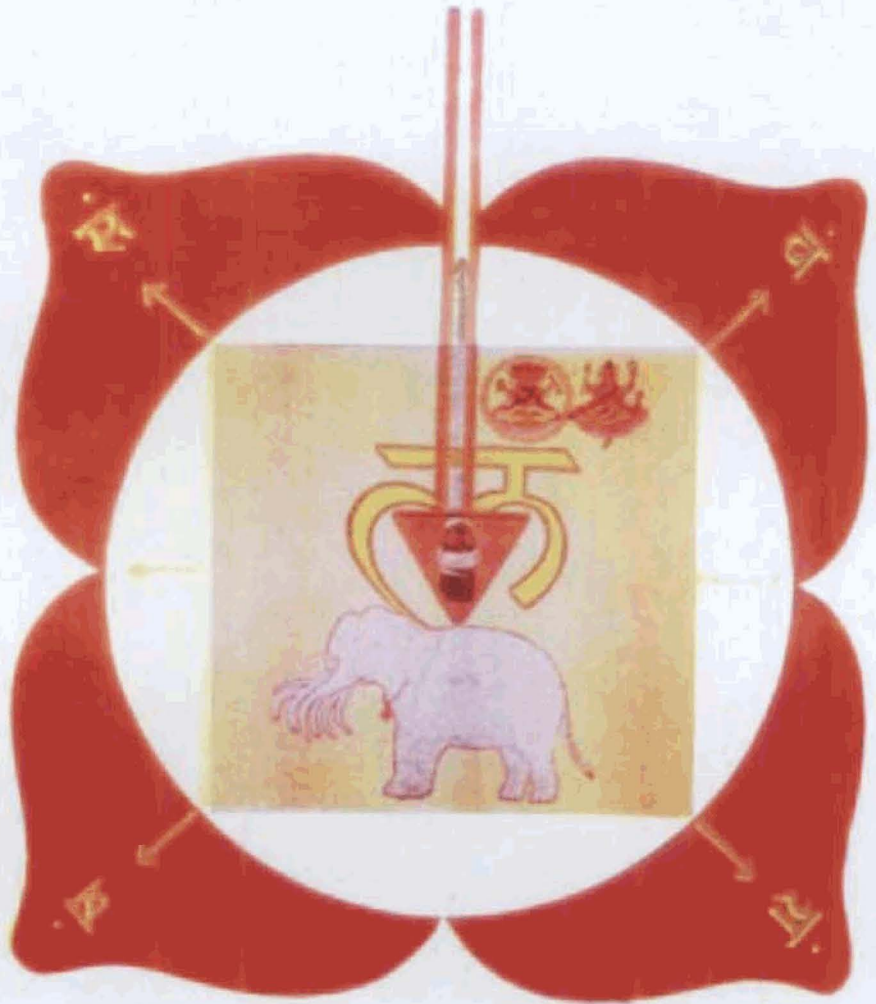
Vijayan, S. Paduka Pancheka. Calicut: Arjun Publications, 1993.

- Woodroffe, Sir John. The Serpent Power. Madras: Ganesh and Company, 1997.
- Yati, Nitya Chaitanya. Psycho dynamics of Pranava. Fernhill: Nitya Books, 1997.
- . Sri Narayana Guru. Ernakulam: Kairali Publications, 2005.
- Yeats, W. B. The Symbolism of Poetry. Essays and Introduction. London: Macmillan, 1961.
- Yogananda, Paramahansa. Autobiography of a Yogi. Bombay: Jaico Publishing House, 1990.
- . The Divine Romance. New Delhi: Oxford and IBH Publishing Company Pvt. Ltd., 1992.

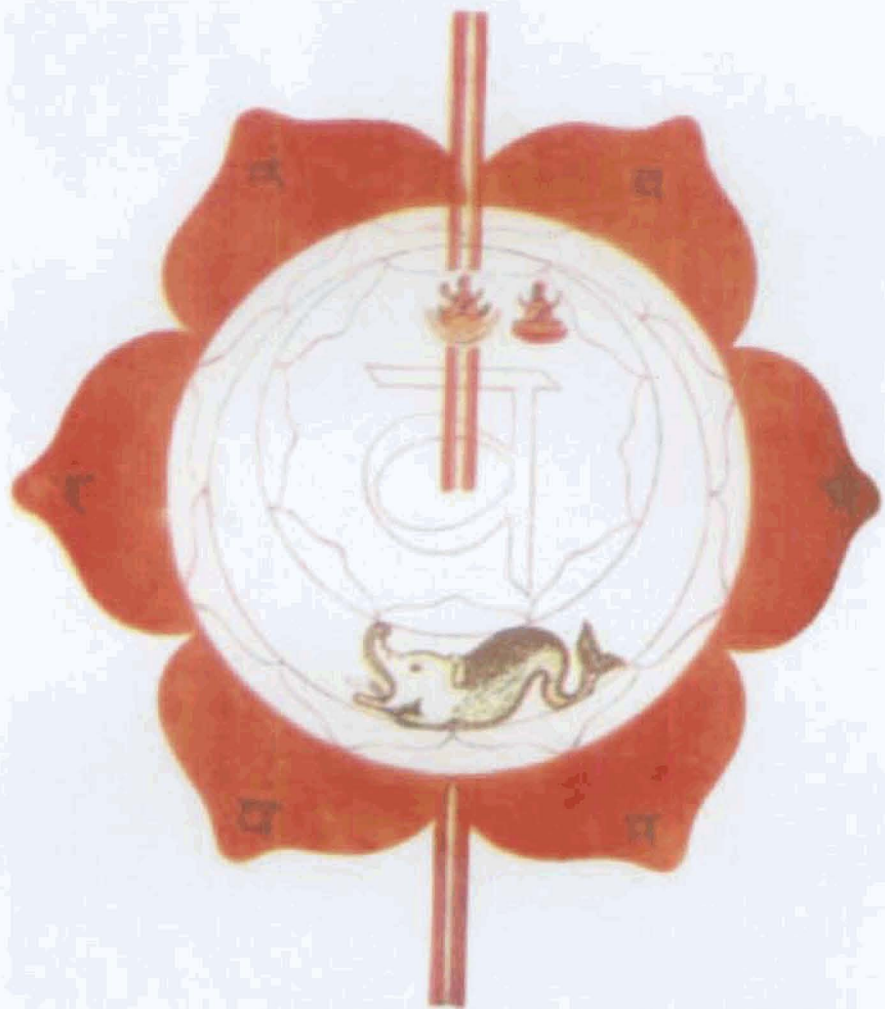


NB 4949

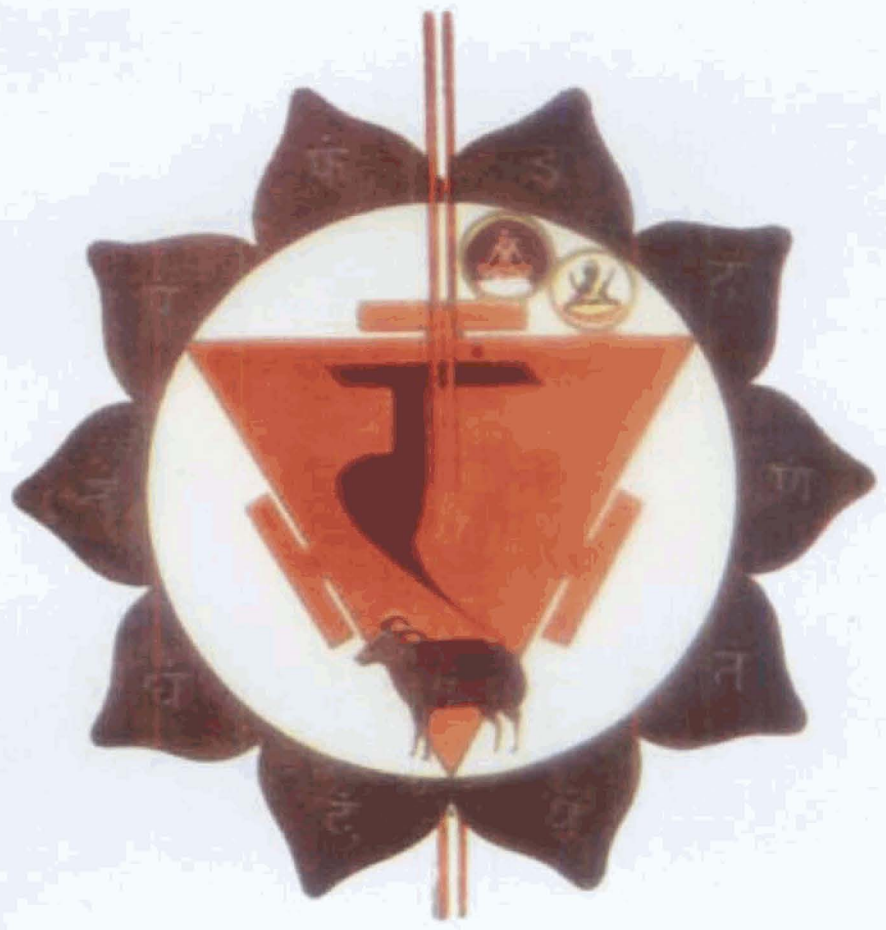
2. Muladhara-Chakra



3. Svadhishthna



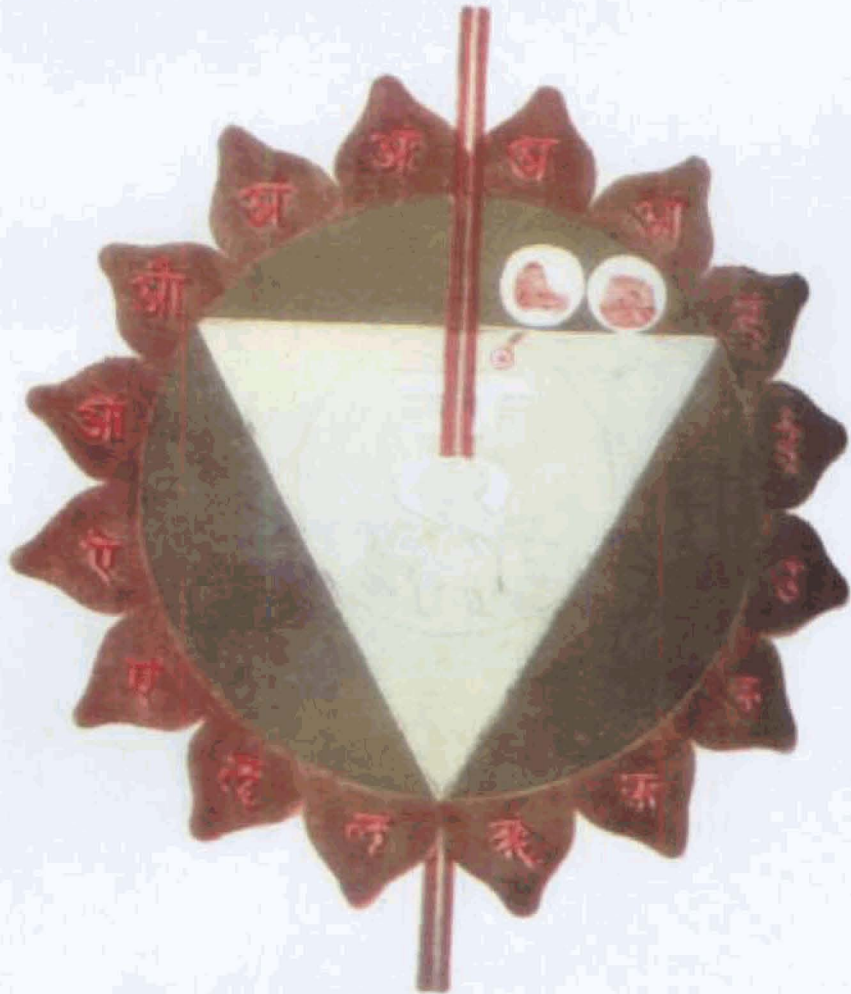
4. Manipura



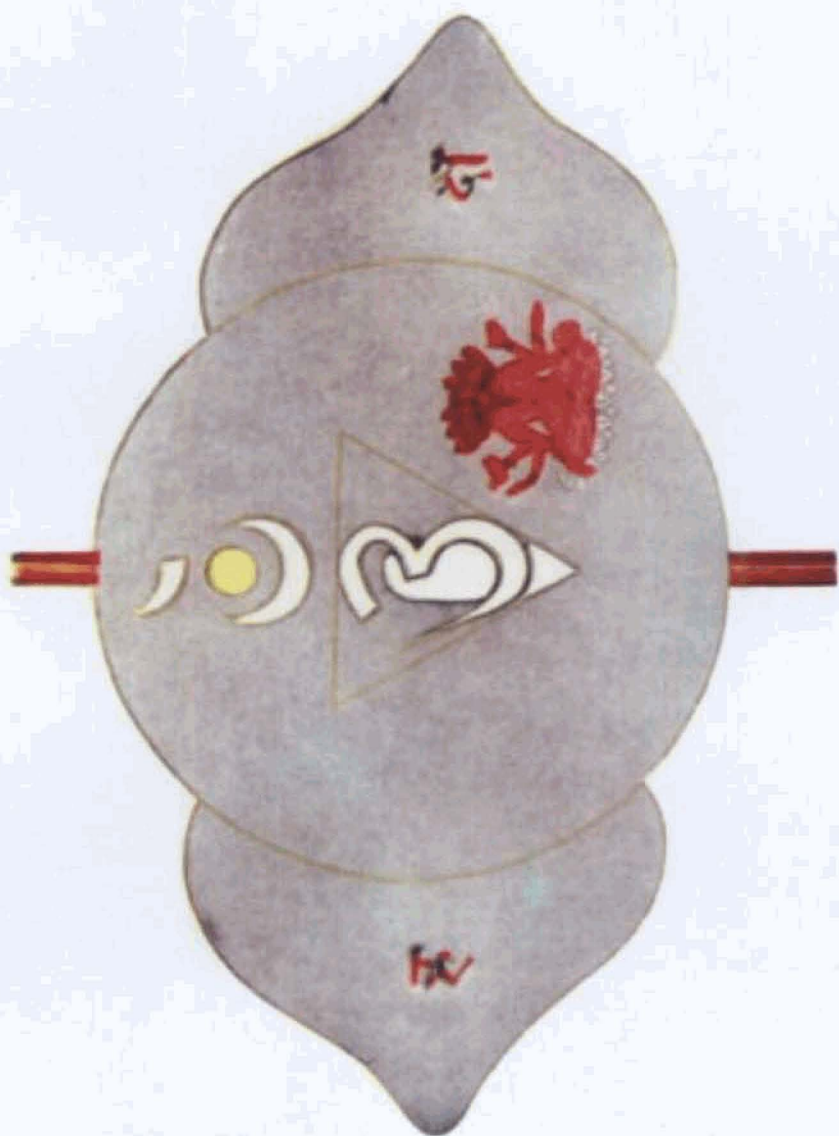
5. Anahata



6. Visuddha



7. Ajnya



8. Sahasrara-Padma

