

Reflection of Supermind in Sri Aurobindo's Savitri

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Abstract: *Sri Aurobindo, one of the most dynamic and prominent voices of Indian renaissance, speaks of evolution of mind. He speaks of Supermind as evolved state of mind. Savitri is his epic poem in which he describes evolution of mind to Supermind. Evolution is the main theme of or watchword in his Savitri. The awakening of the soul or raising life and existence to a higher level is a parallel theme observed in Savitri.*

Key words: Supermind, Consciousness, ignorance, Darkness, mortal, Divine,

The tragedy of man's life is that he does not become aware of his own self though he knows about the highest end of man's life. Most of the time, he is attached with the objects of the world and with his psycho-physical organism. Thus he is deprived of the real joy and bliss of life. He is unable to free his mind from desires and sense of possessions and keeps revolving in its circle and so the evolution towards the higher level of mind never takes place. Throughout his life he feels involve in the affairs of the world and does nothing to come out of this involvement and ultimately he dies as ignorant as ever. This ignorance is the cause of sorrows, pains and miseries of life.

Sri Aurobindo, one of the most dynamic and prominent voices of Indian renaissance, speaks of evolution of mind. He speaks of Super mind- the evolved state of mind when one becomes capable of distinguishing between eternal and mortal. Sri Aurobindo tried to illumine the life of people by removing the veil of worldly affairs in front of their eyes. Supermind is the supreme state of evolution when one becomes aware of his realself- the divine self. At this state one becomes aware of his divine origin. Supermind is the creative aspect of the Absolute. He explains Supermind in his book, 'The Life Divine' as:

"This all containing, all originating, all consummating Supermind is the divine being not indeed in its absolute self existence but in its action as the lord and creator of its own worlds. This is the truth of that which we call god."(p.122)

As proponent of the theory of Supermind, Sri Aurobindo affirms in The Life Divine as, "Mind is not sufficient to explain existence in the universe. Infinite consciousness must first translate itself into infinite faculty of knowledge or, as we call it from our point of view, omniscience." (p.148)

Sri Aurobindo speaks of some supramental knowledge which is capable of creation and that can comprehend the process of evolution, transcendence and supramental knowledge. Supermind provides a link between the absolute and the finite world. It is in between the pure being of sachidanand and analytical consciousness of mind. Supermind is much ahead of mind and is capable in defining things that are beyond mind. Evolution is the fulcrum of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy. He says that for evolution, first there is a descent of the divine into the unconscious matter. Then afterwards there is a gradual uplift in consciousness that comprise of levels like higher consciousness, illumined consciousness, intuition, over mental and finally supramental consciousness or the super mind stage. Sri Aurobindo explains the process of evolution in his book The Life Divine as- "*The divine descends from pure existence through the play of consciousness force and Bliss and the creative medium of super mind into cosmic being, matter ascends through a developing life, soul and mind and the illumination medium of super mind towards the divine being*"(The Life Divine p.243). At first, there is a descent of divinity and then from the world level it evolves to the supreme level Sri Aurobindo, through 'Savitri' shows the evolutionary stages with an intention that people should understand that the supreme is not beyond on the reach of human being, one can reach that stage through acquiring the consciousness after various levels of evolution.

Sri Aurobindo affirms in one of his letter on Savitritrithat, "the poem announces no metaphysical philosophy but only the description of a spiritual experience. Savitri is the presentation of his spiritual experience. The poem was originally written from a lower level, a mixture perhaps of the inner mind, psychic, poetic intelligence, sublimised vital, after-wards with the higher mind, often illumined and intervening"(Savitri,p.740). Savitri is the implication of his philosophy of evolution. Its

story has been taken from the Satyawana and Savitri episode of the VanaParva in the Mahabharata. The tale of Satyawana and Savitri is one of the many symbolic myths of the Vedic cycle. It is recited as a story of conjugal love conquering death. Satyawana 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 son, goddess of the supreme truth. She comes down and is born to save Ashwapathi, the lord of the horse and her human father, who is the lord of Tapasya also. Tapasya helps us to rise from the mortal planes to immortal planes. Dyumatsen is the father of Satyawana, he is the divine mind who has fallen blind. It implies losing of its celestial kingdom of vision, which results in the loss of its kingdom of glory. The whole story contains not mere characters but incarnations of living and conscious forces. They help us to enter into concrete forms and so they have taken human bodies. Thus they help man and show them the way how a man can evolve from the mortal state to a divine consciousness. Savitri is a divine incarnation descended upon the earth to illumine the life of people. Her birth was for the evolution of the mankind. Sri Aurobindo shows evolution through the poem. The poem Savitri starts with these lines:

"It was the hours before the gods awake . . .

A fathomless zero occupied the world.

*A power of fallen foundlessness
awake" (p.1)*

There was darkness of ignorance. The earth was covered with the cloud of unawareness and unconsciousness. But as there was emergence of divine mother on the earth, "*The darkness failed and slipped like a falling cloak*" (Savitri, p.3).

The divine light removes the darkness. For the maternal world it is not possible to change its earthly nature. The mortal creatures hardly accept any divine transformation as it disturbs their ignorant, and physically attached ways of life. The mortal men apply their earthly principles to the heavenly and divine things, which are the means of illumination to their soul and mind. Sri Aurobindo says "Hard is it to persuade earth's - nature's change," (Savitri, p.7). Great and divine souls that come to save and help the mankind have a painful history. They were firstly refused by people; their bright thoughts were hardly able to supersede the darkness and ignorance. They tried to give divinity to the world but in return they were given cross by the ignorant people, as Sri Aurobindo says,

*"A glory of lightings traversing
the earth-scene, Their sun-
thoughts fading, darkened by
ignorant minds, their works
betrayed, their good to evil
turned, the cross their payment
for the crown they gave, Only*

*they leave behind a splendid
name." (Savitri, p.7)*

Savitri was now a mortal being trapped in the worldly cycle of happiness, sufferings, and pains. Now she was not a divine being but a human. Conscious of her fate, she was waiting for the terrible ordeal. Sri Aurobindo writes it as: "Thus trapped in the gin of earthly destinies, awaiting her ordeal's hour abode" (Savitri, p.8). The divine mother in the form of Savitri was prepared to face the fatal fate of her husband with a great courage and a bravely.

Although she was living a life aloof of the world but she had established a communion with the nature and cosmos. "Apart living within, all lives she bore; aloof, she carried in herself the world:" (Savitri, p.8)

At the day of the ordeal she had a conflict going on in her mind, there was a great conflict going on in her mind as she was going to disturb the natural principle. She questions herself whether to accept the fate or to challenge it. "To wrestle with the shadow she had come. And must confront the riddle of man's birth. And life's brief struggle in dumb matter's night. whether to bear with ignorance and death or hew the ways of immortality." (Savitri, p.17)

Savitri was undergoing a very dilemmatic condition. As she was bound by the limitations of human life so she kept thinking that whether it was possible for her to break the limitations of human life and reach a higher and evolved state of consciousness. Then she felt the deity or the divine flame inside her. Now she had to go against the cosmic sequence of birth and death, which are inevitably linked together. By her own soul's power she had to go on to undo her past and shape her destiny. It is stated in this way by Sri Aurobindo. "The fixity of the cosmic sequences fastened with hidden inevitable links she must disrupt, dislodge by her soul's force her past, a block on the immortal's road, make a raised ground and shape anew her fate." (Savitri, p.12)

Nature is never permanent, it keeps on changing and in the evolution process towards the supreme truth, the conditions are also bound to change. Therefore for Savitri also this change was going to be true. Savitri has to break the barrier of death. By the power of her immense spiritual thoughts and strong will power she had to penetrate into the silence of the nothingness and void. These lines of 'Savitri' are speaking about the same: "Altered must be nature's harsh economy; Acquaintance she must win from her past is bond, An old account of suffering exhaust, strike out from time the soul's long compound debt . . . out of a timeless barrier she must break, penetrate with her thinking depths the voids monstrous hush;" (p.12-13)

"Her mind, a sea of white sincerity, passionate in flow, had not one turbid wave."(Savitri,p.15) It was very pure with a clean and clear rapidity. Sri Aurobindo suggests her mind to be a 'sea of white sincerity; such a mind can only read the divine messages and establish union with the supreme soul. Savitri was not born to suffer or to surrender in front of the earthly problems but to lead and show the path of release from the bondage of death to the mankind."But not to submit and suffer was she born to lead, to deliver was her glorious part" (Savitri, p.17). Savitri was not a puppet in the hands of time. She had a strong consciousness force and spiritual power within. She established a slow, strange and uneasy compromise with the nature and her limitless soul. Until the life process lacks divine consciousness, it is conspicuous in nature.

"A conscious frame was here, a self born force.

In this enigma of the dusk of god,
this slow and strange uneasy compromise
of limiting nature with a limitless soul."
(Savitri,p.18)

Any will of man which is born out of mind and not of knowledge has to follow the rules of materialistic world. Such will is far away from the real knowledge and is influenced by darkness and ignorance. As a seed of super human or divine born in Savitri, she refused to be bound by the earthly limits of narrow knowledge. Every one is a portion of that divine almighty and so was Savitri. She neither compromises with the evils all around her nor accepted any failure. A man without his inner light is like a brute mechanical force that is unaware of his divine consciousness and immense power inside him. Savitri had a realisation of this divine power which works behind everyone. As she had this realisation so the death was no more any dread to her. Now she was a full conscious divine fighter, who was equipped with her great spiritual power. And so being a conscious mind she was capable to make her husband alive.

Thus we find that the consciousness of divine origin establishes a communion with the supreme reality and can evolve an earthly soul to supermind. The awakening of the soul or raising life and existence to a higher level is a parallel theme observed in Savitri. Sri Aurobindo says that unless the veil of worldly affairs is removed one cannot rise to unite with the supreme soul.

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