

'SELF' - AN ANALYSIS IN SRI AUROBINDO'S *THE DWARF NAPOLEON*

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Abstract:

*Indian English Writing is composed of many writers with various themes in their works. But very few writers deal with the theme of spirituality. One among these writers is Sri Aurobindo. He retired from politics in 1910, a concern for human affairs which formed his Yogic Sadhana. Over the next forty years, he concentrated on Integral Yoga which had transformed his life. In 1926, he founded the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry with the help of his spiritual collaborator, the Mother. His perceptions of life is conferred in copious works of prose and poetry, among the best known works are *The Synthesis of Yoga*, *Essays on the Gita and Savitri*. He passed away on 5th December 1950. Sri Aurobindo was a good political journalist, a philosopher and a mystic. Most of his works deal with politics and spirituality. One among his poems is "The Dwarf Napoleon", published in Oct 1939. The background of his poem reminds the II World War. It is the period of depression in every field all over the world. The poem "The Dwarf Napoleon" compares and analyses the characters of Napoleon and Hitler.*

Key Words: *Self, spirituality, perceptions, yoga.*

This paper is entitled as "Sri Aurobindo's The Dwarf Napoleon'- "Self" an Analysis". It is an attempt to analyse the "Self" of Hitler as expressed by Aurobindo in his poem. The first line of the poem explicates the intention of Sri Aurobindo to make the readers to perceive the World as "Maya". The word "Maya" means unreal. As the poet reveals in his poem:

Behold, by Maya's fantasy of will
A violent miracle takes sudden birth,
The real grows one with the incredible. (639)

According to the poet, the lives of people are under the will of Maya's fantasy. When one finds the sudden changes in his life that will make him to understand the truth with the unbelievable or unreal things in the world. And the poet finds that the ordinary human being achieves greater things in an impressive way. And these things are controlled or under the spell of Maya's Magical wand. As the poet expresses his idea about the achievements in these three lines:

The small achieves things great, the base things grand.
This puny creature would bestride the earth.
Even as the immense colossus of the post.

Sri Aurobindo couples the Real and the unreal. Though they appear to be Sri Aurobindo yet inseparable. The whole universe is the merging of pairs of opposites according to Vedanta thought. The word "Vedanta" as explained in *Mind according to Vedanta means*, "One of the six systems of orthodox Hindu Philosophy" (267).

One can see the pairs of opposites such as life and death, good and evil, and so on. It depends on each other. The Maya operates like the birth of the plant is death of the seed form. This will be the result of

Maya. The poet has used many paradoxical words effectively to express the features of Maya. Since Maya itself is the combination of two opposite things in one.

Napoleon (1769 - 1821) is the child of French Revolution. Aurobindo has chosen the popular historical figure, Napoleon mainly for his principles. Napoleon, a great military genius who dominated the Europe nearly two decades was born at Ajaccio in Corsica on August 15, 1769. He belonged to the ordinary middle class family. As Corsica was then under French rule, young Bonaparte was sent to study in the military school at Brienne in France, where he showed extraordinary capacity. When the revolution began, Napoleon was lieutenant. Napoleon wanted to make France as powerful as she had been in the days of Louis XIV.

Many of Napoleon's reforms were in agreement with the spirit of the revolution as well as with the past history of France. He provided work for the unemployed by restoring the old monuments of France and building new ones, by constructing military roads across the Alps, by repairing canals and by improving ports. The two greatest monuments to his statesmanship are the concordat and the code Napoleon. The codification of French law was perhaps the most enduring of Napoleon's achievements. The code of Napoleon came into effect in 1804 and is still, the law of France.

Hence, the above said achievements of Napoleon may have impressed Sri Aurobindo to glorify him in this poem. As the poet expresses in these lines:

Napoleon's mind was swift and bold and vast,
His heart was calm and stormy like the sea,
His will dynamic in its grip and clasp,
.....
A movement of gigantic depth and scope
He seized and gave coherence to its hope, (639)

The poet compares the heart of Napoleon to calm and stormy nature of sea. Napoleon comprehends the greatness and trivial things as a supreme power. His greatness was obviously seen in the principles that he had laid during his rule in France. He encouraged religious tolerance, equity, civil marriage and permitted divorce under his reign. At the same time, it upheld the subjection of Women, He was crowned as Emperor on Dec 2, 1804 by the pope. According to the poet only the principles of Napoleon has brought scope and hope for the people of France.

Further Sri Aurobindo compares Adolf Hitler with Napoleon and clearly states that though Hitler has progressed in his life, he is clay. As the poet explains:

Far other this creature of a nether clay,
Void of all grandeur, like a gnome at play,
Iron and mud his nature's mingled stuff,
A little limited visionary brain
Cunning and skillful in its narrow vein. (640)

According to the poet, Hitler's achievements are mere empty and meaningless. As Hitler gives importance to materialistic life which comes under worldly things. The earthly things are not permanent. Hence it may be the reason, the poet finds Hitler's achievements as a "dwarf" who dwells in the earth and guards its treason. The word "dwarf" refers not to the physical appearance instead the character of Hitler. The poet finds Hitler as the substance of both strong like iron and soft like wet earth. His brain limited with "cunning" "skillful" and narrow mindedness. Because he is ambitious for power. He feels his race to be superior and wants only the Germans to rule Germany. As Sri Aurobindo asserts in his poem "The Dwarf Napoleon".

A sentimental egoist poor and rough,
Whose heart was never sweet and fresh and young. (640)

Hitler's spirit is very rational in taking decision which is forced by hopes and fears. His reckless spirit holds the nature of neurosis, "violent", "cruel", "child" and "brute" (640). The spirit of Hitler is uncouth in nature and his oration contains only harsh sounding words. He gives new ideas for the future like a prophet but there is no significance in it. And the Historical facts reveal that Hitler had aversion for the Jews and the Communists. Hitler is brutish in nature yet he plays the role of leader. And also he has controlled the people. He is mighty enough to be a chief of the world which he considers it as eating a riped fruit. And his darker side of his attitude covers and extends from London to Corea. Under his leadership, the nations have broken into pieces. It seems that destiny of whole world lies in the hands of empty or earthly ideas of Hitler.

Hitler is a rudiment dwarf man who is the instrument of "mighty force". As the poet says in this poem "The rude dwarf of a mighty force" (640). The word "Force" refers to the Force of Nazism. The word "Nazism" means The National Socialist or Nazi Revolution. It began as a protest against the disgraceful terms of the Treaty of Versailles. Gradually as it gathered strength and become a dangerous national movement, glorifying Germany in order to understand the significance of the force "Nazism".

Sri Aurobindo has keenly observed the nature of Hitler and so he considers him as an enemy of peace. Hitler's strength and skill is used for negative purpose. He has crushed the humanity into mud. Further he controls the earth or the humans under "one Iron sway". The words 'Iron sway' points out the 'Iron cross', the symbol in flag of Nazism. This symbol reveals the violent or savage plan of Hitler by cursing the determination of man's mind into submissive and superficial under his awesome control. The poet feels that the Nazi party has played the role of spreading only the evil slogans to the crowd. It seems that if the dark or shadowy empire of Hitler is allowed, it will bring only hard times to the country. When there is discrepancies arises to fight for individuals rights and Hitler who is considered as "nature's conscious power" will fall into "deep original night" which refers to the darkness before the creation of world and also shares her forms that extinct before the tragic fate of the Mammoth and the dinosaur.

The poet expresses that the shadow or loss of humanity in Hitler who is in his uniform of great power will threaten the frightened world. Hitler dictates the country by staying in his villa on the destructive hill. Alone, he will listen to the supreme voice or his self. And he has chosen dictatorship as tool which is like the leap of tiger with an evil skill. The evil qualities in Hitler are too much that the body cannot bear and his stature is very small for the evil to stay. Anyhow, he has chosen the vein of torturing which drives him to "thick, act, and cry" and fight against innocent people. This attitude drives him to conquer all the places. His threatening and brutish nature leads him to unconquerable emperor. It seems that devilish deed will be continued until he meets that fate of "violent road" which consists of demon or struck with amazement of god. Sri Aurobindo clearly states that the vices will be defeated by god in the "Storm - Swept" road. Hence, Sri Aurobindo concludes the poem by explaining the cosmic principle that the Dharma (righteousness) always keeps Adharma (vices) under its control.

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