

MAHARSHI AUROBINDO'S PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO "THE TIGER AND THE DEER"

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Sri Aurobindo was an Indian Philosopher, Maharshi, Yogi, Poet and Indian nationalist. He participated in the struggle for Indian Independence. He was one of the freedom fighters. In today's world he is known for his spiritual ideas and practice of spiritual yoga. His yogic practices were deeply linked to his spiritual philosophy. Human minds could evolve into a higher consciousness that transformed human nature into something divine. Sri Aurobindo, born in Calcutta, on 15th August 1872, is one of the supreme masters in Indian English Literature. He is a great poet, philosopher, teacher, dramatist, short story writer and critic, who believed in Divine Life. His poetry may be divided into two broad groups: Poetry of Action and Poetry of Meditation. He gives charming description of nature in his writings. His achievement in prose, poetry and drama are really outstanding. He is well known for his philosophical writings such as The Life Divine. It is a spiritual autobiography of Sri Aurobindo, the Synthesis of Yoga, The Secret of the Veda, an introspection of Vedic past. Briefly it is a study of the way of writing of the Vedic mystics, their philosophic systems, their system of symbols and the truths they figure and translations of selected Hymans of the Rigveda.

In Aurobindo's words, the central theme of 'The Life Divine' is "Man is a transitional being. He is not final. The steps of man to superman is an approaching achievement in the earth evolution. Savitri is Aurobindo's major poetic work, an epic in blank verse of about 24000 lines in which a tale of Mahabharata is made a symbol of the human soul's spiritual quest and destiny. Sri Aurobindo also composed many short poems. In his short poems also he has described beauties using his powerful thoughts and imaginations. Sri Aurobindo was nominated twice for the Nobel Prize first in 1943 for the Noble Award in Literature and in 1950 for the Noble Award for peace.

Aurobindo's short poem "The Tiger and The Deer" is a didactic poem written in 1930. This is one of the unique poems in itself. It has got a deep philosophical tone. It depicts the dual aspects of Nature - the contrast between evil and good, innocence and experience, life and death and the poet's belief that good will eventually outlive and overcome evil. It does not revolve around a tiger and deer. The poet talks about two extreme dualities of nature. "The

"Tiger and The Deer" is a popular poem. The poet has displayed two contrastive images, the tiger and the deer. The images are different but one aspect is common, both shows natural beauty. But the beauty is totally different. Tiger is a symbol of cruel element in nature and deer is a symbol of peaceful element in nature. Tiger's beauty is power and splendour while Deer's beauty is mild and delicate. His mildness increases its beauty. Tiger and Deer are the symbols used by the poet. The title is completely symbolic and the poem is also symbolic. The poet shows contrastive images that nature has two aspects, powerful and cruel, mild and harmless.

The poem begin with a description of the tiger. Tiger crouches and slouches brilliantly through the forest. It has gleaming eyes, mighty chest and soft soundless paws. Generally people are afraid of the tiger because it is dangerous. The tiger stands for death, darkness and arrogance. Even the wind flows gently and steadily because it is afraid that if it blows strongly, it may agitate the tiger. The noise may make the tiger violent. Even the leaves of the trees are afraid to breathe while the tiger walks through the forest. The poet says,

"Brilliant, crouching, slouching what crept through the green heart of the forest".

The first word Brilliant is mind storming. The word is about tiger. The word shows mind storming activity. The tiger is magnificent. The poet has used the word brilliant, to show, how elegant it appears in front of the prey. This is the predator and prey is always dumb or weak. It could be splendor, attractive but not brilliant. The poet chooses the words very carefully. Crouching, the tiger crouches, it does not run all of a sudden, and it does not give a signal to the prey, that I am coming and going to eat you, no, never. It is not going to give any signal, any sign to the prey. It just hides itself. Usually these predators choose the grassland. They do not prefer hunting the prey in open ground. It has to crouch. It waits for the deer, it will wait for his prey to come towards itself or maybe it will be waiting until it reaches the striking distance. It will not send any signal to the prey that here is the death awaiting. It is a brilliant calculative animal. It does not lie its paws on dead leaves. It will change the course of its direction, land on grass softly not even a bit of sound there. That is like slouching, changing the direction, moving, taking pause and then moves forward. It is not walking or running. It's just creeping. It crept, crawl, slowly goes to attack, to hunt. So the word "Brilliant". The tiger is a brilliant animal. Tiger doesn't hunt in a group. They don't hunt in a pack, it does it alone. The poet is comparing physic, the physical attribute of a tiger, how strong, how mighty the tiger is. Tiger has the strongest paws. It has soundless paws. The poet has used the word "Soundless paws". He called these paws, paws of grandeur and murder. Due to soundless paws, you cannot even guess where the tiger is. All of a sudden it jumps out. The tiger is splendorous, majestic animal. The poet has used these two opposite words grandeur and murder in the same line. This is the brilliancy of the poem. The poet has used the word murder because tiger uses its soundless paws to murder the preys. It has a very impressive beauty but it uses its beauty to murder. As the deer in the poem is unaware of its death. It does not know that the death is in front of it or behind it or besides it. It does not know at all. The poet says that wind also slipped through the leaves, as it is also afraid that its noise may disturb tiger. Here the poet wants to

show that sometimes nature is also in favour of bad things recently in covid-19 pandemic we have experienced the same. The tiger suddenly leaped on the deer while deer was drinking water from the pool in the forest coolness and shadow. Deer died remembering its mate, who will be alone in the jungle, forest. Similarly human beings also remember their relatives while dying. They think about its soulmates and family members. The deer dies pathetically thinking about their soulmate.

The poet has used the word 'Destroyed'; What is destroyed? Is it the life of the deer here? Is it the hope? Is it the faith? Is it the promise? It is everything which is destroyed. It could be the promise the deer had made to his soulmate, the companion. It could be the faith in the God, in itself that it would go back to its companion. It is a strong will to get same food and get back alive. All these things can be put together. All these things are 'destroyed' now.

In our everyday life, while leaving home we always say bye, tata, yete/yeto me, ata/ati hun mai etc. These words are nothing but a promise given to family members that I will definitely come back home but just like the deer, if death catches us then this promise would be destroyed. We cannot keep our promise. So the poet has used the word destroyed.

The poet concludes the poem by expressing his longing for a peaceful and harmless world. He conveys through the tiger that those who harm others will be destroyed one day. For this he cites the example of a mammoth. Once upon a time, the mammoth shook the plains of Asia, but it is extinct now. Now the mammoth are not in existence. Since the tiger kills and harm animals, the fate of mammoth would come to it one day. Then the deer would drink without any fear in the cool ponds of the forest. Overall the poet Shri Aurobindo wants to convey that no matter how powerful cruel things become, they will have to die, and they will definitely die. The elements of peace, beauty and love will always survive. Thus the poem "The Tiger and The Deer", beautifully carved by Sri Aurobindo. He has described beauty of the woods by using powerful language and imagination. He has conveyed the message,

"The mighty perish in their might,

The slain survive the slayer"

Those mighty people who dominate and oppress the innocent people, will perish one day. They will not survive as cruelty cannot prevail longer. Only those who are innocent, mild and harmless will survive in the world at the end. The poem is optimistic. The poet says that in spite of the various blows of death and darkness, life is a thing to be enjoyed. Sufferings are not eternal. The poem is a metaphysical lyric of great significance. The poem is, infact a vision of evil and good, innocence and experience.

Try to read out the poem from the perception of freedom struggle. Here we can compare the tiger with the Britishers and the deer with the Indians. Britishers, they come to India, the way the tiger is crouching and slouching moving towards the deer, in the same way the

Britishers were moving towards the Indians, we were unaware at all until they started dominating, until they came and established British East India Company in India and ruled us for more than three hundred years, three centuries. We were not aware, they were hiding somewhere, and they came up to India to establish their own colony. They implemented their own imperial rules. They ruled over, and what did they do at the end, they finally killed us, they killed our traditions, they killed our customs, they killed our indigenous people, they did a massacre. There was not of blood shed while the Indian soldiers lay in the battlefield. Warfield, just like a deer. We were so beautiful, we are still beautiful. The tiger i.e Britishers leaped on Indians and captured India. India never rebels against anybody. Even today it doesn't. That is the attribute of Indians. India is such a majestic country. We are following the traditions of 'अतिथी देवो भव' and 'वसुधैव कुटुंबकम' We Indians consider the whole world as our family. But if you are harmless, silent, you will be considered as weak, and weak are always dominated as we have seen in the poem, just like deer, by the strong like Tiger. What the Britishers did. They are mentally strong. What happened to Britishers today, ruled for more than 300 years. They colonized many countries but where are they today. They are powerless now, living in a small area of the world. We do have the examples of Hitler, Khilji, Lodhi, Mughals all these cruel power came to India but finally they all are destroyed. We also have the examples of cruel powers in our Indian scriptures like Rawan and Kansa. We know the Doha by Saint Kabir.

माटी कहे कुम्हार से, तु क्या रोदे मोया

एक दिन ऐसा आएगा, मैं रौदूंगी तोया।

When a pot maker is constructing any pot it mashes the mud and the mud is saying that today you are trying to give me shape, you are putting all kind of external forces on me but there will be a day when you are going to return back to this soil. This is the fate of human body. This is the fate of any one, it may be tiger or it may be deer born in nature. This is the chain of nature. This is the cycle of nature. This is the unique specialty of nature.

You might be attempting to rule others, but how long can you pull it off? Can you continue to do it? Can you maintain strength for the rest of your life? Not at all. Can you just do what you're doing now, or can you just keep doing it? Not at all. You cannot succeed. It makes no difference how strong the evil entities get. They will all have to pass away one day, but the elements of affection, beauty, and peace will always exist.

Bloody will meet its end in blood,

Mild will remain appreciated unto the last.

Although you may be powerful, although you may be predator, although you may be the tiger, but time will come when you will have to pay back for whatever ills, whatever evils you have done. So it is the theory of Karma by any form, you have to repay for what you have done. Regardless of your strength or your status, the Karma theory states that you will

eventually have to make up for any wrongs or crimes you have committed. What you contribute will eventually come back to you, according to the adage "you reap what you sow." This may not always be the case, but you will eventually have to make amends for your actions in some way. Thus, this is the poem's deep, weighty significance and philosophy as revealed by Aurobindo.

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