

# *C O N T E N T S*

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She is the Force, the inevitable Word,  
The magnet of our difficult ascent,  
The Sun from which we kindle all our suns ...  
Alone her hands can change Time's dragon base.

*Savitri Book III, Canto II, p. 314*

# *SAVITRI : a legend and a symbol*

*Book One : The Book of Beginnings*

*Canto One : The Symbol Dawn*

Nowhere in *Savitri* is Sri Aurobindo's use of language more powerful, complex and original than in the first part of the first Canto of Book One. In this overture to the mighty symphony of his epic, he fuses multiple layers of meaning - literal, psychological, occult and spiritual - in a single flow of incomparable music.

In this issue we present some explanations, from different standpoints, that can assist towards a deeper understanding and appreciation of the opening passages of *Savitri*.

First come some extracts from Sri Aurobindo's letters referring to this part of his poem. These are followed by explanations which the Mother communicated to Huta. To round off this section comes an illuminating excerpt from a little-known essay by Amal Kiran (K.D. Sethna).

## *Some extracts from Sri Aurobindo's letters*

... Here the physical night and physical dawn are, as the title of the canto clearly suggests, a symbol, although what may be called a real symbol of an inner reality and the main purpose is to describe by suggestion the thing symbolised; here it is a relapse into Inconscience broken by a slow and difficult return of consciousness followed by a brief but splendid and prophetic outbreak of spiritual light leaving behind it the “day” of ordinary human consciousness in which the prophecy has to be worked out. The whole of *Savitri* is, according to the title of the poem, a legend that is a symbol and this opening canto is, it may be said, a key beginning and announcement. So understood there is nothing here otiose or unnecessary; all is needed to bring out by suggestion some aspect of the thing symbolised and so start adequately the working out of the significance of the whole poem.

(p.798-9)

...Rapid transitions from one image to another are a constant feature in *Savitri* as in most mystic poetry. I am not here building a long sustained single picture of the Dawn with a single continuous image or variations of the same image. I am describing a rapid series of transitions, piling one suggestion upon another. There is first a black quietude, then the persistent touch, then the first “beauty and wonder” leading to the magical gate and the “lucent corner”. Then comes the failing of the darkness, the simile used [“a falling cloak”] suggesting the rapidity of the change. Then as a result the change of what was once a rift into a wide luminous gap, - if you want to be logically consistent you can look at the rift as a slit in the “cloak” which becomes a big tear. Then all changes into a “brief perpetual sign”, the iridescence, then the blaze and the magnificent aura. ...

# Invocation

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... I am not writing a scientific treatise, I am selecting certain ideas and impressions to form a symbol of a partial and temporary darkness of the soul and Nature which seems to a temporary feeling of that which is caught in the Night as if it were universal and eternal. One who is lost in that Night does not think of the other half of the earth as full of light; to him all is Night and the earth a forsaken wanderer in an enduring darkness.

... In this poem I present constantly one partial view of life or another temporarily as if it were the whole in order to give full value to the experience of those who are bound by that view ....

... If I had to write for the general reader I could not have written *Savitri* at all. It is in fact for myself that I have written it and for those who can lend themselves to the subject-matter, images, technique of mystic poetry.

This is the real stumbling-block of mystic poetry and specially mystic poetry of this kind. The mystic feels real and present, even ever present to his experience, intimate to his being, truths which to the ordinary reader are intellectual abstractions or metaphysical speculations. He is writing of experiences that are foreign to the ordinary mentality. Either they are unintelligible to it and in meeting them it flounders about as if in an obscure abyss or it takes them as poetic fancies expressed in intellectually devised images. ...

... What is to be done in these circumstances? The mystical poet can only describe what he has felt, seen in himself or others or in the world just as he has felt or seen it or experienced through exact vision, close contact or identity and leave it to the general reader to understand or not understand or misunderstand according to his capacity. A new kind of poetry demands a new mentality in the recipient as well as in the writer. ...

(p.735-9)

\*

*As if solicited in an alien world  
With timid and hazardous instinctive grace,  
Orphaned and driven out to seek a home,*

*An errant marvel with no place to live,  
Into a far-off nook of heaven there came  
A slow miraculous gesture's dim appeal.*

You have made what seems to me a strange confusion as regards the passage about the “errant marvel” .... You took the word “solicited” as a past participle passive and this error seems to have remained fixed in your mind so as to distort the whole building and sense of the passage. The word “solicited” is the past tense and the subject of this verb is “an errant marvel” delayed to the fourth line by the parenthesis “Orphaned etc.” This kind of inversion, though longer than usual, is common enough in poetical style and the object is to throw a strong emphasis and prominence upon the line, “An errant marvel with no place to live.” That being explained, the rest about the gesture should be clear enough.

(p.751)

\*

*The wide-winged hymn of a great priestly wind  
Arose and failed upon the altar hills;  
The high boughs prayed in a revealing sky.*

The picture is that of a conscious adoration offered by Nature and in that each element is conscious in its own way, the wind and its hymns, the hills, the trees. The wind is the great priest of this sacrifice of worship, his voice rises in a conscious hymn of aspiration, the hills offer themselves with the feeling of being an altar of the worship, the trees lift their high boughs towards heaven as the worshippers, silent figures of prayer, and the light of the sky into which their boughs rise reveals the Beyond towards which all aspires. At any rate this “picture” or rather this part of the vision is a complete rendering of what I saw in the light of the inspiration and the experience that came to me. ... This last line is an expression of an experience which I often had whether in the mountains or on the plains of Gujarat or looking from my window in Pondicherry not only in the dawn but at other times ....

(p.795-6)

# Savitri

The supreme revelation of  
Sri Aurobindo's  
vision.



The Mother gave this message for "About Savitri" – her explanations of *Savitri*, illustrated by paintings done according to her instructions by Huta.



# About Savitri

On 26th December 1967 the Mother decided to explain *Savitri*. Once she had told a sadhak:

“*One day I hope to explain Savitri in its true sense.*”

Yes, indeed the Mother alone could explain it in its truest sense.

The work began on 18th January 1968, and the Mother gave the title *About Savitri* to it.

The Mother used to read out the passages, and then after a little meditation would give her comments, which Huta tape-recorded and later transcribed. This continued up to 9th August 1970, when the Mother had to suspend the work on account of her health. The last passage she commented on is halfway through Book One, Canto Four.

The Mother arranged for her explanations of Book One, Canto One to be published in book form in February 1972, accompanied by some paintings corresponding to each passage, which Huta had made according to her instructions and inspiration. That book has long been out of print, and the Mother's explanations of Cantos Two, Three and the first half of Canto Four have not yet been published. So we are deeply grateful to Huta for her permission to present this uniquely valuable material recorded by her, in serial form in our journal. Please note that for this work, the Mother made use of the first one-volume edition of *Savitri* which appeared in 1954.

# *About Savitri – Part One*

## *Book One : The Book of Beginnings*

### *Canto One : The Symbol Dawn*

*It was the hour before the Gods awake.*

There is an ancient tradition which describes the creation as done by some first emanations of the Supreme Mother, who were four emanations. In the sense and the feeling of their supreme power, they cut connection with their Origin and became independent. And then, these emanations, being separated from their Origin, entered into darkness.

The first one was Consciousness, Consciousness in Light, and by cutting Himself from His Origin, He went down and down towards Unconsciousness.

The second was Bliss and turned into Suffering.

The third was Truth and turned into Falsehood.

The fourth was Life and turned into Death.

This happened after they came down into the vital level. When this was seen, it was decided that some second emanations would be made to repair the mistake of the first; and the second emanations were the Gods.

This first line refers to the condition of the world before the Gods were born.

Sri Aurobindo says, “It was the hour before the Gods awake.”

\*

*Across the path of the divine Event  
The huge foreboding mind of Night, alone  
In her unlit temple of eternity,  
Lay stretched immobile upon Silence' marge.  
Almost one felt, opaque, impenetrable,  
In the sombre symbol of her eyeless muse*

*The abyss of the unbodied Infinite;  
A fathomless zero occupied the world.*

As the result of this separation between the first emanations and their Origin, the creation by these first emanations had become obscure, inconscient. And that is what Sri Aurobindo describes here. He says, “the divine Event”, that is creation, - the creation that will go on and on for eternity. It started with what he called the Night - the Night of a foreboding mind. It is unconscious, immobile, lifeless, blind. All these things - the obscurity and the unconsciousness, the immobility, the lifelessness, the unbodied Infinite, and a fathomless zero - all these words are meant to express the Nothingness of the world.

\*

*A power of fallen boundless self awake  
Between the first and the last Nothingness,  
Recalling the tenebrous womb from which it came,  
Turned from the insoluble mystery of birth  
And the tardy process of mortality  
And longed to reach its end in vacant Nought.*

Even in the darkest Unconsciousness, there was something like the remembrance of the Divine Origin, and it had an urge to wake up to existence.

But all the habit of the Inconscient was so strong that it had a natural tendency to go back to Nothingness. It is just what preceded the beginning of a conscious creation in the world.

We saw that this emanation of Light and Consciousness had separated from its Origin and had naturally fallen into Inconscience. The result was that the world created was the world of Unconsciousness - a world of Nothingness, of obscure Nothingness.

But in spite of everything the Divine Origin was inside this and had an urge to bring up again a world of Consciousness. And this is like the first attempt of waking up in the Nothingness by something that was a faint expression of consciousness - but “Recalling”, as Sri Aurobindo says, “the tenebrous womb from which it came”. This had a tendency of going back to Unconsciousness. It is like the origin of Death.

# Invocation

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*As in a dark beginning of all things,  
A mute featureless semblance of the Unknown  
Repeating for ever the unconscious act,  
Prolonging for ever the unseeing will,  
Cradled the cosmic drowse of ignorant Force  
Whose moved creative slumber kindles the suns  
And carries our lives in its somnambulist whirl.  
Athwart the vain enormous trance of Space,  
Its formless stupor without mind or life,  
A shadow spinning through a soulless Void,  
Thrown back once more into unthinking dreams,  
Earth wheeled abandoned in the hollow gulfs  
Forgetful of her spirit and her fate.*

For the sake of evolution and the ascension towards Consciousness, earth was formed. But it was formed naturally in the Unconscious, and so Sri Aurobindo says:

*Athwart the vain enormous trance of Space,  
Its formless stupor without mind or life,  
A shadow spinning through a formless Void,  
Thrown back once more into unthinking dreams,  
Earth wheeled abandoned in the hollow gulfs  
Forgetful of her spirit and her fate.*

That is when earth was created in the Unconscious and the Nothingness, in order to concentrate the effort and the working of evolution - that is the description of the beginning.

Earth began - almost totally unconscious - as he says:

*Forgetful of her spirit and her fate.*

That is the beginning.

\*

*The impassive skies were neutral, empty, still.  
Then something in the inscrutable darkness stirred;  
A nameless movement, an unthought Idea  
Insistent, dissatisfied, without an aim,*

*Something that wished but knew not how to be,  
Teased the Inconscient to wake Ignorance.*

This is the description - a very wonderful description - of the beginning of Aspiration: how in the Nothingness, in the Inconscient, stirred the first movement of Aspiration.

There was no mind, so it did not think. Even the vital was not organised, so it did not know how to be. But it stirred slowly to wake up the Inconscient towards something - without knowing what it was.

This is the first vibration which preceded even form, the first beginning of Aspiration towards the possibility of knowing.

\*

*A throe that came and left a quivering trace,  
Gave room for an old tired want unfilled,  
At peace in its subconscious moonless cave  
To raise its head and look for absent light,  
Straining closed eyes of vanished memory,  
Like one who searches for a bygone self  
And only meets the corpse of his desire.*

This is still the description of the world created by division and becoming conscious. Its Origin being the perfect Truth-Consciousness, in spite of its division, in spite of its obscurity, it still contains the seed of its Consciousness and something like the “want” to return to it.

\*

*It was as though even in this Nought's profound,  
Even in this ultimate dissolution's core  
There lurked an unremembering entity,  
Survivor of a slain and buried past  
Condemned to resume the effort and the pang,  
Reviving in another frustrate world.*

# Invocation

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The Origin of Light and Consciousness which it carried in itself could not die - because it is the seed, the very essence of Immortality. And that began waking up.

\*

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

It is the very beginning of the aspiration waking up in the Inconscient to return to its conscious Origin.

It is the starting-point, the first movement of evolution, - the evolution that is the turning back of the Inconscient to return to the full Consciousness.

\*

*As if a childlike finger laid on a cheek  
Reminded of the endless need in things  
The heedless Mother of the universe,  
An infant longing clutched the sombre Vast.  
Insensibly somewhere a breach began:  
A long lone line of hesitating hue  
Like a vague smile tempting a desert heart  
Troubled the far rim of life's obscure sleep.*

This is the waking up of consciousness that Sri Aurobindo compares to a "smile". He says, "hesitating hue" - that is the first beginning of consciousness. It is like a very pale light and he compares it to "a vague smile tempting a desert heart".

It is like a very faint light at the border of the obscure sleep of life.

\*

*Arrived from the other side of boundlessness  
An eye of deity pierced through the dumb deeps;  
A scout in a reconnaissance from the sun,*

*It seemed amid a heavy cosmic rest,  
The torpor of a sick and weary world,  
To seek for a spirit sole and desolate  
Too fallen to recollect forgotten bliss.*

The first vision of Consciousness he compares to “An eye of deity” piercing “through the dumb deeps”. This look is like “A scout in a reconnaissance from the sun” - that is, the symbol of the Consciousness - in the heavy cosmic rest: “The torpor of a sick and weary world”. “Too fallen to recollect forgotten bliss” - that is, too unconscious to remember the Consciousness from which it came.

\*

*Intervening in a mindless universe,  
Its message crept through the reluctant hush  
Calling the adventure of consciousness and joy  
And, conquering Nature's disillusioned breast,  
Compelled renewed consent to see and feel.*

That is just the coming out from the complete unconsciousness of the stone and mineral towards the beginning of life, and this “Compelled renewed consent to see and feel.”

And then he says, “Its message crept”; this is the first sending of thought into the world.

And then

*A thought was sown in the unsounded Void,  
A sense was born within the darkness' depths,  
A memory quivered in the heart of Time  
As if a soul long dead were moved to live:*

That is the memory of the Origin.

Then he describes the resistance:

# Invocation

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*But the oblivion that succeeds the fall,  
Had blotted the crowded tablets of the past,  
And all that was destroyed must be rebuilt  
And old experience laboured out once more.*

In front all seems to have been destroyed - it is only a seeming because it is latent behind the Unconsciousness.

And then the comforting assurance:

*All can be done if the God-touch is there.*

So, in short, Sri Aurobindo is giving all the process of rebuilding the Consciousness in the Unconscious.

He calls the separation "the fall": that is truly a fall of the Consciousness into the Unconscious.

And now he describes how a message sent from the Supreme to repair the harm done wakens up again the Consciousness - as by a kind of imperative influence - to begin to climb up, back to the Supreme Consciousness.

This ascent is the evolution that will take so many thousands and thousands of years. But for a very long time it was not measured. It is only when Mind took form in man that time began to be measured. And before that, who can know how long it took to wake up from the complete Unconsciousness?

He is speaking of the starting-point of this evolution. And then he says:

*All can be done if the God-touch is there.*

Beautiful!

\*

*A hope stole in that hardly dared to be  
Amid the Night's forlorn indifference.  
As if solicited in an alien world  
With timid and hazardous instinctive grace,*



*Orphaned and driven out to seek a home,  
An errant marvel with no place to live,  
Into a far-off nook of heaven there came  
A slow miraculous gesture's dim appeal.  
The persistent thrill of a transfiguring touch  
Persuaded the inert black quietude  
And beauty and wonder disturbed the fields of God.*

We may remember that Sri Aurobindo puts together Quietude, Beauty and Wonder - they seem to be at the beginning of the manifestation of the Divine in the Inconscient.

It started like that: Quietude, Beauty and Wonder.

\*

*A wandering hand of pale enchanted light  
That glowed along a fading moment's brink,  
Fixed with gold panel and opalescent hinge  
A gate of dreams ajar on mystery's verge.  
One lucent corner windowing hidden things  
Forced the world's blind immensity to sight.  
The darkness failed and slipped like a falling cloak  
From the reclining body of a god.  
Then through the pallid rift that seemed at first  
Hardly enough for a trickle from the suns,  
Outpoured the revelation and the flame.  
The brief perpetual sign recurred above.*

It is the most poetic way of describing the waking up of the Consciousness to invisible things. But why this waking up, what had created or given birth to this waking up?

Sri Aurobindo says:

The darkness failed and slipped like a falling cloak  
From the reclining body of a god.

A god had come down upon earth to wake it up to the inner Consciousness. We could say that this was the first Avatar. It is the coming down of the first

# Invocation

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Avatar to wake up the earth to Consciousness - that is, to bring an intensity of Consciousness and Realisation into this inconscient world.

This is obviously the description of the appearance of the first Avatar. It starts from that - because he puts:

Then through the pallid rift that seemed at first  
Hardly enough for a trickle from the suns,  
Outpoured the revelation and the flame.

The revelation and the flame. And ...

The brief perpetual sign recurred above.  
That is the sign of the Avatar coming down upon earth.

\*

*A glamour from the unreached transcendences  
Iridescent with the glory of the Unseen,  
A message from the unknown immortal Light  
Ablaze upon creation's quivering edge,  
Dawn built her aura of magnificent hues  
And buried its seed of grandeur in the hours.  
An instant's visitor the godhead shone:  
On life's thin border awhile the Vision stood  
And bent over earth's pondering forehead curve.  
Interpreting a recondite beauty and bliss  
In colour's hieroglyphs of mystic sense,  
It wrote the lines of a significant myth  
Telling of a greatness of spiritual dawns,  
A brilliant code penned with the sky for page.*

This is the description of the first contact of the Light from above bringing an unknown message.

An instant's visitor the godhead shone:  
On life's thin border awhile the Vision stood  
And bent over earth's pondering forehead curve.

It is the answer of the Divine to the condition into which had fallen the creation, and the first contact of the Gods with Matter.

Interpreting a recondite beauty and bliss  
In colour's hieroglyphs of mystic sense,  
It wrote the lines of a significant myth  
Telling of a greatness of spiritual dawns,  
A brilliant code penned with the sky for page.

It gives the idea that the story of the world, of the creation, was told while it was going on and it was inscribed, to be kept for ever. It means that whatever happens is noted and kept in the memory of the earth.

He says:

It wrote the lines of a significant myth  
That is the story of Savitri. It is at the time of the first contact of the Emanation from the Divine with the atmosphere of the earth that the story of Savitri was decided.

\*

*Almost that day the epiphany was disclosed  
Of which our thoughts and hopes are signal flares;  
A lonely splendour from the invisible goal  
Almost was flung on the opaque Inane.  
Once more a tread perturbed the vacant Vasts;  
Infinity's centre, a Face of rapturous calm  
Parted the eternal lids that open heaven;  
A Form from far beatitudes seemed to near.  
Ambadress twixt eternity and change,  
The omniscient Goddess leaned across the breadths  
That wrap the fated journeyings of the stars  
And saw the spaces ready for her feet.*

It is the coming down of the Mother.

A lonely splendour from the invisible goal  
Almost was flung on the opaque Inane.

It is Savitri coming down. There is nothing to say - nothing comes. It is all complete as it is. There is nothing to explain and nothing to add.

\*

# Invocation

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*Once she half looked behind for her veiled sun,  
Then, thoughtful, went to her immortal work.  
Earth felt the Imperishable's passage close:  
The waking ear of Nature heard her steps  
And wideness turned to her its limitless eye,  
And, scattered on sealed depths, her luminous smile  
Kindled to fire the silence of the worlds.  
All grew a consecration and a rite.  
Air was a vibrant link between earth and heaven;  
The wide-winged hymn of a great priestly wind  
Arose and failed upon the altar hills;  
The high boughs prayed in a revealing sky.*

That is to express how Nature was conscious of Her descent - because this descent was changing the attitude and nature of things. She came down to kindle the fire of aspiration.

Nature was conscious of Her arrival. All that is considered inanimate Nature - that is, the wind, the water, and the trees and flowers - everything received Her joyously.

It is only man who did not know ....

\*

*Here where our half-lit ignorance skirts the gulfs  
On the dumb bosom of the ambiguous earth,  
Here where one knows not even the step in front  
And Truth has her throne on the shadowy back of doubt,  
On this anguished and precarious field of toil  
Outspread beneath some large indifferent gaze,  
Impartial witness to our joy and bale,  
Our prostrate soil bore the awakening ray.  
Here too the vision and prophetic gleam  
Lit into miracles common meaningless shapes;  
Then the divine afflatus, spent, withdrew,  
Unwanted, fading from the mortal's range.*

Sri Aurobindo seems to say that a Ray of Knowledge, of Light, of Truth came down upon earth and was so badly received, transformed into such a commonplace thing, that it simply withdrew.

This Ray from above changed into a prophetic gleam, changed into miracles, even the most common meaningless shapes. But then, finding no response, it withdrew, unwanted, fading.

Many times this happened before it could come and stay. At least something like a response was needed to keep it. And it came many times, waking up the smallest thing, and then, not having sufficient response, it withdrew. Then, long periods of preparation, slow dull preparation; then, many times, an attempt to descend - a Ray - and things are lit up and suddenly they seem marvellous. But so many times they fell back into their usual, normal, meaningless ways.

But now, this time, there is a response - something seems ready, and we shall witness the beginning of the change.

So we have only to be attentive, to be awake, to look, and we shall see the beginning of things.

Something is beginning to change in the world, and, as Sri Aurobindo says, when it is like that, even the smallest thing becomes a living miracle.

\*

*A sacred yearning lingered in its trace,  
The worship of a Presence and a Power  
Too perfect to be held by death-bound hearts,  
The prescience of a marvellous birth to come.  
Only a little the God-light can stay:  
Spiritual beauty illumining human sight  
Lines with its passion and mystery Matter's mask  
And squanders eternity on a beat of Time.  
As when a soul draws near the sill of birth,  
Adjoining mortal time to Timelessness,  
A spark of deity lost in Matter's crypt  
Its lustre vanishes in the unconscious planes,  
That transitory glow of magic fire  
So now dissolved in bright accustomed air.*

# Invocation

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That is the explanation of why the experience does not last. The atmosphere of the earth is too contrary to the magnificence of the Supreme Consciousness and veils it almost constantly. From time to time it can show and express itself, but then again this inconscient atmosphere veils it.

It was like that in 1956 when the Supramental Power came down upon earth. It was coming in torrents of Light, wonderful Light and Force and Power, and from the earth b-i-g w-a-v-e-s of deep blue Inconscience came and swallowed it up. All the Force that was coming down was swallowed up, and it is again from inside the Inconscient that it had to work itself through. That is why things take so much time here. It is too much unconsciousness in the response that veils what earth has absorbed. Otherwise, it is long since the Light has poured down, and things ought to have changed.

\*

*The message ceased and waned the messenger.  
The single Call, the uncompanioned Power,  
Drew back into some far-off secret world  
The hue and marvel of the supernal beam:  
She looked no more on our mortality.  
The excess of beauty natural to God-kind  
Could not uphold its claim on time-born eyes;  
Too mystic-real for space-tenancy  
Her body of glory was expunged from heaven:  
The rarity and wonder lived no more.  
There was the common light of earthly day.  
Affranchised from the respite of fatigue  
Once more the rumour of the speed of Life  
Pursued the cycles of her blinded quest.  
All sprang to their unvarying daily acts;  
The thousand peoples of the soil and tree  
Obeyed the unforeseeing instant's urge,  
And, leader here with his uncertain mind,  
Alone who stares at the future's covered face,  
Man lifted up the burden of his fate.*

He is saying that the earth, the world, is not yet ready to manifest the Divine in its purity. And spontaneously, naturally, the Divine gets veiled, hidden by the ordinary form, and even the difference of vibration is scarcely felt.

Until now, in the creation, it is only man who looks at the future. All the rest of the creation is concerned only with the present; man looks at the future and is anxious about it, but the future is veiled - "The future's covered face". The next step in evolution will see the future.

*(to be continued)*



*The Mother's Savitri Drawings : an exhibition in the hall at Savitri Bhavan  
December 24, 1999 to January 24, 2000*

# *The hour before the Gods awake*

*Extracts from an essay by Amal Kiran (K.D. Sethna)*

*It was the hour before the Gods awake*

Why does Sri Aurobindo not write “awoke”? The reason is that he is pointing not to an event which happened once but to one that constantly and repeatedly happens. ... What Sri Aurobindo posits in this line is a religio-mythic concept that has been part of India’s temple-life for millennia: the daily awakening of the Gods.

The Gods are the Powers that carry on the harmonious functions by which the universe moves on its progressive path. According to an old belief, based on a subtle knowledge of the antagonism between the Lords of Falsehood and the Lords of Truth, the period of the night interrupts the work of the Truth-Lords by its obscuration of sight and by its pulling down of the consciousness into sleep. Each day with the onset of darkness the Gods are stopped in their functions by the Demons: the Gods pass into an oblivious slumber. Each day with the advent of light they emerge into activity and continue their progress-creating career. Traditionally the moment of their awaking, termed “Brahma-muhurta”, is 4 am. Every temple in India rings its bells and clangs its cymbals at 4 am to stir the deities no less than the devotees into action. The “hour” therefore which *Savitri* depicts at its start may be taken, if we are to be literal, as 3 - 4 am. The termination of this hour [the awakening of the Gods], is “the divine Event” mentioned in the second line....

There is each night a small temporary Inconscience, a passing snatch of the Great Darkness that is the divinely ordained womb of our cosmos. In this snatch we can glimpse the movement by which the Darkness grew less and less impenetrable and passed into what we may call Dimness awaiting Illumination: the phenomenon which Sri Aurobindo tersely catches in the phrase about the Inconscient being teased to wake Ignorance. The symbolisation consists in each night being the primeval Night itself in local transient miniature.

*(The Sun and the Rainbow, Hyderabad, 1981 p. 147-151)*



# *Savitri - A Force in Action*

*A talk on December 12, 1999 by C. V. Devan Nair*

First, I ought to give you some idea about the person talking to you. I begin by saying what I am not: I am no scholar, exegete or poet. But I am a seeker, who loves poetry, music and song, whether in Tamil, Hindi, Malay or English. The response is immediate, defying analysis – as was the immediacy of recognition when I first read in *Savitri*:

*And with a silver cry of opening gates  
Sight's lightnings leaped into the invisible.*

My school was a brutally experiential one, brief hints of which I might give here. In my teens I came under the powerful spell of Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. Strange, how many came to Sri Aurobindo through these two mighty precursors! A yearning for the blissful Beyond seized my soul. And this aspiration kept mounting – until World War 2 hit us in the shape of the Japanese invasion and occupation of Malaya and Singapore. A horrendous experience! I was nineteen years old. The blissful Beyond was of no help at all. Believers and unbelievers, the blessed and the damned, the good and the evil, rich and poor all alike were tortured and massacred. I saw decapitated heads stuck on poles along streets in towns and cities. The population was terrified. Years later, when I read Cantos 7 & 8 of Book Two, The Descent Into Night, The World of Falsehood, The Mother of Evil and The Sons of Darkness, I recognised not only my own nightmarish wartime experiences but nightmares incredibly more gruesome than I had bargained for. It is not advisable to read those terrifying cantos too often unless one becomes more like Sri Aurobindo himself, who could say:

*On a desperate stair my feet have trod  
Armoured with boundless peace,  
Bringing the fires of the splendour of God  
Into the human abyss.*

Not yet armoured with boundless peace, whenever I risk reading those cantos, the room seems to fill with ominous shadows, and I find myself muttering 'Mother, Mother' for protection.

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The searchlight of memory now focuses on a red laterite road in a rubber plantation in Malaya, along which I was riding a bicycle. A Japanese soldier halted me, member of a platoon that had captured a Chinese worker, whom they believed was with the Malayan anti-Japanese resistance. Proof was not required. Every Chinese worker was assumed to be a resistance sympathiser or activist. Stopped also were twenty other passers-by. At the points of bayonets, we found ourselves hustled into a circle around the terrified captive. The soldiers tied his hands behind his back, gagged him, and covered his head and body down to the waist in a jute sack soaked in kerosene. A soldier struck a match, and set him ablaze. Soon the figure was a flaming human torch. The butt of a Japanese rifle knocked him to the ground, where he writhed to his dreadful end in stifled, guttural agony.

To this day that scene of unmitigated horror, including the maniacal laughter which it aroused in the soldiers, surges up in occasional nightmares, and I live again the hideous experience - especially that terrible feeling compacted of helpless terror and outrage in the face of total, unbridled, unqualified evil.

That day, a revolutionary was born. A cold, relentless anger swept my entire being, throbbing with unremitting revolt against cruelty, tyranny and oppression. "Freedom, FREEDOM, for men on earth!" was the strangled cry that surged up from my depths - and to blazing, bloody hell with God and his blissful beyond! The fight for the future was here - on earth.

My years of revolution began with organising assistance for the anti-Japanese resistance, at risk of horrible torture and death if I were captured; and were to continue into the British re-occupation after the allied victory over the fascist powers. It was a bizarre introduction to the unconscious revolutionary yoga of humanity.

After the British reoccupation, I qualified as a teacher of English Language and Literature, became General Secretary of the Singapore Teachers Union, and helped in the production of Shakespeare's plays. But I was also member of a clandestine organisation called the Anti-British League. The colonial Special Branch became aware of our activities and thirty-nine of us were arrested and detained without trial. Thus I endured British prisons over a total of five years, in two separate spells. The colonial authorities regarded me as a dangerous person. They were not wrong.

A revolutionary himself, Sri Aurobindo does seem to have a soft spot for revolutionaries. During my second spell of imprisonment He visited me in

prison, in the shape of two volumes (in those days) of *The Life Divine*. I didn't understand much at first, but I was deeply impressed by the majestic flow of magnificent prose. It was like being suddenly flung into an immense river that flowed "in a royalty of mighty ease", one knew not from whence nor whither. I might cite just one such passage that pops up every now and then as a reminder from the heights of what we are really here for:

*The ascent to the divine Life is the human journey, the Work of works, the acceptable Sacrifice. This alone is man's real business in the world and the justification of his existence, without which he would be only an insect crawling among other ephemeral insects on a speck of surface mud and water which has managed to form itself amid the appalling immensities of the physical universe.*

Luminous intimations aplenty were planted in my being. There is a time and season for every seed to burst into bud and bloom. Sooner or later all will. After release from prison I dipped into every book by or on Sri Aurobindo and Mother I could lay hands on. With what delighted astonishment I found that here was the greatest of all revolutions in human experience, and Sri Aurobindo and Mother the greatest revolutionaries ever. Compared to this, man-made revolutions are very poor jokes. They revolutionise nothing, anyway.

Many find Sri Aurobindo difficult reading ... difficult indeed if one tries to understand a mighty river with the head. Standing on the bank we watch the movement of waves, measure the temperature of the waters, try to estimate the speed of the current and indulge in such-like follies. The only way to experience a river is to plunge into it, and to flow with the current over rapids and cataracts and slow, broad stretches into boundless seas. Difficulties mysteriously dissipate if one leaps into the divine waters and allows their currents to carry one whithersoever they will ... more and more you identify with an eternal current. This is especially so with *Savitri*.

I recited it to myself, moving my lips as I did so, pronouncing each word as I went along - and my entire being filled with nameless meanings. Entirely unsuspected ancient memories lodged in some deep recess of the being leap into consciousness from the pages of the epic, and passages and lines of tremendous power continue their work in subliminal regions. Like the

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Mother's own words, *Savitri* is a Force in action. As we read, something within us grows and grows and grows. It is that same 'something' which "heaves like a sea to the moon" whenever we encounter something majestic, grand, and of surpassing beauty - be it the Mother's smile and touch, a movement of great music, an unspeakably radiant rainbow-hued sunrise over Everest and all the surrounding snow-capped peaks as "beauty and wonder disturbed the fields of God," or passages of mind-blowing potency in *Savitri*. None of these have anything to do with our meddlesome heads. The process is best described in that oft-quoted passage from *Savitri*:

*As when the mantra sinks in Yoga's ear,  
Its message enters stirring the blind brain  
And keeps in the dim ignorant cells its sound;  
The hearer understands a form of words  
And, musing on the index thought it holds,  
He strives to read it with the labouring mind,  
But finds bright hints, not the embodied truth:  
Then, falling silent in himself to know  
He meets the deeper listening of his soul:  
The Word repeats itself in rhythmic strains:  
Thought, vision, feeling, sense, the body's self  
Are seized unutterably and he endures  
An ecstasy and an immortal change;  
He feels a Wideness and becomes a Power,  
All knowledge rushes on him like a sea:  
Transmuted by the white spiritual ray  
He walks in naked heavens of joy and calm,  
Sees the God-face and hears transcendent speech...*

Even if we do not experience all that *Savitri* did, we do come out in gooseflesh listening to the mantras so lavishly scattered over the pages of the epic. I am among those rendered speechless by *Savitri*. Sri Aurobindo's lines in the epic best describe the condition. One comes across:

*Poems in largeness cast like moving worlds  
And metres surging with the ocean's voice  
Translated by grandeurs locked in Nature's heart  
But thrown now into a crowded glory of speech*

*The beauty and sublimity of her forms,  
The passion of her moments and her moods  
Lifting the human word nearer to the god's.*

For seekers, *Savitri* as a whole is an even greater glory, constituting as it does the more than human expression of a divine Promise and its Fulfilment.

Not so long ago, the human image of the deathless word dwelt on earth for ninety-five years - until November 17th 1973, when she left her mortal residue behind to work powerfully from behind the veil. "*The world unknowing, for the world she stood.*" Some knew it. Most adored what they did not know. The great majority of mankind knew nothing of Her advent - but that is of no account: at no stage of evolution have the forerunners of the Future ever begun as a majority. Indeed, they have always seemed more than a little weird to the swarms, hordes, herds or tribes they were destined to replace. So be it with us - the few, the aspiring few!

*Savitri* is at once the decisive experience of the Master Spirit of the Age, and the Supreme's Dream as captured by a mantric poet without peer. As the Mother said of Auroville:

*You say that Auroville is a dream. Yes, it is a "dream" of the  
Lord and generally these "dreams" turn out to be TRUE -  
much more TRUE than the so-called realities!*

Through unprecedented tumults and pressures when least expected ("... *the hour is often terrible, a fire and a whirlwind and a tempest, a treading of the winepress of the wrath of God ...*" ), what Sri Aurobindo saw in an instant, the ages of earth and men will, knowingly or unknowingly, accomplish.

The human mind has not the remotest conception of the 'how' of that stupendous outcome, any more than the simian tribes of Lemuria had of Einstein's equations. That's inevitable. For merely human dreams throughout history have always ended in one nightmare or another. Whether we like it or not, the hour of the unexpected is upon us.

A quiet, stunningly revelatory line in *Savitri*,

*All's miracle here, and can by miracle change*

may yet induce a startled awakening in budding yogis and accomplished scientists alike - especially those who stand at the furthest frontiers of modern particle physics and astrophysics, and find themselves peering into a *Mysterium Tremendum*.

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*Savitri* is at once experience and dream. Sri Aurobindo's and Mother's experiences, expressed in powerful mantric poetry, have become the daily dream of handfults of seekers scattered around the globe. Auroville is also a dream on its way to fulfilment – a way that often seems onerous, but what of that! Recall Sri Aurobindo's moving lines in his sonnet *The Pilgrim of the Night*:

*I walk by the chill wave through the dull slime  
And still the weary journeying knows no end;  
Lost is the lustrous godhead beyond Time,  
There comes no voice of the celestial Friend.  
And yet I know my footprints' track shall be  
A pathway to immortality.*

We may not know it, but the pathway is made much easier for us because They trod it first. Only our aspiration, sincerity and surrender need to be genuine, not spurious.

Next, what of experiences - invariably simultaneous phenomena? At once involved may be sight and sound, spirit, head, heart, body and God knows what else. And sometimes one or the other or all of them are annulled - most often the head, which suddenly finds itself deflated, supremely irrelevant. Indeed, it is the primary obstacle to a living, simultaneous experience that defies labelling. "It is not the head which has wings," said the Mother. "It's the heart." But how to capture simultaneity in linear human language? Impossible. Furthermore, like all mantra, music, song and poetry, *Savitri* is meant for the ears, not for the eyes - and certainly not for the intellect. For the mind is prone to analysis and as has been pointed out, "Analysis kills spontaneity. The grain, once ground into flour, springs and germinates no more." Sri Aurobindo categorically expresses the same truth. *Savitri*, speaking to the Madonna of Light, says:

*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  
And the Bird of Paradise sit upon life's boughs  
And the winds of Paradise visit mortal air.*

The Transformation which Sri Aurobindo gave powerful expression to in the epic is, in his own words, "decreed and inevitable." Pointless to theorise

about *Savitri*. The incommunicable might only be communicated through reciting selected mantric passages from the epic. And what a heartbreaking exercise this selection is. One feels a sense of betrayal. To use an image coined by Amal Kiran, throughout the epic we find Mt. Everest facing Mt. Everest. Time constraints don't permit us to climb all those Everests. I am painfully obliged to choose between one and another equally splendid passage as I go along.

In several passages Sri Aurobindo makes abundantly clear that it is not our surface selves, but the Divine himself within each and all, who journeys through life after countless lives from the worm to the God. For instance, he speaks of that journey thus:

*A sailor on the Inconscient's fathomless sea,  
He voyages through a starry world of thought  
On Matter's deck to a spiritual sun.  
Across the noise and multitudinous cry,  
Across the rapt unknowable silences,  
Through a strange mid-world under supernal skies,  
Beyond earth's longitudes and latitudes,  
His goal is fixed outside all present maps.  
But none knows whither through the unknown he sails  
Or what secret mission the great Mother gave.  
In the hidden strength of her omnipotent Will,  
Driven by her breath across life's tossing deep,  
Through the thunder's roar and through the windless hush,  
Through fog and mist where nothing more is seen,  
He carries her sealed orders in his breast.  
Late will he know, opening the mystic script,  
Whether to a blank port in the Unseen  
He goes or, armed with her fiat, to discover  
A new mind and body in the city of God  
And enshrine the Immortal in his glory's house  
And make the finite one with Infinity.*

Both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have told us that the first step we take towards the sunlit path is the discovery of the psychic being. We obtain illuminating hints of what that is in the following lines:

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*Ourselves and a high stranger whom we feel,  
It is and acts unseen as if it were not;  
It follows the line of sempiternal birth,  
Yet seems to perish with its mortal frame.  
Assured of the Apocalypse to be,  
It reckons not the moments and the hours;  
Great, patient, calm it sees the centuries pass,  
Awaiting the slow miracle of our change  
In the sure deliberate process of world-force  
And the long march of all-revealing Time.  
It is the origin and the master-clue,  
A silence overhead, an inner voice,  
A living image seated in the heart,  
An unwall'd wideness and a fathomless point,  
The truth of all these cryptic shows in Space,  
The Real towards which our strivings move,  
The secret grandiose meaning of our lives.  
A treasure of honey in the combs of God,  
A Splendour burning in a tenebrous cloak, ...  
It is our glory of the flame of God,  
Our golden fountain of the world's delight,  
An immortality cowled in the cape of death,  
The shape of our unborn divinity.*

Every time one picks up *Savitri* it is as if one were digging deeper or climbing higher into ultimate profundities, for larger and richer veins of gold appear in entire passages and lines. Indeed, sometimes we find that our first impressions were misleading. I may cite six lines in particular as an instance. Other readers of Mother's Agenda may have discovered the same error of understanding as I did.

On the morning of September 8, 1965, Mother was preparing to translate into French the following lines from "The Debate of Love and Death." Remember, *Savitri* is addressing Death after her identification with the very highest power of Supreme Love, which alone can dissolve Death and effect the Supramental Transformation. She tells Death:



*Why dost thou vainly strive with me, O Death,...  
For now at last I know beyond all doubt:  
The great stars burn with my unceasing fire  
And life and death are both its fuel made.  
Life only was my blind attempt to love:  
Earth saw my struggle, heaven my victory.*

Mother recognised the tremendous significance of those lines. She told the disciple:

Savitri says, “Life and Death are the fuel.” Then she says, “In my blindness, LIFE ONLY was my attempt to love.” She doesn’t say, “Life was only -.”; She says, “Life only was...”. Because my attempt to love was blind, I confined it to life - but I have won the victory in death [that is, in ‘heaven’]. It’s very interesting.

*“Earth saw my struggle, heaven my victory;”*

The disciple protested: “Yet, earth should see the victory? The victory should be on earth, shouldn’t it?”

The Mother responded: “Yes, but Savitri couldn’t win the victory in life because she lacked death, and she had to conquer death in order to conquer life. That’s the idea. Unless you conquer Death, the victory cannot be won. Death must be overcome; there should be no more death. That’s very clear. According to what Sri Aurobindo says here, it isn’t the principle of Love that changes into flame by materialising itself; it’s the flame that changes into light. The great stars give light because they burn; they burn because they are the result of Love. I didn’t remember this passage. But I told you, my experience (*Mother refers to the experience of the “great pulsations” of divine Love in April 1962*) is that the last thing as one rises - the last thing beyond light, beyond consciousness, beyond ... the last thing one reaches is love. “One,” this “one” is - it’s the “I”. I don’t know. According to the experience, it’s the last thing to manifest now in its purity, and it’s the one that has the transforming power. That’s what he appears to be saying here: the victory of Love seems to be the final victory.

He said, “Savitri, a Legend and a Symbol”; it’s he who made it a symbol. It’s the story of the encounter of Savitri, the principle

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of Love, with Death; and it's over Death that she won the victory, not in life. She could not win the victory in life without winning the victory over Death. I didn't know it was put so clearly here. I had read it, but only once. It's very interesting. Maybe we'll have to reread *Savitri*?"

Indeed, we need to reread *Savitri* endlessly. It's mind-boggling! And God knows that our minds deserve to be boggled.

The Book of Everlasting Day, replete with the highest flights of mantric revelation ever achieved in all history, is what reveals this monumental work *Savitri* as the veritable Veda of the modern world. There is no doubt that we **are** being propelled, by the veiled Supramental Power which Sri Aurobindo and the Mother brought down to earth, towards that Everlasting Day. It may be tomorrow, a few centuries hence or even a few thousand years later - all mere drops in the ocean of Time.

*A few shall see what none yet understands;  
God shall grow up while the wise men talk and sleep;  
For man shall not know the coming till its hour  
And belief shall be not till the work is done.*

A few have seen what most still do not understand. And God **is** growing up while our wise men talk, argue, quarrel and sleep. We recall the words of the most senior of Sri Aurobindo's disciples, Nolini Kanta Gupta: "Although we may not know it, the New Man, the divine race of humanity, is already among us. It waits for an occasion to throw off the veil and place itself in the forefront." But belief shall be not till that veil is thrown off.

This connects with the Supreme's voice heard by Savitri after her conquest of Death - and please bear in mind that Savitri's yoga was at once the Mother's own.

*All then shall change, a magic order come  
Overtopping this mechanical universe.  
A mightier race shall inhabit the mortal's world.  
On Nature's luminous tops, on the Spirit's ground,  
The superman shall reign as king of life,  
Make earth almost the mate and peer of heaven,*

*And lead towards God and truth man's ignorant heart  
And lift towards godhead his mortality.*

In fact, as Nolini indicated, the New Being is already among us. The footsteps of Destiny are now audible for at least a few men and women in our time. And that's all that matters.

Time permits me to recite only brief excerpts from the boon received by Savitri from the Supreme. I have not read anything more beautiful, moving, rich and grand. In brief, the Supreme announces here the birth of the flame child – the fulfilment humanity has been in travail of for ages. The Supreme Voice tells Savitri:

*All that thou hast, shall be for others' bliss,  
All that thou art, shall to my hands belong.  
My hidden presence led thee unknowing on  
From thy beginning in earth's voiceless bosom  
Through life and pain and time and will and death,  
Through outer shocks and inner silences  
Along the mystic roads of Space and Time  
To the experience which all Nature hides.  
Who hunts and seizes me, my captive grows;  
This shalt thou henceforth learn from thy heart-beats.  
For ever love, O beautiful slave of God!  
O Mind, grow full of the eternal peace;  
O Word, cry out the immortal litany:  
Built is the golden tower, the flame-child born.”*

Listen to what Mother said:

*“... the line from Savitri that gave me the most overpowering experience of the entire book... . And when I came to this particular line... I was as if suddenly swept up and engulfed in ... ('the' is wrong, 'an' is wrong - it's neither one nor the other, it's something else) ... eternal Truth. Everything was abolished except this:*

*“For ever love, O beautiful slave of God!”  
That alone existed.*

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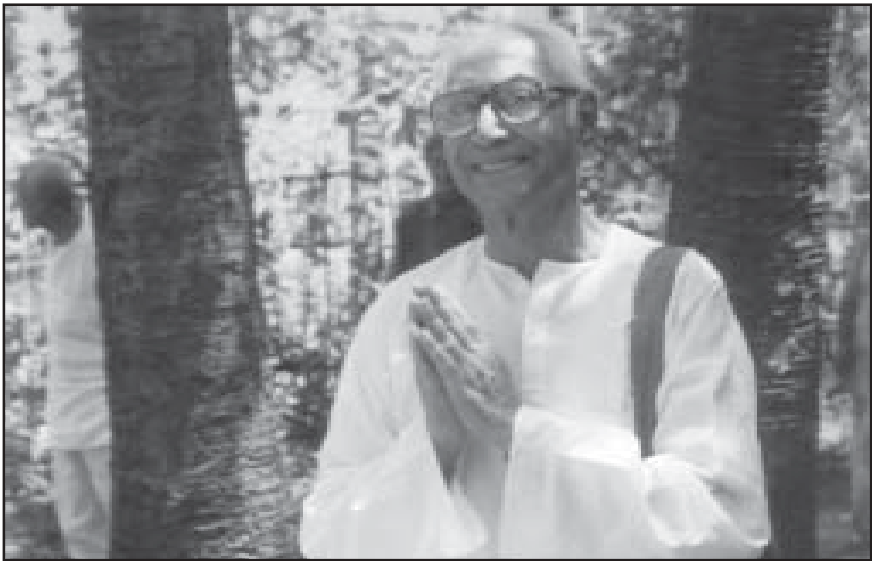
Probably long before Sri Aurobindo completed The Book of Everlasting Day, the Mother had already intuited their Victory. For she had written in her journal, soon after meeting Sri Aurobindo for the first time:

*“The time has come, the new manifestation is certain, the new manifestation is close. ... This human hour, this earthly hour is blessed among all the hours.”*

There can be no doubt. However contrary appearances may be, we live in the most blessed hour in all human history and prehistory. Why? Because:

*Built is the golden tower, the flame-child born.*

\*



*Arabinde Basu at Savitri Bhavan on November 28, 1999*

## *Savitri Bhavan Activities*

### *November 1999 to February 2000*

#### **Special events and exhibitions**

During the week from November 17 to 24 we had twice daily playings of the Mother's recorded readings, from 7 to 7.30 each morning and 5.30 to 6 each evening. The programme opened on Wednesday November 17 with an extract from *Savitri* Book 3, Canto 2, and continued through the week with the Mother's readings from Sri Aurobindo's book *The Mother*, in six parts. On Sunday November 21 in the early morning we heard Sri Aurobindo's poem 'The Rishi', and in the evening 'The Hour of God', while at the time of our Study-circle session from 10.30 to 11.30 am we listened to her magnificent long reading from Book Eleven of *Savitri*.

From December 21 to January 24 were displayed in the hall the beautiful panels of our exhibition "The Mother's Savitri Drawings", first shown in Pitanga Hall in November 1998.

On Sunday January 2, the first Study-circle gathering of the New Year, we again played the Mother's reading from Book Eleven of *Savitri*. This 40 minute-long recitation, recorded in the mid-1950s, uniquely powerful and inspiring, was a fine way to usher in the new century.

Starting from Thursday January 6th we have a regular 'video evening'. We opened the series with 'Darshan', a film-meditation on Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, and continue with the 'Meditations on Savitri' series, presenting the Mother's readings accompanied by her own organ music and the paintings prepared by Huta according to her instructions and inspiration.

Throughout the month of February we are presenting "About Savitri, part two": the Mother's explanations of Canto Two of *Savitri*, given to Huta and recorded by her, along with some paintings prepared by Huta according to the Mother's instructions.

#### **Guest speakers**

On Sunday November 28, Professor Arabinda Basu spoke on Canto 15 of Book 2, "The World Soul". An edited version of this talk will be published in a future issue of *Invocation*.

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The talk on December 12 was by C.V. Devan Nair : “*Savitri* - a Force in Action”. A revised text appears in this issue. The speaker for January 23 was R.Y. Deshpande, who took the theme “Sri Aurobindo and the New Millennium”.

## **Regular activities**

Meanwhile our regular weekly activities are continuing: the Sunday morning Study-circle, Dr. Ananda Reddy’s Wednesday class on *The Life Divine*, group-reading of *Essays on the Gita*, and two weekly classes on “English through *Savitri*”.

## **Future perspectives**

After the inauguration of the first phase building on August 8 1999, we envisage the following priorities for the further development of the Savitri Bhavan project :

- 1. Furnishing and equipping the new building** for optimum usage of the premises and of all the valuable Savitri-related materials that have been donated.
- 2. Building Fund** towards the next phase of the complex, which will probably take the form of a hostel to accommodate voluntary workers, visiting researchers or speakers and other guests.
- 3. The Savitri Park:** Savitri Bhavan is surrounded by spacious grounds. It is envisaged to develop them into a beautiful park to enhance the atmosphere of the complex. Thanks to a specified donation, it has been possible to make a good start on this work.
- 4. Activities:** expanding the range of our present ongoing activities.

## **Books in Savitri Bhavan library**

At the request of some readers we are giving here a list of books relating to *Savitri*, that are available in our library.

## ***Books on Savitri in the Savitri Bhavan library***

- The Mother, *About Savitri with some paintings*, Huta, 1972.
- Sri Aurobindo Archives, *On the new edition of Savitri*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, 1999  
*Supplement to the revised edition of Savitri*, " 1993  
*Note on the Text*, [from Sri Aurobindo's Collected Works, vol. 34]
- Deshpande, R.Y., *The Ancient tale of Savitri*, SAICE, Pondicherry 2nd. ed., 1996  
*Satyavan must die*, Sri Aurobindo Study Circle, Bokaro, 1996  
*Vyasa's Savitri*, SAICE, Pondicherry, 1996
- Hicks, Rand, *A Savitri Dictionary*, Dipti Publications, Pondicherry, 1984
- Mehta, Rohit, *The Dialogue with Death*, Motilal Banarsidass, 1972
- Nadkarni, Mangesh V., *Savitri: a brief introduction*, Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry
- Nandakumar, Prema, *A Study of Savitri*, [publishing details not available]
- Netter, William, *Log of a Journey*, The Author, 1999  
*Savitri: an Aurovilian commentary*, 1993  
*Savitri seminar outline and workbook*, 1992
- Pandit, M.P., *The Book of Beginnings*, Dipti Publications, Pondicherry, 1983  
*The Book of the Divine Mother*, " 1986  
*Readings in Savitri*, Vols. 1 - 10, " "  
*Savitri talks in Germany*, " 1985  
*A Summary of Savitri*, " 1995  
*Yoga in Savitri*, " 1995
- Purani, A.B., *Lectures on Savitri*, 2nd. ed., Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1989  
*Sri Aurobindo's Savitri*, " 1952 (1996)
- Sitaramayya and Swarna Gouri, *A Dual Power of God*,  
MCC Publications, Bangalore, 1999 (available from SABDA)
- Sobel, Prem, *Savitri Concordance*, All India Books, Pondicherry 1984
- Tonioni, Giovanni (Agni), *Namaste Savitri* [paintings], Comunita Arora,  
Modena, Italy 1995

We have also received translations of *Savitri* into French by the Mother (selected passages), Satprem (Books 1 - 6 with an introduction) and Raymond Thepot (complete, with notes); into German by Peter Steiger (1975) and Heinz Kappes (1985); into Hindi by Mrs. Sushma Gupta; and into Oriya by Benod Behari Das.

## *About Savitri Bhavan*

We dream of an environment in Auroville

that will breathe the atmosphere of Savitri

that will welcome Savitri lovers from every corner of the world

that will be an inspiring centre of Savitri studies

that will house all kinds of materials and activities to enrich our understanding and enjoyment of Sri Aurobindo's revelatory epic

that will be the abode of Savitri, the Truth that has come from the Sun

We welcome support from everyone who feels that the vibration of Savitri will help to manifest a better tomorrow.



## **CORRECTION**

*We regret that in the last issue one line from Nirodbaran's talk was omitted from the top of page 8. The text of the first two lines should have read as follows:*

to dictate, I would write down his words, copy them, and then the matter would go to Nolinida, to make a fair copy or to type.