Sri Aurobindo is an illustrious example of the mystic-spiritual tradition, which runs through the religious and literary history of India right from the times of the Vedic Rishis. Savitri may be seen as the poetic counterpart of his philosophical treatise, The Life Divine. The Future Poetry, an exposition of his aesthetic theory, offers a glimpse into his own spiritual consciousness that forms the basis of his poetic creation. It may be said that Sri Aurobindo's theory of aesthetics, his philosophy and poetry are all different aspects of his integral vision acquired through his spiritual experience.

Sri Aurobindo envisages the poet of the future as the seer whose poetry will be a voice of the Eternal, a revelation of the Infinite and an expression of lasting beauty and delight. His aesthetic vision finds full expression in Savitri, which marks the climax of his poetic creativity. In the words of the Mother, "Savitri is eternal in its subject, and infinite in its appeal, miraculous in its mode and power of execution; it is a unique thing, the more you come in contact with it, the higher will you be uplifted." The vision that has inspired Savitri demands from the reader, a capacity for a multidimensional experience - spiritual, intellectual and aesthetic. There is undoubtedly a greater emphasis on the spiritual dimension even in the reader's experience of Savitri and his capacity to appreciate it.

It would not be an exaggeration to state that Savitri is perhaps unsurpassed in its sweeping range, grand spiritual vision, profound symbolic significance, great poetic appeal and splendid beauty. Sri Aurobindo himself comments on the difficulty presented by Savitri to an ordinary reader: "One who
has had the kind of experience which Savitri sets out to express or who, not having it, is prepared by his temperament, his mental turn, his previous intellectual knowledge or psychic training, to have some kind of access to it, the feeling of it, if not the full understanding, can enter into the spirit and sense of the poem and respond to its poetic appeal; but without that it is difficult for an unprepared reader to respond...”² It is unreservedly acknowledged that the immense complexity of Savitri offers a challenge that one hesitates to take up. Yet one finds oneself drawn towards it, lured by the charm of its beauty and the force of its vision.

This chapter gives a glimpse into the poetic appeal of Savitri with the intention that it might lead to a better appreciation and keener perception of this ‘new age epic’. An in-depth study of Savitri from the aesthetic perspective is beyond the scope of this study. An attempt is made to touch upon some of the stylistic features and poetic devices used. It is hoped that this will help one to appreciate the subtle and finer nuances of this magnificent epic poem.

Imagination, Inspiration and Vision:

Sri Aurobindo’s poetic vision moves on the wings of imagination in the higher planes of consciousness:

"An inspiration and a lyric cry,
The moments came with ecstasy on their wings;
Beauty unimaginable moved heaven-bare …
Creation leaped straight from the hands of God, …
Imagination the free-will of Truth, …"
A vision of grandeurs, a dream of magnitudes
In sun-bright kingdoms moved with regal gait"

(2. III. 281-310)

It is in these glorious realms of higher consciousness that the vision of Savitri moves. The supracosmic vision and prophetic gleam of Savitri are clearly evident throughout the poem. Speaking about the vision and inspiration behind Savitri, the Mother says, "... the entire form of Savitri has descended en masse from the highest region and Sri Aurobindo with his genius only arranged the lines - in a superb and magnificent style." The high source of inspiration is revealed in several verses of Savitri, as in the following lines:

"Oft inspiration with her lightning feet,
A sudden messenger from the all-seeing tops,
Traversed the soundless corridors of his mind.
Bringing her rhythmic sense of hidden things.
A music spoke transcending mortal speech."

(1. III. 575-579)

Sri Aurobindo firmly believes that true poetry is a divine gift. His poetic vision comes from the planes of the Supermind, far beyond the bounds of human intelligence. He perceives the real self of things and knows the Divine by a spiritual identity made possible by his intense Sadhana. Savitri is the outcome of this supreme vision. In Sri Aurobindo’s words, "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." It is not the objective world he sees, though, that is also there with all its earthy features. His spiritual experiences and mystic realizations lead him into subtle worlds of subjective experience, of inner realization. The mystic seer visualizes all the energy and
force working in Nature as concretely as if it were a tangible object. Long passages of high inspiration flow freely and effortlessly without the faintest hint of hesitation. It is amazing that such passages do not suffer from vagueness or evidences of obvious effort. The brilliant clarity of vision in the following lines illustrates this point:

"I saw the Omnipotent's flaming pioneers
Over the heavenly verge which turns towards life
Come crowding down the amber stairs of birth;
Forerunners of a divine multitude,
Out of the paths of the morning star they came
Into the little room of mortal life.
I saw them cross the twilight of an age,
The sun-eyed children of a marvelous dawn, ...

(3, IV. 346-353)

Thus, in Savitri, Sri Aurobindo's vision gives the reader glimpses of a new dawn and reveals the splendour of a bright new world inhabited by the Gnostic being who shall evolve when man meets his destiny and the life divine is established on the earth.

Imagery:

It was with the Romantic Movement that imagery came to be recognized as the core of the poem and the poem itself as composed from a multiplicity of images. Shelley says, "A poem is the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth." This is especially true of Savitri that is a record of 'something seen'. While one may not find a detailed discussion of the term 'imagery' in Sri Aurobindo's works, it cannot not be assumed that he does not consider it
significant to poetry. He frequently emphasizes: "... what the poet sees and feels, not what he opines, is the real substance of poetry." He also points out that "the essential power of the poetic word is to make us see, not to make us think or feel; thought and feeling must arise out of, rather be included in the sight, but sight is the primary consequence and power of poetic speech." Sri Aurobindo thus attaches great significance to the 'force of inspired seeing,' which brings the reader closer to the power of the truth expressed in poetry.

C.D. Lewis points out, "Poetic image is a word-picture charged with emotion or passion... An epithet, a metaphor, a simile may create an image... Every poetic image ... is to some degree metaphorical. It looks out from a mirror in which life perceives not so much its face, as some truth about its face." Images used by Sri Aurobindo in Savitri are not merely vehicles of beauty, they are rather the 'transcriptions of truths' allegorical or symbolical; they are sometimes accurate, but often free and imaginative. Imagery in Sri Aurobindo's poetry can be a study by itself. However, an attempt is made to become aware of how images are used to transmit the poet's vision and thus contribute to the unity and harmony of the epic.

Savitri contains several passages where images come one after another pressing like pictures from a moving reel, as illustrated in this image of Desire:

"Thence sprang the burning vision of Desire ... It burns all breasts with an ambiguous fire. A radiance gleaming on a murky stream, It flamed towards heaven, then sank, engulfed, towards hell; It climbed to drag down Truth into the mire And used for muddy ends its brilliant Force; A huge chameleon gold and blue and red
Turning it to black and grey and lurid brown,
Hungry it stared from a mottled bough of life
To snap up insect joys, its favourite food,
The dingy sustenance of a sumptious frame
Nursing the splendid passion of its hues…”

Images used in Savitri are of many kinds: conventional, experimental, sensuous -visual, aural, kinetic, kinesthetic. Some are direct impressions and some others appear as similes or metaphors. They come from all quarters of life: nature, society, daily life, science, technology, commerce and so on. But it is the visionary, revelatory or intuitive perception that is the primary source of most of the images, and it is these that work like flashes of light revealing to the reader the poet’s vision.

Sri Aurobindo makes a ‘sense road to reach the intangible’. Images in Savitri reveal ‘homelands of beauty shut to the human eyes.’ Here is an image from the opening canto:

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

(1. 1. 96-97)

The image transports the reader’s imagination to the celestial worlds where gods are seen reclining, draped in cloaks of some ethereal fabric which, slipping from the body dazzles with the vision of radiant glory.

Sri Aurobindo himself remarked in one of his letters about Savitri, “Rapid transitions from one image to another are a constant feature in Savitri as in most
mystic poetry." It is interesting to note that one finds images on almost every page of Savitri. Many of these are images of light, which suggest the brilliance of the poet's vision penetrating deep into the secrets of the world and life as reflected in the following illustrations:

"...a searchlight stabs the Night's blind breast" (2. V. 18)

"A ripple of light and glory wraps the brain" (2. II. 251)

"...through the pallid rift that seemed at first
Hardly enough for a trickle from the suns,
Outpoured the revelation and the flame." (1. I. 96-100)

The 'star' is also a recurring image in Savitri. One such instance is found in Narada's reply to the queen:

"As a star unaccompanied, moves in heaven
Unastonished by the immensities of space,
Travelling infinity by its own light,
The great are strongest when they stand alone." (6. II. 848-851)

Another image shows Dawn fixing a golden gate through which one could peep into the mystery of the cosmos:

"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." (1. I. 90-93)
A beautiful image captures Joy travelling the roads of a solitary heart -

"Running as if to escape from longed-for hands,
Jingling sweet anklet-bells of fantasy."

(2. VI. 632-633)

One also finds images that fuse sight and sound, enhancing their transmitting power. One such image is found in the Book of Love in the context of Satyavan telling Savitri about his growing visionary power.

"....rapid life that roams
Wind-maned through our pastures, on my seeing mood
Cast shapes of swiftness, trooping spotted deer
Against the vesper sky became a song
Of evening to the silence of my soul."

(5. III. 173-177)

Elsewhere there is a reference to "Sight's sound-waves breaking from the soul's great deep." Another example of the fusion of the faculties of sight and sound is found in a description of spring. Spring, the season of joy, festivity, freshness and flowering, is described with sensuous richness:

".... Spring an ardent lover, leaped through leaves
And caught the earth-bride in his eager clasp;
His advent was a fire of irised hues
His arms were a circle of the arrival of joy."

(4. I. 92-95)
The sea and the river are recurring images as in a description of Savitri’s passage through the ‘valley of the wandering Gleam’-

“All this streamed past her and seemed to her vision’s sight
As if around a high and voiceless isle
A clamour of waters from far unknown hills
Swallowed its narrow banks in crowding waves
And made a hungry world of white wild foam”
(7. Ill. 239-243)

In another powerful image, Death rose like ‘a storm-haired Titan-striding sea’, its waves striking down the swimmer. An image of a sea voyage is found in the passage describing how thoughts from a cosmic source come down to Savitri -

“As smoothly glides a ship nearing its port,
Ignorant of embargo and blockade,
Confident of entrance and the visa’s seal
It came to the silent city of the brain
Towards its accustomed and expectant quay”.
(7. VI. 446-450)

Images abound in Savitri and an exploration in this area is sure to bring new discoveries and greater joy of appreciation. As Sri Aurobindo says, “The finding of a new image is itself a joy to the poet and the hearer because it reveals some new significant correspondence or sheds a stronger disclosing light on the thing seen and makes it stand out and live more opulently, luminously, with a greater delight of itself in the mind.”
Language, Style and Technique:

Sri Aurobindo says,

"Reject not form, what lives in form is He.
Each finite is that deep Infinity
Enshrining His veiled soul of pure delight …
Form is the wonder-house of eternity." 12

This reflects his integral vision of the Spirit's communion with Matter. He emphasizes a perfect correspondence between form and substance. He provides an excellent illustration of this principle in Savitri. He considers technique as an indispensable tool to achieve this fine fusion of form and substance. He looks upon technique as a first step towards perfection. He uses technique as a means of expression.

Though indispensable, technique occupies a comparatively small field in poetry than in any other art, for, poetry, as Worsfold remarks, "has the least material basis." 13 It speaks directly to the mind through imagination and language. Its instrument, the 'rhythmic word' is full of subtle elements. It is complex, flexible and packed with infinite possibilities.

In Savitri one finds a perfection of rhythm and style that has come about as a spontaneous expression of his soul-vision.

"The music born in Matter's silences...
The meaning it had held but could not voice;
The perfect rhythm now only sometimes dreamed
An answer brought to the torn earth's hungry need
Rending the night that had concealed the Unknown,
Giving to her her lost forgotten soul.”

(1. V. 559-565)

Savitri thus voices the earth’s yearning, the soul’s aspiration and the Divine word, in a manner that leaves the idea resonating in the reader’s mind long after he has read it. This is in keeping with Sri Aurobindo’s belief that the best or highest technique descends from the higher planes of consciousness. He says of the technique he used in Savitri, “I have not anywhere in Savitri written anything for the sake of mere picturesqueness or merely to produce a rhetorical effect; ... 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 ... in the vision or the experience. When the expression has been found, I have to judge, not by the intellect or by any set poetical rule, but by an intuitive feeling, whether it is entirely the right expression and, if it is not, I have to change and go on changing until I have received the absolutely right inspiration and the right transcription of it ...”14 The highest intensity of vision is sustained by the poet through the whole of Savitri thereby achieving what may be a matching intensity of style and rhythm, as revealed in the following description of Savitri which carries the reader through the ascending planes of consciousness:

“What seemed herself was an image of the Whole.
She was a subconscious life of tree and flower,
The outbreak of the honied buds of spring;
She burned in the passion and splendour of the rose,
She was the red heart of the passion-flower,
The dream-white of the lotus in its pool.
Out of subconscious life she climbed to mind,
She was thought and the passion of the world’s heart,
She was the godhead hid in the heart of man,  
She was the climbing of his soul to God.  
The cosmos flowered in her, she was its bed.  
She was Time and the dreams of God in Time;  
She was Space and the wideness of his days.  
From this she rose where Time and Space were not;  
The superconscient was her native air,  
Infinity was her movement’s natural space;  
Eternity looked out from her on Time.”

(7. VII. 223-239)

Passages like this one are at once subtle yet graphic in detail, evocative in the description and revelatory in the vision. In Savitri, poetic style thus becomes a fine fusion of language, thought, rhythm, imagery, mood and vision; it is dynamic and flexible. Sri Aurobindo believes that style is like a living organism - “it is born and grows like any other thing.”

Sri Aurobindo’s illumined style has a penetrating spiritual emotion as well as an intense and revealing speech. Poetic style really consists in language, for language is the vehicle of emotions and vision. According to Sri Aurobindo, the poet rises in the scale of poetic achievement by degrees as he “brings out not only the definitive intellectual value of the word, not only its power of emotion and sensation, its vital suggestion, but through and beyond these, its soul suggestion, its spirit.” In Savitri Sri Aurobindo rises to these standards he has set. As one reads Savitri aloud one invariably feels the vibrations of its words and rhythms sink deep into one’s mind. It is this quality that raises it to the level of the mantra. The reader feels the force of the ‘inevitable word’ in lines like these:
"If thou must indeed deliver man and earth
On the spiritual heights, look down on life,
Discover the truth of God and man and world,
Then do thy task knowing and seeing all.
Ascend, O soul, into thy timeless self;
Choose destiny's curve and stamp thy will on Time."

(11. i. 853-858)

The language of Savitri is a vivid, throbbing reality having its own body and soul:

"Her lashes fluttering upwards gathered in
To a vision which had scanned immortal things,
Rejoicing, human forms for their delight.
... Low she replied,
'Awakened to the meaning of my heart
That to feel love and oneness is to live
And this the magic of our golden change,
Is all the truth I know or seek ..."

(12. Epilogue. 313-322)

Every aspect of Savitri, including its language, seeks to work this alchemy in the reader - to awaken to the meaning of the vision described, to feel the love and oneness it envisages, to know the truth it projects and to experience the 'golden change' it foresees.

Poetic Diction:

A discussion of poetic style would be incomplete if it did not consider diction that is an inseparable part of style. Diction implies choice and
arrangement of words in a literary work. It points to the way in which words are used for the purpose of creative expression. Words are the very basis of poetry, like the stone of sculpture or the colour of a painting. In the mystic-spiritual poetry of Sri Aurobindo, 'the poetic word is a vehicle of the spirit and the chosen medium of the soul's self-expression.'

In Savitri one finds, what may be referred to as, typical Aurobindonian diction. The entire epic reads like a great spiritual discovery. Words seem to open up whole worlds of undiscovered beauty. There are several passages in which even simple words appear to be charged with heavenly felicity. On the other hand one comes across passages which might seem too dry and abstract, or too rhetorical and indulging in repetitive elaboration. There are critics who do not agree with Sri Aurobindo's choice of words. Yet Sri Aurobindo's use of a varied and complex vocabulary may be justified on the basis of the comprehensive range of the epic that necessitates it.

Savitri includes terms from various branches of learning. Sri Aurobindo uses them in a striking manner, with a daring originality as revealed in the following examples:

"We must fill the immense lacuna we have made,
Re-wed the closed finite's lonely consonant
With the open vowels of Infinity,
A hyphen must connect Matter and Mind,
The narrow isthmus of the ascending soul"

(1. IV. 383-387)
He also freely uses scientific and technical terms like plasm, wave-particles, atom, cells, stratosphere, decimals, television and many other words, but he always uses them with a suggestive appropriateness as in -

"The tree of evolution I have sketched,
Each branch and twig and leaf in its own place,
In the embryo tracked the history of forms,
And the genealogy framed of all that lives"

(7. IV. 553-556)

It may be said that the use of such words has brought a new flexibility to Sri Aurobindo's poetic expression besides imparting a sense of modernity to his diction.

Words like soul, spiritual, Inconscient, subconscious, subliminal, overmind, supermind, void, nescience, and many other philosophical terms are necessary to convey his spiritual vision. His use of seemingly strange terminology may be justified on grounds that he had to evolve his own diction to express his comprehensive, many-sided vision and experience of all the planes of consciousness. Whatever language, whatever terms are necessary to convey the truth of his vision, he uses them 'without scruple or admitting any mental rule of what is or is not poetic and does not hesitate to employ terms which might be considered as technical when these can be turned to express something direct, vivid and powerful.'

A deeper probe into the diction of Savitri is sure to unravel many interesting aspects of it. It is, however, believed that even a superficial study of the words leads one to the conclusion that the diction employed in Savitri is closely connected with the poetic substance. Between the word and the vision
there appears to be a certain equation. In the skilful hands of Sri Aurobindo, words seem to move, act and come alive, throbbing with the Truth of his vision.

Rhythm, Rhyme and Metre:

Sri Aurobindo identifies two aspects of poetic rhythm. The first is the metrical rhythm that includes "the variation of movement without spoiling the fundamental structure of the metre, right management of vowel and consonantal assonances and dissonances, the masterful combination of the musical element of stress with the less obvious element of quantity." The second aspect of poetic rhythm is the 'secret soul of rhythm', which uses the metrical elements but far exceeds them. Sri Aurobindo says, "This soul of rhythm can only be found by listening in to what is behind the music of words and sounds and things." One can get something of the secret soul of rhythm by listening to the subtler element in great poetry. This is possible when the reader goes beyond the levels of feeling and understanding poetry, and is tuned to 'see' the vision behind. He should have the capacity to follow the poet in his pursuit of 'unheard melodies'. It may be said that the most enchanting feature of poetic rhythm comes from the soul. Hence there are no logically laid down principles and techniques, no precise procedure to try and develop one's capacity to appreciate the inner rhythm. As Nolini Kanta Gupta says, while reading Savitri, one must "contact the living sap, the rasa that has poured itself out in the creation ... it has its own light that will suffuse (the reader) automatically with its radiance; the delight of bathing in the living spring will formulate itself in rhythms of knowledge and true understanding."

While Sri Aurobindo attaches great significance to over-head inspiration and the secret soul of rhythms, he does not consider metre and rhyme as artificial, external or superficial. Metre, according to him is a fixed and balanced
system of the measures of sound, and it is not only the traditional but also the
right physical basis for the poetic movement."²² Sri Aurobindo considers metre
and rhyme as significant to poetic art, not because of his reverence for the long-
established poetic tradition, or because he considers it a natural mould of
expression for poetic emotion and vision. There is a deeper reason. He reminds
us of the "spiritual value of rhyme, its power to enforce and clinch the appeal of
melodic and harmonic recurrence which is a principal element in the measured
movement of poetry, its habit of opening sealed doors to the inspiration, its
capacity to suggest and reveal beauty to that supra-intellectual something in us
..."²³ It is interesting to observe that Sri Aurobindo, who emphasizes the value of
rhyme in his poetic theory, adopted the blank verse for his greatest poetical
work, Savitri.

Several critics have acknowledged Sri Aurobindo's metrical craftsmanship
and his mastery of blank verse. In Savitri, Sri Aurobindo's blank verse seems to
have come with a naturalness that is comparable to Milton's natural genius for it.
As K.D. Sethna points out, "The fusion of the early Milton with the late: this may
be taken in general to characterize at its best the blank verse of Sri Aurobindo."²⁴
He is said to have combined in his poetry the delicate splendour of early Milton
with the amplitude of the epical Milton. His spiritual vision and divine
inspiration in the creation of Savitri seems to have infused his blank verse with
beauty and force.

In Sri Aurobindo's words, Savitri was "an attempt to catch something of
the Upanishadic and Kalidasian movement, so far as that is a possibility in
English."²⁵ He uses the iambic pentameter but dispenses with the complicated
structure of blank verse paragraph. His use of end-stopped lines is interesting.
He builds each line as an almost self-sufficient unit and piles lines one on another
with an apparent ease ultimately resulting in the magnificent edifice of Savitri.
There are several single lines that sparkle with beauty and clarity. Such lines give a rare *mantric* quality to *Savitri*:

"The doors of light are sealed to common mind"

"To be is not a senseless paradox"

"The mind of earth shall be a home of light"

"A divine harmony shall be earth's law."

There are also lines that have a balanced structure with juxtaposed pairs of phrases. These too lend a refreshing effect with their epigrammatic edge.

"It plans without thinking, acts without a will"

"Objects are his letters, forces are his words"

"He is the vision and he is the Seer"

"He is the Maker and the world he made"

"Near to earth's wideness, intimate with heaven"

Sri Aurobindo uses end-stopped lines and often, the meaning appears to be complete in each line. Yet they are not fragmentary units. Each line contributes to the whole. Many lines are interlinked and have a bearing on the lines that follow. This serves in maintaining the coherent structure of the epic.

The last line of each passage is packed with intensity, giving the effect of the finale of a musical composition, as revealed in this example:

"Only he yearned to call for ever down
Her healing touch of love and truth and joy
Into the darkness of the suffering world.
His soul was freed and given to her alone."

(3. II. 218-221)
A whole train of thought is summed up in the last line that is more intense than the preceding lines.

Sri Aurobindo himself explains the metrical design of the epic. He clearly states that his object was "not perfect technical elegance according to precept but sound-significance filling out the word-significance." Savitri is the expression of a new poetic consciousness. So it has a distinction of its own in its rhythm and language. Some readers might find it highly stylized, cumbersome and complex, but it certainly has a special beauty and significance. Sri Aurobindo's "rhythm is neither the neo-classic singsong nor the Shelleyan impulsive music, or Swinburne's monotonous word-sound, but a powerful, evocative incantatory sound – it is 'sound-significance' filling out 'word-significance' – that seems to awake some ancient memory in the soul ... As elevating and soothing in its effect as the Gita, the music of Savitri reverberates in the depths of our soul." 27

Beauty and Harmony:

Sri Aurobindo recommends that the poet should have a comprehensive view of life – "... the life, something of which the poet has to re-embry in the beauty of the word, is all life, the infinite life of the spirit thrown out in its many creations. The poet's business ... is not with the outward physical life as it is or the life of the passions and emotions only for its own sake or even with some ideal life imaged by the mind ... but with the life of the soul and with these other things only as its expressive forms." 28 Savitri reflects Sri Aurobindo's belief that the whole of human life is the legitimate field for the expression of the Divine in its multiple forms – Truth, Beauty, Love, Delight and Power. Savitri reveals his great love for man and earth, for all the manifestations of the Divine: Beauty in the physical, Truth in the mind, Love in the heart, Power in the vital. Savitri presents the view that without perfect love there cannot be perfect beauty and
without perfect beauty there cannot be perfect delight, which is possible only with the knowledge of the perfect Truth.

Sri Aurobindo’s vision of the universe is beautiful and harmonious. He sings of beauty in its very essence:

“Thou lookst on me in the gaze of the stars,
Yet art the earthly keeper of my soul,
My life a whisper of thy dreaming thoughts,
My morns a gleaming of thy spirit’s wings,
And day and night are of thy beauty part.”

(12. Epilogue. 135-139)

He sings of beauty at the summit of the soul-evolution when Matter meets the Spirit Divine:

“She felt herself made one with all she saw …
The Mother was she of Beauty and Delight …
A Power of which she was a straying Force,
An invisible Beauty, goal of the world’s desire,
A Sun of which all knowledge is a beam,
A Greatness without whom no life could be.”

(7. V. 117-134)

Sri Aurobindo thus looks at Beauty as the highest aspect of the Divine. The beauty that we find in Savitri is universal; its expression is impersonal yet the most intense. Throughout Savitri, one finds a note of grace, a subtle beauty, not outwardly vivid. The descriptions are swift, with mystic overtones and symbolic suggestiveness.
Sri Aurobindo has combined in Savitri celestial beauty with earthly form. She symbolizes a blend of beauty and grace, strength and compassion, love and light. Her advent was to earth, a new revelation.

"Nothing was alien or inanimate,
Nothing without its meaning or its call.
For with a greater Nature she was one.
As from the soil sprang glory of branch and flower,
As from the animal's life rose thinking man,
A new epiphany appeared in her."

(4. 1. 290-295)

The descriptions of Savitri on four different occasions in the epic reveal her extraordinary beauty - divine yet human, maintaining a harmony between heaven and earth. There is a prophetic description of her heavenly beauty at the promise of a daughter to Aswapati:

"Beauty shall walk celestial on the earth,
Delight shall sleep in the cloud-net of her hair,
And in her body as on his homing tree
Immortal Love shall beat his glorious wings."

(3. IV. 436-439)

There is, then, Aswapati's vision of the full-grown Savitri who appears to him in an unearthly splendour of beauty:

"A grave world-symbol chiselled out of life.
Her brow, a copy of clear unstained heaven, ... Amid her tresses' cloudy multitude
Her long eyes shadowed as by wings of Night
Under that moon-gold forehead's dreaming breadth
Were seas of love and thought that held the world; ...
A deathless meaning filled her mortal limbs;
As in a golden vase's poignant line
They seemed to carry the rhythmic sob of bliss.”

(4. III. 130-142)

Beauty, divinity and delight become one inseparable whole in Savitri. When she comes after her first meeting with Satyavan, she glows with the enchantment of love. Rishi Narada finds in her the exuberance of beauty and delight when she was 'changed by the halo of her love'. He thus describes this 'wonderful marvel of God':

"Thy limbs have shared the sports which none has seen,
And in god-haunts thy human footsteps strayed,
Thy mortal bosom quivered with god-speech
And thy soul answered to a Word unknown ...
Thy body rhythmical with the spring-bird's call.
The empty roses of thy hands are filled
Only with their own beauty and the thrill
Of a remembered clasp …”

(6. l. 156-171)

Savitri is portrayed as the 'consciousness of the Divine in beauty formed.' In a long passage of sustained overhead inspiration, the poet gives a fifty-one-line description of Savitri:

"All in her pointed to a nobler kind
Near to earth's wideness, intimate with heaven …
A heart of silence in the hands of joy
Inhabited with rich creative beats
A body like a parable of dawn
That seemed a niche for veiled divinity”  

Here one finds the fullest revelation of Sri Aurobindo’s ideal of beauty. Savitri’s person, her spirit, and her will, all glow with supernal beauty. There is yet another description of Savitri after her triumph over Death when she returns to the earth with Satyavan. She is so transformed that Satyavan cries in wonder:

“What high change is in thee, O Savitri? Bright
Ever though wast, a goddess still and pure,
Yet dearer to me by thy sweet human part
Earth gave thee making thee yet more divine.”

Such descriptions glow with a spiritual radiance and justify A.B. Purani’s statement that “Sri Aurobindo does not get, as do some other great creators of beauty, intermittent glimpses of supreme beauty; he seems to have his permanent station on those heights.”

It would be relevant to discuss here, the love of Satyavan and Savitri described in the Book of Love. “For purity and for tenderness and for the soul that does not deny the body but gives human values their due place in a scheme of life, it would be difficult to find a more powerful episode of love in the world’s literature.” When Savitri and Satyavan see each other, an alchemy of love occurs. Love’s miraculous transmutation knits life to life –

“Gaze met close gaze and clung in sight’s embrace.”
Love is a divine power by which 'all can change'-

"Love dwells in us like an unopened flower...
A look, a touch, the meaning of a face ...
Divines the immortalities of form
And takes the body for the sculptured soul.
Love's adoration like a mystic seer
Through vision looks at the invisible,
In earth's alphabet finds a God-like sense ...
Heart feels for heart, limb cries for answering limb;
All strives to enforce the unity all is." 

Love by its mystical power gives a new significance to human life. The love of Savitri and Satyavan symbolizes the union of Truth and Light. The beauty of their union in body and spirit results in lasting Bliss. The poet describes how Satyavan and Savitri go towards their earthly home -

"With linked hands ...
Hearing a marriage march and nuptial hymn ...
Numberless the stars swam on their shadowy field
Describing in the gloom the ways of light."

Thus in Savitri one finds the supreme harmony of the five eternal powers of the Divine: Truth, Beauty, Delight, Life and Spirit. As Sri Aurobindo says, "...these are indeed the five greater ideal lamps or rather the five suns of poetry."31 In the mystic folds of the light of these 'five suns' hides a greater dawn. Savitri gives humanity the hope of sighting this dawn if they have the right aspiration.
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