

Insight into the four aspects of Mahashakti according to the writings of Sri Aurobindo

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Abstract: India is a nation of different states, different languages, variety of living style and life styles, different minds of people etc. Even though our nation is full of variety, but the most innate of our nation is One, our Soul in one. Our culture, religion, spirituality makes us more together with the belief on Absolute Power. As we have a history of lakhs of years, from the beginning the Indian minds always think over what is the root cause of creation of this world? Indian scriptures say that this world is created by a Supreme Power. And this Supreme Power created the world and acting in the world in the form of Mahashakti. This Mahashakti is the manifestation of that Supreme Power on earth in the dual form of Purush-Prakriti i.e., the Energy and the Matter. She is leading this world through her four most powerful energies. These powerful energies are Maheshwari, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi and Mahasaraswati. Maheshwari is Wisdom and is seated in the wideness above the thinking mind and will and greatens into wisdom and largeness with a splendour. Mahakali is Strength. She is of another nature. Not wideness but height, not wisdom but force and strength are her peculiar power. Mahalakshmi is Harmony. Beauty and Harmony of the mind and soul is the demand of Her. Mahasaraswati is Perfection. She presides over knowledge, science, arts and their detail of organisation and execution. All these four powers need a union. Their harmonious unity can bring us towards the highest heights of the Supramental spirit.

Keywords: Supreme Power, Mahashakti, Maheshwari, Purush-Prakriti, Sachchidananda.

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Introduction: Bharat i.e., India has a great history of having Saints, Revolutionaries, Yogi, Rishis of transmitting our traditional knowledge systems to the upcoming generations. Sri Aurobindo is one of the most eminent, renowned personalities in the history of India. The life and works of Sri Aurobindo are a living testimony to his victorious opening of the gates of a new horizon and by means of summarizing all his views from his writings, speeches, letters, we can get a bundle of eternal knowledge about creation of this world, the Supreme Shakti from the universe playing an inseparable role and many more.

Before we proceed to throw light on the views of Sri Aurobindo on the four aspects of The Mahashakti, The Supreme Power, it will be relevant to know a little about Sri Aurobindo. He was born on 15th August 1872 at Calcutta. He was taken along with his elder brothers to England for the primary education. But human nature says as far as we go away from our innate things, we get closer to those things only. Same was the case with little Aurobindo. He was taken there away from his motherland not to get closer to the things related to Indian Soil. But a reverse happened. He returned to India in 1893 and joined Baroda College as Professor of French and English. In 1906 he became the principal of the Calcutta College and decided to work for the political and spiritual freedom of India. The pioneering work that he did was evidently a part of his larger work for the entire humanity and for the whole world. In 1908 he was charged for sedition and kept in Alipore jail. During that period, he had Darshan of Bhagwan Shri Krishna and also had numerous experiences of Yoga and realized the assurance of the liberation of the country.

Sri Aurobindo's View: He came to Pondicherry in 1910 to concentrate on his new area of work i.e., Spiritual awakening of India and to bring down the supramental consciousness and power on the earth. He authored various books on Spirituality, Yoga, Indian philosophy, Ramayana, Mahabharat. Some of them are Essays on Gita, The Mother, The Life Divine and many more. Yogi Aurobindo was in many ways a quite essential Bhartiya Rishi, who embodied a revolutionary zeal.

We, the living beings, all are always very much curious about how the world is created! How the world is organised! And how the world is governed and controlled!

“There is one Infinite Eternal, Changeless Existence, the All. From That All comes forth; to That all returns.” [1]

As a wave arises in the ocean, a universe rises in the All. As the wave sinks again into the ocean, a universe sinks again into the All. As the ocean is water, and the wave a form or manifestation of the water, so is there one Existence, and the universe is the form, or manifestation.

The one whom we adore as the Mother is the consciousness and force of That Supreme and far above, she creates. She is the Mahashakti who governs all the worlds. Sri Aurobindo says,

“The Supreme is manifest in her for ever as the everlasting Sachchidananda, manifested through her in the worlds as the one and dual consciousness of Ishwara-Shakti and the dual consciousness of Purush-Prakriti, embodied by her in the worlds and the Planes and the Gods and their Energies and figured because of her as all that is in the known worlds and in unknown others.” [2]

(chapter 6)

The Sankhya explains in more detail and in new ways the nature of Purush, the Spirit Soul, and of Prakriti, the Matter.

The Supreme is manifested in her for ever as the eternal Sachchidananda. Sri Aurobindo in his 'The Mother' puts a light on four leading powers and personalities of the Mahashakti. These four are: Maheshwari, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi and Mahasaraswati. In the morning prayer composed by P. P. Swami Shri Manoharnath Maharaj, we can also find these 4 names and the greatness of Shaktis. He writes,

महाकाली महालक्ष्मी मंजीरे महासरस्वती ।
संसार तारणी अम्बे संरक्ष सती पावती ।
भावस्फूर्तव आर्शि शर्शि सवव मंगल साधने
।

शर्शि युर्शि भर्शि िीर्शि िो धर्त िुख मोचने ॥[3]

(प्रातुस्मरण)

1. **Maheshwari (Wisdom)** – She is established in the comprehending wideness of thinking mind and determination power. Imperial Maheshwari is the witty, mighty and wise One who opens us to the horizon of supramental infinities, the nobility of supreme Light and the cosmic vastness. She has calm wideness, comprehending wisdom, tranquil benignity, inexhaustible compassion and sovereign and surpassing majesty with greatness. That's why nothing can disturb her, nothing can move her and nothing can shake her because all wisdom lies in her; nothing is hidden from her that she chooses to know; she comprehends all things and all beings and their nature. She is most exalted, amazing and also calm in nature. To the wise, she gives a greater and more bright wisdom; those that have good vision she admits to her counsels; on the hostile she imposes the consequence of their hostility; the ignorant and foolish she leads according to their blindness. She handles each man according to their need and urge. Though she is bound by nothing or attached by nothing, yet she has more than any other, the heart of the universal Mother. Truth of things is her concern.
2. **Mahakali (Strength)** – She is of the nature which has an overwhelming intensity, a mighty intenseness of force to achieve, a divine violence rushing to shatter every obstacle. She is most severe to all that is stubborn ignorant and obscure. She has a power of splendid strength, irresistible passion, warrior mood, impetuous swiftness and world-shaking force. Sri Aurobindo says, "Terrible is her face to the Asura, dangerous and ruthless her mood against the haters of the Divine; for she is the Warrior of the Worlds who never shrinks from the battles." [4]

(chapter 6, page no 42-43)

She cannot tolerate the indifference, negligence and sloth in the divine work. Her peculiar powers are force and strength and when she is allowed to intervene in her strength, then in one moment are broken like things without consistence. But She too is the Mother, She too has a deep and passionate kindness and her love is also as intense and deep as her wrath. Though her anger and wrath are dreadful to the hostile, She is loved and worshipped by the great, the strong and the noble; for they feel that her blows beat what is rebellious in their material into strength and perfect truth. Nothing can satisfy her and calms down her that falls short of Supreme ecstasies, noblest aims and largest vistas or vision. The Divine force she carries with her.

3. **Mahalakshmi (Harmony)** – The another one is above Wisdom and Strength. She is vivid and sweet and wonderful with her deep secret of beauty and harmony and fine rhythm. She carries with her an intricate and subtle opulence, a compelling attraction and captivating grace.

श्वेताम्बरधरे िर्व नानालङ्कारभरूति ।
जगर्ूति जगन्मातमवहालक्ष्म नमोऽस्तु ते ॥[5]

(श्लोक ८)

In our Stotra-Mantras also the outline of Mahalakshmi is beautifully and divinely recited. Maheshwari can appear too calm and great, Mahakali too swift and formidable for its weakness to bear; but all turn with joy and longing to Mahalakshmi. For She throws the spell of the intoxicating sweetness of the Divine. Yet it is not easy to meet this enchanting power or have her presence. She demands harmony and beauty of the mind and soul, harmony and beauty of the life and surroundings, harmony and beauty in every act and movement. So, if love and beauty are reluctant to be born, she does not come. If she finds herself in men's hearts surrounded with jealousy, envy, hatred, bitterness in thoughts, selfishness, in such hearts the gracious and beautiful Goddess will not linger. For it is through love and beauty that she lays on men the yoke of the Divine.

4. **Mahasaraswati (Perfection)** – The fourth is equipped with her close and profound capacity of intimate knowledge, careful flawless work and quiet and exact perfection in all things.

सरस्वती महाभागो वंद्ये कमललोचने।
वन्द्यारूपे वंशालार्धे वंद्यां िर्ह नमोऽस्तु ते॥

She is the most skilful in executive faculty and very near to the physical Nature. She holds in her nature the intimate and precise knowledge, the subtlety and patience, the discerning eye of the perfect worker. Her province are the science, craft and technique of things, organiser, administrator, artisan and classifier of worlds. She labours in moulding and remoulding each part till it has attained its true form and is put in its exact place in the whole. When her work is finished, nothing has been forgotten, no part has been misplaced or omitted or left in a faulty condition; all remains solid, complete and admirable too. She is a mother to our wants, a friend in our difficulties. Maheshwari lays down the large lines of the world forces, Mahakali drives their energy and impetus, Mahalakshmi discovers their rhythms and measures, but Mahasaraswati presides over their detail of organisation and execution, relation of parts and unfailing exactitude of result and fulfilment.

These are the four great aspects of the Mahashakti. But the Supramental action is only possible when the Four have founded their harmony and freedom of movement in the transformed mind and life and body.

“The unreserved surrender of your inner and outer being will bring this plasticity into all the parts of your nature; consciousness will awaken everywhere in you by constant openness to the Wisdom and Light, the Force, the Harmony and Beauty, the Perfection that come flowing down from above.”

The Transformative potential of the four aspects of Mahashakti and their relevance in today's world:

Aurobindo's concept of Mahashakti emphasizes the evolution of consciousness towards a harmonious union of the material and spiritual domains. This idea resonates with contemporary discussions on personal and collective growth, as well as the pursuit of a more enlightened society.

Maheshwari, in today's world, Maheshwari's wisdom can inspire individuals and leaders to adopt a broader perspective, promoting inclusive and sustainable development. Her influence encourages deep thinking, strategic planning, and a visionary approach to solving global challenges. Mahakali's energy is crucial in today's fast-paced world. Her attributes can empower individuals to take bold actions, confront injustices, and drive societal change. Her transformative power is essential for tackling urgent issues like climate change, social inequality, and political corruption. Mahalakshmi, in contemporary society, Mahalakshmi's attributes promote a balanced approach to life, emphasizing the importance of inner and outer well-being. Her influence can guide individuals and communities towards creating harmonious relationships, fostering creativity, and ensuring economic prosperity without compromising ethical values. Mahasaraswati's qualities are highly relevant in today's world, where expertise and innovation are essential. Her attributes inspire individuals to strive for excellence in their fields, encourage lifelong learning, and foster the meticulous implementation of ideas and projects. Her influence is vital for advancing science, technology, and the arts.

Conclusion: These powers of the Divine Mother can unitedly bring mankind to supramental realisation and again bring down to the matter also. They are more difficult to bring down and have not stood out in front with so much prominence in the evolution of the earth-spirit. But if we desire this transformation, we have to put ourselves in the hands of The Mother, The Mahashakti and let her do unhindered her work within us. Only things we should have, consciousness, plasticity and unreserved surrender to that Power. The integration of these four aspects—wisdom, power, harmony, and skill—provides a comprehensive framework for personal and collective growth. In a rapidly evolving world, their transformative potential offers guidance for navigating complexities and achieving a balanced, progressive society.

Together, the four aspects of Mahashakti inspire us to cultivate a deeper consciousness, act with purpose, create harmonious environments, and strive for excellence. Their relevance lies in the holistic approach they offer for addressing contemporary challenges and fostering a brighter, more integrated future.

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