

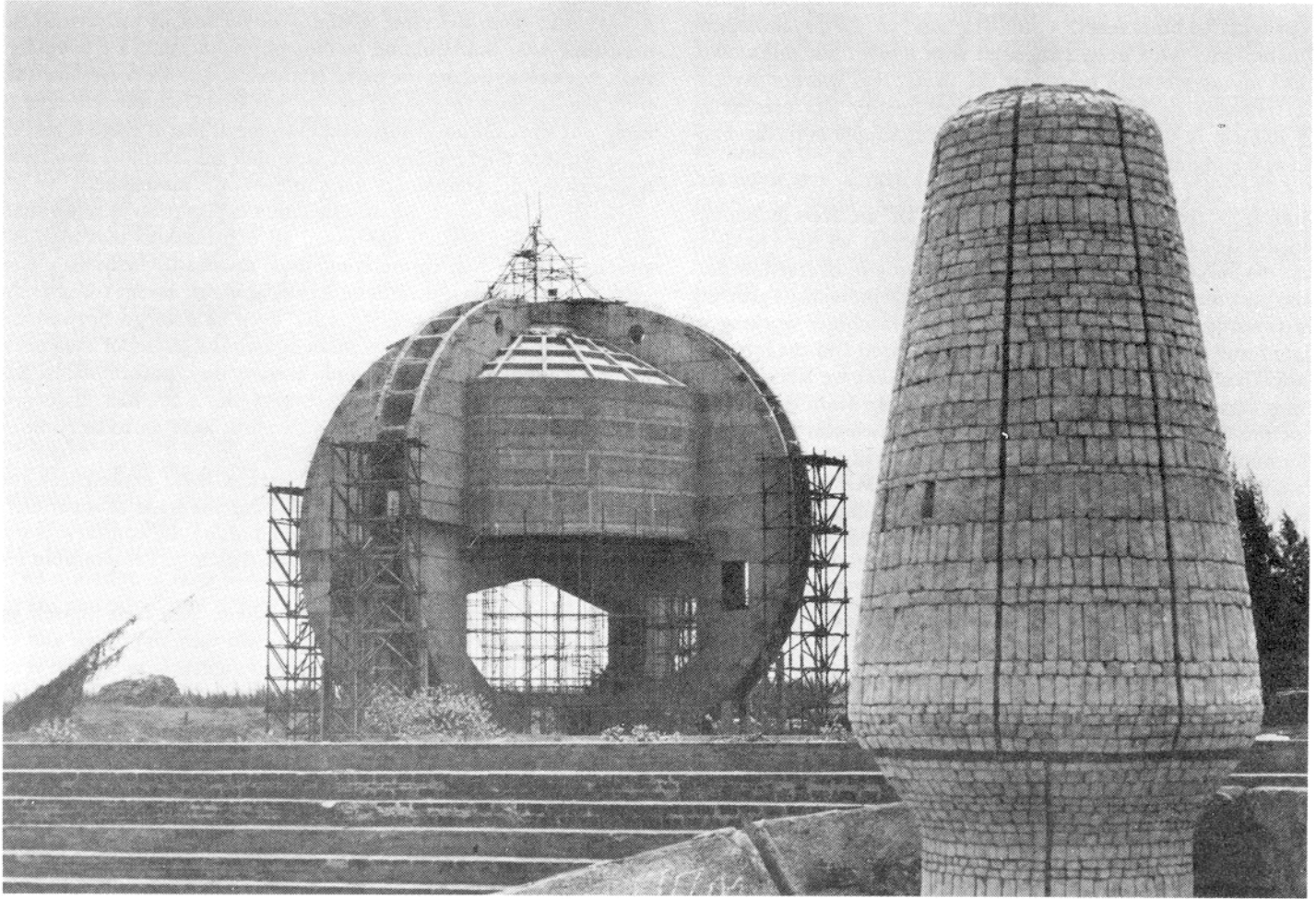


Collaboration

FALL 1978

Mt. Tremper, NY 12457, U.S.A.

Vol. V, No. 1



Matrimandir, April 1978; the completed room of the Inner Chamber can be seen. The inaugural lotus urn is in the foreground. (Photo by Kiran K.)

We want to thank our readers for their generous response to our notice that *Collaboration* is now on a subscription basis. We regret we were not able to answer each one individually for their donations and the many letters of appreciation you sent as well.

We invite our readers to send us not only news and activities that might be of general interest, but also to submit their own writings, essays, reflections on the vision and Yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, its application to various areas of life and human endeavor. (Please limit the length to 500 words. In special cases we may con-

sider longer pieces.) Poetry is also welcome. Everything is subject to our editorial approval.

The first issue of our fourth year of publication opens with a feature on the subject of women as viewed by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. This too, like *Savitri* in our last issue, seems especially appropriate a subject during the Mother's Centenary Year. We present some brief passages expressing their spiritual view and hope they will encourage further reading and a general effort for progress towards the liberation of both men and women from the old restrictive views.

• After I knew that God was a woman, I learned something from far-off about love; but it was only when I became a woman and served my Master and Paramour that I knew love utterly.

• Not sex exactly, but what might be called the masculine and feminine principle [is there in the psychic being]. It is a difficult question [whether sex is altered in rebirth]. There are certain lines the reincarnation follows and so far as my experience goes and general experience goes, one follows usually a single line. But the alteration of sex cannot be declared impossible. There may be some who do alternate. The presence of feminine traits in a male does not necessarily indicate a past feminine birth—they may come in the general play of forces and their formations. There are besides qualities common to both sexes. Also a fragment of the psychological personality may have been associated with a birth not one's own. One can say of a certain person of the past, "that was not myself, but a fragment of my psychological personality was present in him." Rebirth is a complex affair and not so simple in its mechanism as in the popular idea.

• But it is from the self-determination of the free individual within the free collectivity in which he lives that we have to start, because so only can we be sure of a healthy growth of freedom and because too the unity to be arrived at is that of individuals growing freely towards perfection and not of human machines working in regulated unison or of souls suppressed, mutilated and cut into one or more fixed geometrical patterns. The moment we sincerely accept this idea, we have to travel altogether away from the old notion of the right of property of man in man which still lurks in the human mind where it does not possess it. The trail of this notion is all over our past, the right of property of the father over the child, of the man over the woman, of the ruler or the ruling class or power over the ruled, of the State over the individual. The child was in the ancient patriarchal idea the live property of the father; he was his creation, his production, his own reproduction of himself; the father, rather than God or the universal Life in place of God, stood as the author of the child's being; and the creator has every right over his creation, the producer over his manufacture.... So too the subjection of woman, the property of the man over the woman, was once an axiom of social life and has only in recent times been effectively challenged. So strong was or had become the instinct of this domination in the male animal man, that even religion and philosophy have had to sanction it, very much in that formula in which Milton expresses the height of masculine egoism, "He for God only, she for God in him,"—if not actually indeed for him in the place of God. This idea too is crumbling into the dust, though its remnants still cling to life by many strong tentacles of old legislation, continued instinct, persistence of traditional ideas; the fiat has come out against it in the claim of woman to be regarded, she too, as a free individual being.

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• I wish to speak to you about the problem of woman, a problem as old as humanity in its appearance, but infinitely older in its source. For if one seeks to find the law governing it and solving it, one must go back to the origin of the universe, even beyond the creation.

Some among the more ancient traditions, perhaps the most ancient ones, have given as the cause of the creation of the universe the will of a Supreme Absolute to manifest in a self-objectification and the first act of this objectification seemed to have been the emanation of the creative Consciousness. Indeed, these ancient traditions speak habitually of the Absolute in the masculine and the Consciousness in the feminine gender, thus making of the primordial gesture the source of the differentiation between man and woman and, with the same stroke, giving a sort of priority to the masculine over the feminine. Although, in fact, they are one, identical, coexistent before the manifestation, it was the masculine that took the decision first and it was he that emanated the feminine to carry out the decision; which comes to mean that if there is no creation without the feminine, there is neither the feminine manifestation without the preliminary decision from the masculine.

Certainly one could ask whether this explanation is not a little too human. But, to tell the truth, all explanations that man can give, at least in their formulation, must necessarily be human. For, certain exceptional individuals, in their spiritual ascent towards the Unknowable and Unthinkable, have been able to go beyond the human nature and identify themselves with the object of their seeking in an experience sublime and, in some way, unformulable. But as soon as they wanted to make others profit by their discovery, they had to formulate it and their formula, in order to be comprehensible, had to be human and symbolic.

One may ask, however, whether it was these experiences and what they reveal that were responsible for the sense of superiority which man bears always towards woman or, on the contrary, it was the sense of superiority so widespread that it was responsible for the formula given to the experiences.

In any case the indubitable fact is there. Man feels himself superior and wants to dominate, the woman feels oppressed and revolts, openly or secretly; and the eternal quarrel between the sexes continues from age to age, identical in essence, innumerable in its forms and shades.

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It is well understood that man throws the whole blame upon the woman, as woman in the same way throws the entire blame upon man. In truth the blame should be equally distributed between the two and neither should boast as being superior to the other. Moreover, as long as this notion of superiority and inferiority is not eliminated, nothing or nobody can put an end to the misunderstanding that divides the human race into two opposite camps and the problem will not be solved.

So many things have been said and written on the problem; it has been approached from so many different angles that a volume would not be sufficient for an exposition of it in all its aspects. Generally speaking, the theories are excellent; in any case, each one has its own virtue, but the practice has proved less happy, and I do not know if, on the level of achievement, we are any more advanced than the stone age. For in their mutual relations man and woman are, at once and towards each other, quite despotic masters and somewhat pitiable slaves.

Yes, slaves; for so long as you have desires and preferences and attachments, you are a slave of these things and of those persons on whom you depend for their fulfilment.

Thus woman is the slave of man because of the attraction she feels for the male and his strength, because of the desire for a "home" and for the security it brings, lastly because of the attachment to maternity; man too on his side is a slave of woman because of his spirit of possession, his thirst for power and domination, because of his desire for sexual relation and because of his attachment to the little comforts and conveniences of a married life.

That is why no law can liberate women unless they free themselves: men too likewise cannot, in spite of all their habits of domination, cease to be slaves unless they are freed from all their inner slavery.

This state of secret conflict, often not admitted, always present in the subconscious, even in the best cases, seems inevitable, unless human beings rise above their ordinary consciousness to identify themselves with the perfect consciousness, to be unified with the supreme Reality. For when you attain this higher consciousness you perceive that the difference between man and woman reduces itself to a difference purely physical.

As a matter of fact, there might have been upon earth originally a pure masculine and a pure feminine type, each with its clearly differentiated special characters; but in course of time, inevitable mixture, heredity, sons resembling their mother and daughters resembling their father, social progress, similar occupation—all this has made the discovery of any pure type an impossibility in our days: all men are feminine in many of their aspects, all women too are masculine in respect of many characters, especially in modern societies. Unfortunately, on account of the physical appearance, the habit of quarrel continues, even exaggerated perhaps by the spirit of rivalry.

Both man and woman can, however, in their best moments forget the difference of sex, but it reappears at the least provocation, the woman feels she is woman and man knows he is man, and the quarrel starts again indefinitely, in one form or another, open or veiled and all the more bitter the less it is avowed. One may ask if it will not be so till the day when there will be no longer men and women, but living souls expressing their identical origin in sexless bodies.

For we dream of a world in which all these oppositions will at last disappear, where a being will be able to live and prosper who will be the harmonious synthesis of all that is best in human production, identifying conception and execution, vision and creation in one single consciousness and action...

In any case until the appearance of a new conception and a new consciousness compelling Nature to create a new race which will have no need any more to submit to the necessity of animal pro-

creation and will not be under the compulsion of being cut into two complementary sexes, the best that can be done for the progress of the present human race is to treat the two sexes on a footing of perfect equality, to give both one and the same education and training and to teach them to find, through a constant contact with a Divine Reality which is above all sexual differentiation, the source of all possibilities and all harmonies.

• What I object to is the male element and female element. Well, I find that it is not true, and I shall always say: IT IS NOT TRUE. There is an element like this and another like that.... There is an activity like this and an activity like that. But why the devil do you want one to be masculine and the other feminine? It is not like that! This, this masculine...feminine business is a trick of Nature, it has arranged things here like that. So, you see (I am going to tell you): when one descends from above, well, right up there one has no idea of "masculine and feminine" and all that nonsense; as you come down and arrive here it begins to become something real. So you tell yourself: "Well, well! that's how Nature has arranged things." Good! But what I said is that these conceptions—these very conceptions which make one element masculine and the other feminine—this is a conception which has come from below, that is, has come out of man's brain which cannot think otherwise than of MAN and WOMAN—because he is still an animal. There you are! And that's how I feel—I have always felt this, I have said it from the beginning and will repeat it till the very end and if you don't want to hear me say so, don't speak to me about it!

• *Disciple*: When I am in contact with someone, either I am speaking to a man or woman.

Mother: Well, it's a great pity both for you and for the other person.

No, it is just the very opposite of what ought to happen! When you are in contact with someone and speaking with him, it is precisely to what surpasses all animality that you should speak; it is to the soul you must speak, never to the body. Even more is asked of you, for you are asked to address the Divine—not even the soul—the one Divine in every being, and to be conscious of that.

• *Disciple*: What should be the ideal of a modern woman in ordinary life?

Mother: In ordinary life, women can have all the ideals they like, it is not very important.

From the spiritual point of view, men and women are equal in their capacity to realise the Divine. Each one must do so in his (or her) own way and according to his (or her) own possibilities.

• Women are in principle the executive power. You must never forget that. And in order to receive the inspiration, you can take support from a masculine consciousness if you feel the need for it. There is the Supreme Consciousness, which is more certain, but still, if you need an intermediary... But for the execution, it is you [women] who have the power to carry it out in all the details, with all the power of organisation.... I am teaching [the women Members of Parliament] that: do not be submissive to men. It is you who have the power of execution.

[All the above passages are taken from *On Women*, compiled from the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, c 1978 Sri Aurobindo Ashram.]

Mind

• Mind, as we know it, is a reflective mirror which receives presentations or images of a pre-existent Truth or Fact, either external to or at least vaster than itself. It represents to itself from moment to moment the phenomenon that is or has been. It possesses also the faculty of constructing in itself possible images other than those of the actual fact presented to it; that is to say, it represents to itself not only phenomenon that has been but also phenomenon that may be: it cannot, be it noted, represent to itself phenomenon that assuredly will be, except when it is an assured repetition of what is or has been. It has, finally, the faculty of forecasting new modifications which it seeks to construct out of the meeting of what has been and what may be, out of the fulfilled possibility and the unfulfilled, something that it sometimes succeeds in constructing more or less exactly, sometimes fails to realise, but usually finds cast into other forms than it forecasted and turned to other ends than it desired or intended.

• Mind is only a preparatory form of our consciousness. Mind is an instrument of analysis and synthesis, but not of essential knowledge. Its function is to cut out something vaguely from the unknown Thing in itself and call this measurement or delimitation of it the whole, and again to analyse the whole into its parts which it regards as separate mental objects. It is only the parts and accidents that the Mind can see definitely and, after its own fashion, know. Of the whole its only definite idea is an assemblage of parts or a totality of properties and accidents. The whole not seen as a part of something else or in its own parts, properties and accidents is to the mind no more than a vague perception; only when it is analysed and put by itself as a separate constituted object, a totality in a larger totality, can Mind say to itself, "This now I know." And really it does not know. It knows only its own analysis of the object and the idea it has formed of it by a synthesis of the separate parts and properties that it has seen. There its characteristic power, its sure function ceases, and if we would have a greater, a profounder and a real knowledge,—a knowledge and not an intense but formless sentiment such as comes sometimes to certain deep but inarticulate parts of our mentality,—Mind has to make room for another consciousness which will fulfil Mind by transcending it or reverse and so rectify its operations after leaping beyond it: the summit of mental knowledge is only a vaulting-board from which that leap can be taken.

• Mind in its essence is a consciousness which measures, limits, cuts out forms or things from the indivisible whole and contains them as if each were a separate integer. Even with what exists only as obvious parts and fractions, Mind establishes this fiction of its ordinary commerce that they are things with which it can deal separately and not merely as aspects of a whole. For, even when it knows that they are not things in themselves, it is obliged to deal with them as if they were things in themselves.... It is this essential characteristic of Mind which conditions the workings of all its operative powers, whether conception, perception, sensation or the dealings of creative thought. [From *The Life Divine*, I:118-9, 127, 162. c 1977 Sri Aurobindo Ashram.]

• The characteristic energy of pure Mind is change and the more it acquires elevation and organisation, the more this law of mind assumes the aspect of a continual enlargement, improvement and better arrangement of its gains and so of a continual passage from a smaller and simpler to a larger and more complex perfection. For Mind, unlike bodily life, is infinite in its field, elastic in its expan-

sion, easily variable in its formations. Change, then, self-enlargement and self-improvement are its proper instincts. Its faith is perfectibility, its watchword is progress.

• [Man] has in him not a single mentality, but a double and a triple, the mind material and nervous, the pure intellectual mind which liberates itself from the illusions of the body and the senses and a divine mind above intellect which in its turn liberates itself from the imperfect modes of the logically discriminative and imaginative reason. Mind in man is first enmeshed in the life of the body, where in the plant it is entirely involved and in animals always imprisoned. It accepts this life as not only the first but the whole condition of its activities and serves its needs as if they were the entire aim of existence. But the bodily life in man is a base, not the aim, his first condition and not his last determinant.

• And yet Mind also, our mentality, our thinking, understanding part, is not our Self, is not That, not the end or the beginning; it is a half-light thrown from the Infinite. The experience of Mind as the creator of forms and things and of these forms and things existing in the Mind only, the thin subtle basis of idealism, is also a delusion, a half-view taken for the whole, a pale refracted light idealised as the burning body of the sun and its splendour.

• [Man's] life-mind,—its instincts, its impulses,—is not and cannot be self-sufficient and predominant as it is in the lower creation. It has been seized upon by the intelligence and profoundly altered by it even where the development of the intelligence is imperfect and itself most insistent in its prominence. It has lost most of its intuitive character, is indeed now infinitely richer as a supplier of materials and data, but no longer quite itself or at ease in its action because half rationalised, dependent at least on some infused element however vague of reasoning or intelligent activity and incapable of acting to good purpose without the aid of the intelligence. Its roots and place of perfection are in the subconscious from which it emerges and man's business is to increase in the sense of a more conscient knowledge and action. Man reverting to a governance of his being by the life-mind would become either irrational and erratic or dull and imbecile and would lose the essential character of manhood.

The intuition, on the other hand, has its roots and its place of perfection in the supramental which is now to us the superconscient, and in mind it has no pure and no organised action, but is immediately mixed with the action of the reasoning intelligence, is not quite itself, but limited, fragmentary, diluted and impure, and depends for the ordered use and organisation of its suggestions on the aid of the logical reason. The human mind is never quite sure of its intuitions until they have been viewed and confirmed by the judgment of the rational intelligence.... Man surmounting reason to organise his thought and life by the intuitive mind would be already surpassing his characteristic humanity and on the way to the development of supermanhood. This can only be done above: for to attempt it below is only to achieve another kind of imperfection: there the mental reason is a necessary factor.

The reasoning intelligence is an intermediate agent between the life-mind and the yet undeveloped supramental intuition. Its business is that of an intermediary, on the one side to enlighten the life-mind, to make it conscient and govern and regulate as much as may be its action until Nature is ready to evolve the supramental energy which will take hold of life and illumine and perfect all its movements by converting its obscurely intuitive motions of desire, emotion, sensation and action into a spiritually and luminously spontan-

taneous life manifestation of the self and spirit. On the other higher side its mission is to take the rays of light which come from above and translate them into terms of intelligent mentality and to accept, examine, develop, intellectually utilise the intuitions that escape the barrier and descend into mind from the superconscience. It does this until man, becoming more and more intelligently conscious of himself and his environment and his being, becomes also aware that he cannot really know these things by his reason, but can only make a mental representation of them to his intelligence.

The reason, however, tends in the intellectual man to ignore the limitations of its power and function and attempts to be not an instrument and agent but a substitute for the self and spirit...and endeavours to become the absolute ruler of mind and life. This it cannot do successfully, because it depends on the lower life intuition and on the covert supermind and its intuitive messages for its own real substance and existence. It can only appear to itself to succeed because it reduces all its experience to rational formulas and blinds itself to half the real nature of the thought and action that is behind it and to the infinite deal that breaks out of its formulas....

The characteristic power of the reason in its fullness is a logical movement assuring itself first of all available materials and data by observation and arrangement, then acting upon them for a resultant knowledge gained, assured and enlarged by a first use of the reflective powers, and lastly assuring itself of the correctness of its results by a more careful and formal action, more vigilant, deliberate, severely logical which tests, rejects or confirms them according to certain secure standards and processes developed by reflection and experience....

The operation of the logical reason is the same in all these fields of its data. At first the intelligence amasses a store of observations, associations, percepts, receipts, concepts, makes a more or less obvious arrangement and classification of relations and of things according to their likenesses and differences, and works upon them by an accumulating store and a constant addition of ideas, memories, imaginations, judgments; these make up primarily the nature of activity of our knowledge....

Memory is the indispensable aid of the mind to preserve its past observations, the memory of the individual but also of the race, whether in the artificial form of accumulated records or the general race memory preserving its gains with a sort of constant repetition and renewal....

The memory and judgment are both aided by the imagination which, as a function of knowledge, suggests possibilities not actually presented or justified by the other powers and opens the doors to fresh vistas. [*The Synthesis of Yoga*, pp. 16, 8, 281, 818-823. c 1976 Sri Aurobindo Ashram.]

LIFE AS AN ANVIL *The Mother*

The outer life, the activity of each day and each instant, is it not the indispensable complement of our hours of meditation and contemplation? And is not the proportion of time given to each the exact image of the proportion which exists between the amount of effort to be made for the preparation and the realisation? For meditation, contemplation, Union is the result obtained—the flower that blooms; the daily activity is the anvil on which all the elements must pass and repass in order to be purified, refined, made supple and ripe for the illumination which contemplation gives to them. All these elements must be thus passed one after the other through the crucible before outer activity becomes needless for the integral development. Then is this activity turned into the means to manifest Thee so as to awaken the other centres of consciousness to the same dual work of the forge and the illumination. Therefore are pride and satisfaction with oneself the worst of all obstacles. Very

The essential purpose and sign of the growing evolution here is the emergence of consciousness in an apparently inconscient universe, the growth of the consciousness and with it growth of the light and power of the being; the development of the form and its functioning or its fitness to survive, although indispensable, is not the whole meaning or the central motive. The greater and greater awakening of consciousness and its climb to a higher and higher level and a wider extent of its vision and action is the condition of our progress towards that supreme and total perfection which is the aim of our existence. It is the condition also of the total perfection of the body. There are higher levels of the mind than any we now conceive and to these we must one day reach and rise beyond them to the heights of a greater, a spiritual existence. As we rise we have to open to them our lower members and fill these with those superior and supreme dynamisms of light and power; the body we have to make a more and more and even entirely conscious frame and instrument, a conscious sign and seal and power of the spirit. As it grows in this perfection, the force and extent of its dynamic action and its response and service to the spirit must increase, the control of the spirit over it also must grow and the plasticity of its developed and acquired parts of power and in its automatic responses down to those that are now purely organic and seem to be the movements of a mechanic inconscience. This cannot happen without a veritable transformation and a transformation of the mind and life and very body is indeed the change to which our evolution is secretly moving and without this transformation the entire fullness of a divine life on earth cannot emerge. In this transformation, the body itself can become an agent and a partner. It might indeed be possible for the spirit to achieve a considerable manifestation with only a passive and imperfectly conscious body as its last or bottommost means of material functioning, but this could not be anything perfect or complete. A fully conscious body might even discover and work out the right material method and process of a material transformation. For this, no doubt, the spirit's supreme light and power and creative joy must have manifested on the summit of the individual consciousness and sent down their fiat into the body, but still the body may take in the working out its spontaneous part of self-discovery and achievement. It would be thus a participator and agent in its own transformation and the integral transformation of the whole being; this too would be a part and a sign and evidence of the total perfection of the body. [From *The Supramental Manifestation Upon Earth*, pp. 21-22. c 1973 Sri Aurobindo Ashram.]

modestly we must take advantage of all the minute opportunities offered to knead and purify some of the innumerable elements, to make them supple, to make them impersonal, to teach them forgetfulness of self and abnegation and devotion and kindness and gentleness; and when all these modes of being have become habitual to them, then are they ready to participate in the Contemplation, and to identify themselves with Thee in the supreme Contemplation. That is why it seems to me that the work must be long and slow even for the best, and that striking conversions cannot be integral. They change the orientation of the being, they put it definitively on the straight path; but truly to attain the goal, none can escape the need of innumerable experiences of every kind and every instant.

O Supreme Master, who shinest in my being and in each being, let Thy Light be manifest and the reign of Thy Peace come for all. [From *Prayers and Meditations*.]

THE GREAT HOLOCAUST—CHHINNAMASTA

Nolini Kanta Gupta

[A report of a private talk.]

Throughout the ages whenever there has been a new creation on earth, or manifestation of a new consciousness in earthly atmosphere, it was always preceded by a stage of destruction and dissolution of the old. The dance of Shiva has its two aspects—the bliss of creation and also the joy of destruction...both have been equally necessary up till now—complimentary to each other.

Destruction means the destruction of the unnecessary, unfit, all that refuses to accept the new advent, obstructs it, tries to deny it,—all that is out of harmony with the inevitable new future. Earthly evolution is a march of progression—if you fail to keep up with that speed you have to move out of the way, rather you are removed to make room for the next coming stage.

If you are in the older creation or at least are in love with it, attached to it, the destruction becomes painful even fearful and repulsive to you. But if you aspire for the new, are willing to participate in the dawning future, already belong to it, you feel the necessity of this destruction and welcome it to hasten the work and even rejoice in it. You enjoy the destruction—at least Shiva does, the Divine Force does, it seems.

Something like that, in fact the same thing is happening now. Mahakali has started her work of preparation, of elimination—of destruction and dissolution—to clear the path of Mahalakshmi and Mahasaraswati,—the infinite love and compassion of Maheshwari sanctions and supports it. The new creation, the new world that Mother built and is still building with so much love and care is ready—ready to manifest, to reveal itself in the material field, waiting for materialising on earth, but earth is not yet ready, rather man is not ready, he still refuses it, clings to its old dead world—and clings fast to it—he loves this game of falsehood and crookedness. Perhaps truth is too bright, too compelling for his egoistic nature and obscure make-up—so he denies, obstructs as much as he can the new consciousness, the new reality. Mother out of her infinite love tried to take this denial on her own self, tried to convince and change as many elements as was possible—then, when nothing more could be done, She withdrew leaving the field to her other aspect to do what was unavoidable—the breaking up of the old rigid world. It is a necessity for the ultimate good of earth and even man.

The work has started—call it the dance of Shiva, the tandava or the dance of Kali the fierce Mother—it has started and is proceeding faster and faster on its way. Destruction, dissolution, decomposition—yes that is the first result and we are witnessing and participating in it, whether we like it or not. It is the Supreme Lord's decree—it is bound to happen. Those who cling to Truth survive, those who make alliance with Falsehood perish—man has no other way than to make a choice, consciously or unconsciously.

It is an inevitable stage, there is nothing to lament or grieve if you are an aspirant of Truth.

"The hour is often terrible, a fire and a whirlwind and a tempest, a treading of the winepress of the wrath of God; but he who can stand up in it on the truth of his purpose is he who shall stand; even though he fall, he shall rise again; even though he seems to pass on the wings of the wind, he shall return. Nor let worldly prudence whisper too closely in thy ear; for it is the hour of the unexpected." [From *The Hour of God*.]

A VISION

Nolini Kanta Gupta

The Mother says: "Just see. Look at me. I am here come back in my new body,—divine, transformed and glorious. And I am the same mother, still human. Do not worry. Do not be concerned about your own self, your progress and realisation, nor about others. I am here, look at me, gaze into me, enter into me wholly, merge into my being, lose yourself into my love, with your love. You will see all problems solved, everything done. Forget all else, forget the world. Remember me alone, be one with me and my love."

[Both passages from *Collected Works of Nolini Kanta Gupta*, vol. 6, c 1977 Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education.]



The descending triangle represents Sat-Chit-Ananda.

The ascending triangle represents the aspiring answer from matter under the form of life, light and love.

The function of both - the central square - is the perfect manifestation having at its centre the Avatar of the Supreme - the lotus.

The water - inside the square - represents the multiplicity, the creation.

This is not a Yoga in which abnormality of any kind, even if it be an exalted abnormality, can be admitted as a way to self-fulfilment or spiritual realisation. Even when one enters into a spiritual and intellectual experience, there should

If a perfect manifestation of the Divine in material life is the end of evolution, transformation of human nature is the principal means of achieving it. Man in his unregenerate state manifests not the Divine but the animal from which he has emerged and upon which he stands in his endeavour to transcend himself. His inherent divinity lies asleep or half-awake within him, unable to come to the fore and express itself because of the crudeness and opacity of his natural instruments. Even when it is fully awake and strong enough to reveal something of its love and light and peace and purity, it finds only one or two parts of the nature purified and prepared to be the channels of that revelation, while the rest lie lapped in unredeemed obscurity. For a full and unobstructed self-manifestation of the Divine in man, it is essential that human nature should undergo a radical and integral transformation by a complete elimination of its basic animality and a conversion of all its members, faculties, and functions into their divine counterparts. Nothing short of a fully divinised nature can manifest the integral Divine.

What Is Transformation?

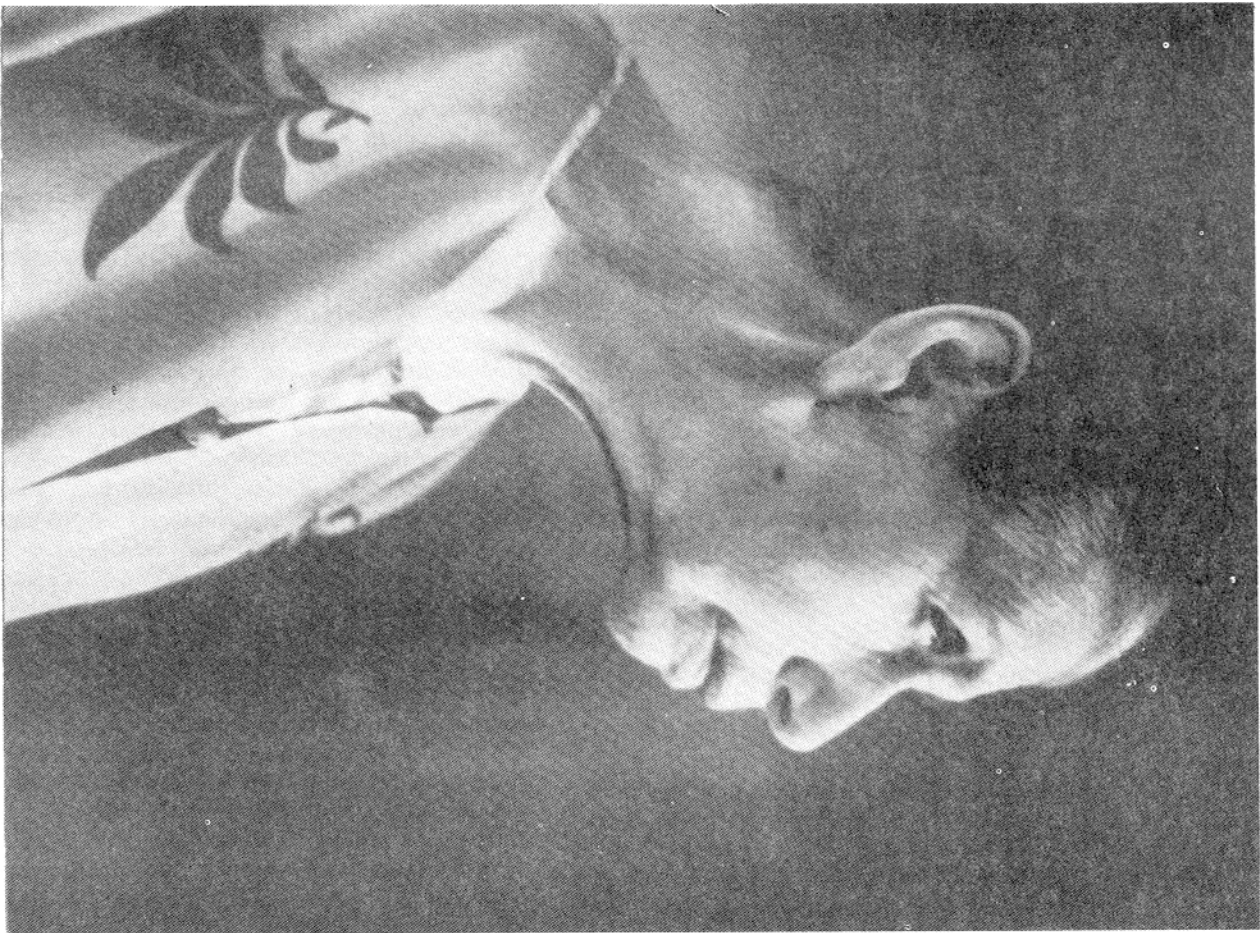
In the philosophy of the Mother's Yoga as well as in Sri Aurobindo's, the word "transformation" bears a special and very comprehensively profound sense. It is the keyword of the long and arduous process of total self-perfection which is the indispensable prerequisite of divine manifestation. Transformation means a radical change and conversion of human nature, its thorough transmutation and transfiguration. Let us try to understand what it really amounts to. Human nature in its unperfected state is composed of a mind of ignorance seeking for knowledge, a life of desires and passions and dogging discontent, and a fragile body, conservative in its inertia and insensible to the higher values of existence. This triple mechanism has always opposed the soul's transcendence of the human formula and assumption and expression of the divine; and yet, paradoxical as it may seem, it has been created to be the very means of that expression. Derived from the inconscience of Matter and conditioned by it, the mechanism is found to be much too dense and inapt to meet the demands of the evolving soul, the disabling weight of ignorance and the downward pull of material inertia greatly impeding its necessary self-modification and self-adaptation. The soul, exerting a steady ethico-spiritual will, effects a certain amount of purification, sometimes even a great amount—it rays out something of its light into the mind, transmits something of its peace and calm and detachment into the vital, and controls some of the movements of the body; but it finds that there is a limit to this purification, which cannot be easily overpassed. This has been the invariable experience of most of the spiritual disciplines of the world. A certain inherent imperfection of human nature has been taken for granted and put up with. It is only a few dynamic Yogas, such as the Vedic and Tantric in India, and the most illumined of the ancient mystery cults in the West, that sought to cross the Rubicon and achieve something like a thorough purification and mastery of human nature. But mastery is not transformation. And, besides, never has the result been commensurate with the endeavour—the stuff of human nature proving a little too intractable to the will of ethical or spiritualised mind of man, which was the only means the Spirit could employ to prepare its vehicle of expression on earth. Some Yogas did register a comparative success, but it was either unilateral or partial, never the sovereign victory which was their ideal.

Perhaps there was something lacking in their ideal itself. Perhaps they did not bestow on the nether bases of life the same amount of attention as they bestowed on its radiant peaks; or, as in the case of the Tantra, in their exploration of the submerged regions of human consciousness, they let go their hold on the light of the peaks and

floundered in the reeking swamps. Perhaps many of them failed to command the integral vision of the omnipresent Reality—the Superconscient, the Subliminal, the mentally Conscient, the Subconscient, and the Inconscient—and discover the supreme divine Principle whose all-achieving dynamic could effect a total transformation of human nature. So, in spite of high transcendental realisations, they could not compel life to be the manifesting instrument of the Divine.

As we have said above, by transformation the Mother means not a mere purification and enlightenment of nature, an ethical sublimation, but a fundamental change and conversion of the very poise and constituents of the whole nature. What are the poise and the constituents? The normal poise of human nature is an ego-centric triplicity of mind, life, and body, separated in its individualised formation from the world, and yet carrying on perforce a commerce of mutuality and interchange with it, which is the condition of its development and growth. This poise, though inevitable and indispensable in the lower stages of evolution when the individuality is being formed around the nuclear ego, is a wrong poise, opposed to the essential truth of unity which is the bed-rock principle of all existence. A conversion of this normal poise by the process of transformation will mean a reversal to the unitarian as opposed to the Separative consciousness. The whole being will then live in and act from a permanent consciousness of unity, seeing itself in all and all in itself, and dealing with the world of diversity as if it was—as, indeed, it is—a multiple self-deploying of the One.

The constituent elements of the nature of man are the physical body, the vital, that is to say, the principle and active formation of life, and the mind. Behind this triple formation is the psyche or the soul evolving in this nature for a divinely perfect self-expression and self-fulfilment on earth. But the body, life, and mind, being derived from material inconscience, are normally turbid and impure, and cannot mirror the immaculate purity of the soul. The soul, however, goes on purifying them by infusing into them its aspiration, devotion, peace, and freedom. In this way, a considerable purity, plasticity and transparency may be established in the nature, but the basic defects and disabilities persist, in however diminished a form, and prevent a full divine outflowing. Now, conversion is calculated to rid the nature of these very basic defects and limitations. Matter, life, and mind have their spiritual counterparts in Existence, Consciousness-Force and Supermind respectively. If Matter is converted into the immortal substance of the eternal Existence, life into the luminous Consciousness-Force, and mind into the Supermind, they shed for ever their obscuring deficiencies and become perfect instruments of the Divine. This is conversion and transformation—a radical sublimation of the lower nature of man into the higher nature, *para prakriti*. But this sublimation does not imply suppression or annihilation; the triple formation of mind, life and body persists and acts, but with a new consciousness, a new dynamism, and a new triumphant effectivity. The Upanishads say that there is nothing here that is not there above, and nothing there that is not here. This formula not only links the earth to Heaven, but discovers Heaven even in the murk and slime of the earth; and the inescapable corollary to this formula is that Heaven is in the earth in order that earth may live in Heaven. All the divine principles and powers that make up the splendour of Heaven are involved or partly evolved in the material world, and can be fully evolved. Earth can become Heaven and man divine. This is the logic of transformation. This is real Resurrection or New Birth of man, far more radical and integral than the current conception of it. [To be continued. From *In the Mother's Light*, by Rishabhchand, c 1967 by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust.]





The first topic today is one of study groups, action groups, and such other select bodies that come into being for specific purposes. Why is it that some thrive, some meet with an untimely end, some prolong a useless existence for a long time and a few add strength to themselves day by day and become useful units of society? The truth is that when people get together to form groups they come with very good intentions, but in the course of the formation, say the drawing up of the constitution, the enunciation of its ideals and so on, the general tendency is to lay down very precise rules devised by some of the learned minds of the group or by those who are in a position to take the lead; they expect the whole group or unit to conform to them, to grow into a mould that is imposed upon it from the very beginning. This is the main cause why after a time the groups or the units cease to progress and start disintegrating within themselves. We forget that these groups consist of living individuals, growing souls, and unless each constituent unit, each member of the group is encouraged to express himself, to utilise the existence of the group for his own progress, the purpose of the group is not served. When only a few individuals in the group are allowed to dominate the proceedings of a group, to impose their own ideas on the developing lives of the group and the rest are denied their due expression and forced to follow the dominant few, there is a gap between those who truly profit at a certain level from the existence of the group and those who just continue to be without any particular significance or purpose. This fact must be recognised and each individual should be treated as a living cell of the body. Unless each cell is helped to thrive by the rest, the general vitality of the group suffers. The responsibility of each member of such a group is clearly, first, to form himself into a useful unit of the group by keeping his own consciousness at the highest level possible when he functions in that group and secondly to provide encouragement and facilities to the others to develop in the same manner. In other words, it must never be forgotten that the health of a group depends upon a cooperative endeavour, a spontaneous get-together, an adjustment, a subordinating of one's own ego to the general good.

The second topic relates to thoughts. How to acquire mastery over thoughts? In the first place, the question that arises is why at all we should strive to acquire mastery over thought? The answer is clear. Most of our activities in life have their background in our own mind. Our thinking, the kind of the thoughts that we think influence to a large extent the activity that we put forth in our life. For that purpose it is necessary that we first analyse our own mind and see to what extent our thoughts are really our own and to what extent they are just thoughts borrowed from the thoughts of others or thoughts that have floated into our mind from the general atmosphere. Once we know this, it should be possible to reject the thoughts that come from foreign sources and then pay attention to the thoughts that arise within ourselves. In the process we stop acting according to the thoughts that are not our own, but belong to the environment, social and domestic.

As regards actions that flow from our own thoughts, we first observe our own thoughts, find out their nature, to what extent these thoughts have affinity with our own type, to what extent we are influenced by extraneous factors; and after examining this we exert ourselves towards an effective direction of our thought and activity. That is, we try to choose our thoughts; we try to determine the direction in which our thinking shall flow. Then arises the capital step. From among the various thoughts that occur in our minds we see some are recurring, some are not related to the immediate situation, the local circumstances, but there are a few which are fairly permanent. Of these we should choose one capital idea, one noble

idea which can lift us out of the normal petty rounds of our existence and organise our whole round of thoughts around this chosen idea. That is not easy.

Once we decide which is to be the ideal around which our minds are to be organised, there comes the question of a serious discipline, for a discipline is necessary. As the Mother says, life without discipline is a waste. I will not accept it if it is pointed out that the Mother has discouraged the imposition of an external discipline in the Ashram. That is only as far as the outer life of the institution is concerned. She discouraged the framing of rules and regulations and putting them on the notice board, because she felt that a body of people who were serious enough to be awake to their inner quest will certainly not need to be told like schoolboys what to do, what not to do, where to sit, where not to sit and so on. That is why she felt it redundant and almost insulting to hand out notices telling people how to behave. But she always insisted on an inner discipline. She has repeated so often that the inner discipline expected here is far more exacting than the most severe discipline one could think of in the external sphere. This inner discipline has to be worked out at each moment of one's life; for at each moment there is a choice to be made, a choice of thoughts, a choice of emotions, a choice of actions. At each moment one has to decide whether one is going to put one's weight on the side of progression or on the side of regression, whether one is to choose what the Upanishads call the pleasant or the good. This challenge of constant choice calls for the utmost vigilance, keeping the serious seeker at a high level of consciousness and a spontaneous and automatic choosing of the right thing at the right time. Necessarily, the spontaneous choice itself is a product of a cultivated inner background in which the old sense impressions that tend towards an easier life, towards the yielding to temptations of various kinds, are eliminated, and the higher and deeper tendencies soulward, godward, are encouraged. So this inner discipline follows once the seeker decides what shall be the capital idea around which he is to organise his thoughts and his life activities.

That done, the Mother recommends certain broad rules of behaviour, attitudes; first, we must know how to rest mentally. Physical rest does not do as much good as we are apt to think. It is effective for a short while after the suspending of physical activities, but thereafter unless one knows how to rest in the mind, the physical rest ceases to be productive. One should know how to relax the mind, how to check its restless activity and open it to some kind of calm and peace. The physical rest is only the beginning but the real rest that nourishes is the mental rest.

The second rule is that no person should work or exert himself beyond his capacity. It is of course possible to increase one's capacity by a steady, sustained effort, and Nature is a good helper. Nature always pours in energies corresponding to the work one does, but again we can receive them up to a certain point; beyond that, one arrives at the point of breakdown and Nature's energies cannot even be received. A balance has to be preserved.

Thirdly, one must know how to wait. All things do not yield their fruit in a day. One must know when to wait, when to hurry, when to speed up, where to slow down. The Mother says, "To know how to wait is to put time on our side." And above all, there should be the attitude of surrender to the Divine Power, to the Divine Consciousness-Force that is at work. One must build up this attitude of surrender in the whole being, not in the mind alone, so that through surrender one establishes a link with the higher forces and help is received from them. [From *Dynamics of Yoga*, Second Series, c 1977 Dipti Publications.]

MATRIMANDIR OPTICAL SYSTEM

Jim Hurley

Experiments are now underway in Auroville to realize an optical system which will function as the Mother relates in Her vision of the Inner Chamber of the Matrimandir. The Mother describes the Inner Chamber as "a very big room, absolutely bare, receiving a light that comes from above, which would be arranged in such a way that light from above would be concentrated on one place where there would be...whatever we want to put as the center of the city. At first, we had thought of Sri Aurobindo's symbol, but we can put whatever we want. Like that, with a ray of light striking it all the time, which turns, turns,... with the sun, you understand. If that is well done, it will be very good. And then underneath, so that people can sit and meditate, or simply rest, *nothing*, nothing, except something comfortable underneath so that they can sit without getting tired, with probably some pillars, which would serve as backrests, at the same time. Something like that. And that is what I always see. And quite a high room, so that the sun can enter as a ray, according to the time of day, and strike the center which will be there. If that is done, it will be very good."

"This idea of the ray of sun...when I look, straight away, that is what I see. And a ray of sun which could come at all times—it would be arranged in such a way that it comes all the time. *[A gesture following the movement of the sun.]* And then, something would be there, a symbol, which would be both upright so that it can be seen all around, and flat to receive the light fully—what?... And let it not become a religion, for heaven's sake! *[Silence.]*

"Who could find the way to realise that? Because there is no lack of sun here...of course there are days when there isn't any, but after all, there are many days when there is—so that from every side, from any angle, the ray falls, it should be arranged like that. It's a question of geometry." *[From Matrimandir Letter No. 2, February 1978, from a talk of the Mother on 31 December, 1969.]*

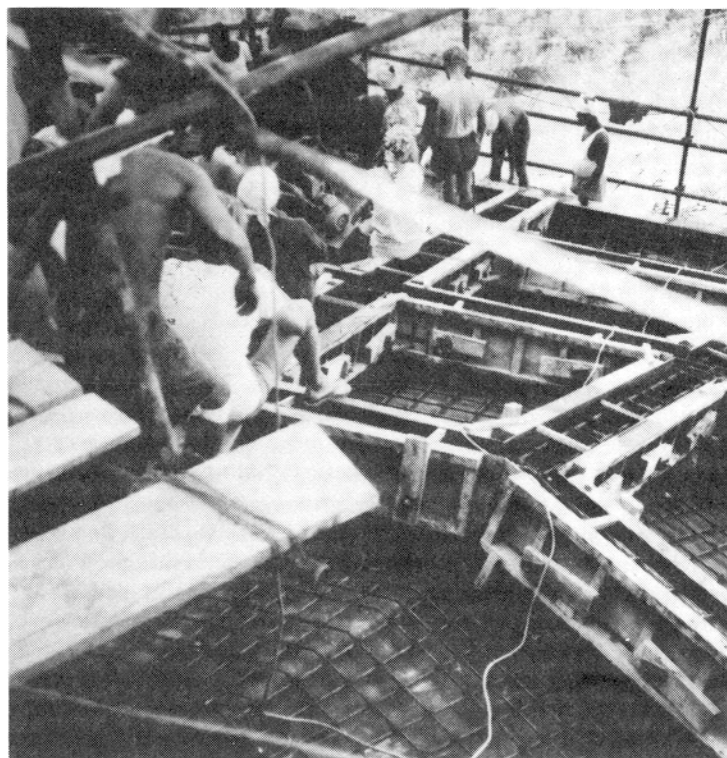
"It is not the work of an architect, it is the work of an engineer, with very precise calculations for the light of the sun, very precise. It needs someone who really knows. The architect has to see that the columns are beautiful, that the walls are beautiful, that the proportions are correct—all that is very good—and then the symbol at the center. The aspect of beauty, of course the architect should see to that, but the whole calculation aspect...and that is the important thing, the play of the sun on the center. Because that becomes the symbol, the symbol of the future realisation." *[From Matrimandir Letter No. 4, May 1978, from a talk by the Mother, 3 January 1970.]*

The Auroville team working on this project has chosen a translucent sphere of 70 cm. diameter (28 inches) as the symbol which will be lit by the sun. They have determined that a sunbeam the size of about 1.5 meters (5 feet) in diameter would provide light of sufficient intensity.

There are two main approaches being taken to direct the sun's beam at the globe. Currently the team is experimenting with a fixed-lens system. If this is not feasible, it may be necessary to construct a solar-tracking system which would follow the sun's motion.

In addition to this, at night and during overcast conditions, an internal lighting system is being planned which will maintain a constant minimum level of light inside the chamber.

Selfishness is the only sin, meanness the only vice, hatred the only criminality. All else can easily be turned into good, but these are obstinate resisters of deity. —Sri Aurobindo



Concreting of the roof of the Inner Chamber of the Matrimandir, April 1978. (Photo by Kiran K.)

NEWS OF MATRIMANDIR CONSTRUCTION

The final concretings closing the Inner Chamber were completed on 7 and 8 April. When the final chetty of concrete was placed, a banner with the Auroville symbol was hoisted over the Matrimandir.

Still to be completed are horizontal linking ribs between the verticals of the North (Mahakali) and South (Maheshwari) pillars. Scaffolding around the chamber's walls has been removed. The scaffolding supporting the chamber walls will remain in place for some time, until all stresses have been taken up within and between the pillars, and the inner curing process of the concrete has proceeded further. Scaffolding inside the chamber will also remain for the plastering of the ceiling.

The next major stage will be the hoisting into place and construction of the two spiral ramps leading up to the Inner Chamber. Each ramp consists of 11 sections weighing up to 800 kilos. They have been under construction in the Matrimandir metal workshop for the past 18 months. The first 3 sections of each ramp will be hoisted by the existing central crane; others will have to be raised from outside by chain pulley. Once in place, they will be double-welded together before being boxed in, probably using a ferro-cement casing.

Seven conceptional approaches to ventilating and "air conditioning" the interior of the Matrimandir by natural process have recently been received from Arizona State University. They represent the work of a number of graduate students operating under the guidance of Prof. Jeffrey Cook, who visited Auroville last January. Arizona State University has also made preliminary studies of the possibility of using photovoltaic cells to illuminate the interior of the Matrimandir at night and on overcast days. However, the cost (more than \$500,000) is too high at present for further investigation. A breakthrough in light-cell technology could make it more feasible *[From Matrimandir Letter No. 4, May 1978.]*

• A cultural program was initiated at the Bharat Nivas, the Indian pavilion, in Auroville, on 14 April, the Tamil New Year. The opening program included a music recital, a painting workshop, and an exhibition of hand-embroidered Kolam tapestries. Other programs scheduled and organized by the Tamil villagers, the Tamil Fund for Rural Development, and Auroville are a nature-cure camp, Yoga-asana classes, a sports festival, folk artisan training, a horticultural and medicinal show, a library-reading room, dance, film, theater and puppet show.

• Seven, an Aurovilian, has announced the beginning of an integrated community near the Bharat Nivas, comprised of a woman from Madras, three villagers, and himself. Seven is also acting as coordinator for Auroville-village relations.

• People interested in longer-term planning for Auroville, communication between people with differing ideas of Auroville's future, etc. have been meeting. The meetings are open, working meetings, not decision-making meetings. All proposals will be brought to the Pour Tous meetings.

• Pour Tous has not been able to adhere to its budget and the deficit has been increasing steadily. Pour Tous feels that there are 3 areas that cannot be cut: food, electricity, cow fodder; leaving afforestation, farms, services, general and community maintenance can be cut. In the area of community maintenance, instead of individuals coming to Pour Tous with requests for personal money, each community will appoint one person who receives the money from Pour Tous and to whom the individual members of the community will go with their needs.

Three comments were made: (1) When a control was instituted in Aspiration kitchen, there was a very visible increase in the amount of food available; (2) Pour Tous presently reckons on a pint of milk per day per person, but since the community dairies do not yet produce anywhere near this amount, people should not

take more from the community dairies; (3) anyone receiving money regularly from outside should contribute for maintenance no matter how long they have been in Auroville.

Population of Auroville

Following is a rough breakdown of the present population of Auroville by community. To the total of approximately 370 residents should be added another 30 persons who are not yet considered permanent residents, but long-term visitors:

Aspiration	120	Fraternity	30
Certitude	52	Kottakarai	28
The Centre	40	Abri-Ami (including	
Douceur	8	Children's Community)	15
Aurovillage	8	Hope	8
Utility	8	Shnarga	6

Forecomers, Pitchandikulam, Fertile, Gratitude, 2 Banyans, Auro-Green, Vijay, Denis, Revelation, 9 Palms, Udayland Discipline each has about 4 residents.

• Visitors to Auroville should register with Francis. As visa administrator, he is often asked by authorities to locate people. Visitors should also let Pour Tous know they are there. "New people" are those who have been there less than a year or have returned after more than a year. In both cases completely new visas must be obtained and an agreement reached with Pour Tous. As a general policy such people will be asked to make a maintenance contribution to Pour Tous.

[Some news items from *Auroville Voice*, 2:2.]

Tax-deductible contributions for the Matrimandir construction or marble or for Auroville may be sent to Matagiri Sri Aurobindo Center, Inc. Please specify what you wish your contribution to be used for.

GENERAL NEWS

• S.S. Shah of Bombay has announced the erection of the Sri Aurobindo Memorial Tower in Bombay. The tower, financed by Mr. Shah, was unveiled on 15 February 1978 by Shri B.G. Deshmukh, municipal commissioner of Greater Bombay. In his speech at the unveiling ceremony, Shri Deshmukh said, "Sri Aurobindo was not only one of the greatest sons of India, he belonged to the whole world."

Mr. Shah has also announced plans to construct the Sri Aurobindo Bhavan on a site near the tower. The Bhavan will house an information center, exhibition hall, children's educational and cultural center, yogic exercise and activity hall for sadhaks, reading, study and meditation halls, an auditorium, and lecture halls. A strip of land opposite the proposed site is to be developed into Sri Auro Park. Mr. Shah may be contacted c/o Kooverji Devshi & Co., Arun Chambers, Tardeo Road, Bombay 400034 India.

• The Sri Aurobindo Sriketra Society, working under the auspices of the Navajyotikaryalaya of Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry, has been developing the community of Dalijoda, a site of some 200 acres about 32 kilometers from Cuttack, in Orissa. About 24 young sadhaks have joined the venture and dedicated their services to improving the area. The sadhaks living there have started work on 15 sections of the area, which bear such names as Grace, Love, Peace, Harmony, etc. Work includes agriculture, poultry keeping, milk production, and handicrafts; children from neighboring villages are being given an integral education as developed in the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. There is a common dining hall, a guesthouse, and an office.

Relics of Sri Aurobindo were installed at the center on 4 April 1978. The project was initiated by Sri Prapati. [From *Oriya Aurovilian*.]

• Dr. V. Madhusudan Reddy, who recently spent 3 months lecturing and teaching at the Cultural Integration Fellowship and other places in San Francisco, has announced the planned publication of 2 symposium volumes: *The Mother's Birth Centenary Volume* will be released on 17 November and the *Sri Nolini Kanta Gupta 90th Birthday Volume* will be released on 24 November. Disciples and prominent scholars have submitted papers for inclusion in the 2 volumes, both being published by the Institute of Human Study in Hyderabad.

The Institute also publishes *New Race*, a quarterly devoted to an exposition of the vision and work of Sri Aurobindo. An annual subscription is \$6.00 and may be ordered directly from Institute of Human Study, 2-2-4/1 University Road, Hyderabad 500768, India.

• Arabinda Basu, from the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, author of several works on Sri Aurobindo, will be returning to the United States in October for one semester of teaching in Illinois. Further details, not available at press time, may be obtained from Matagiri.

• Global Education Associates (552 Park Avenue, East Orange, NJ 07017) has published a special issue of *Whole Earth Papers* (Winter 1978) entitled *Indian Voices on World Order*. The issue is an expression of GEA's "transnational and transcultural dialogue on strategies for achieving a more just and human world order." This issue contains material by Sri Aurobindo and an article, "Four Lines of Consciousness," by M.P. Pandit.

• **East-West Cultural Center** (2865 W. 9th St., Los Angeles, CA 90006; tel. 213-480-8325) observed its 25th birthday last May. The two-day program included an open house with Dr. Judith Tyberg, founder of the center; M.P. Pandit from the Sri Aurobindo Ashram; South Indian dances by Jan Zeitlin; a Siva-Dance recital by a visiting group of the Indian Culture Centre of the Fiji Islands; an Auroville slide show by Robert Dane; a concert by Vasanti from the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, and other activities.

Regular programs of the center include Thursday evenings in the Library with Dr. Tyberg sharing the wisdom and Yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, with mantra and meditation; Sanskrit classes (Dr. Tyberg's own Sanskrit Mantra tapes and Sanskrit Pronunciation Tape are available from the center), the Spiritual Inquiry Group, led by Frederic Ross, Friday afternoons; *The Life Divine* class conducted by Dr. Tyberg Friday evenings.

In June there were some special programs, including a slide presentation by Santosh Devdas, a cinematographer; a talk on "Psychology and Psychotherapy East and West" by Dr. Vasant Merchant of Northern Arizona University.

In July Frederic Ross, vice-president of the center, spoke on "The Coming New Immortal Body." Dr. Framroze Bode, Zoroastrian high priest of Bombay, is at the center for three months and is speaking on mysticism.

For details on other programs at the center and to check schedules, contact the center.

Sri Aurobindo's Action Center (Association for Auroville) (P.O. Box 1977, Boulder, CO 80306; tel. 303-447-0982). Joseph and Muriel Spanier of the center gave two Auroville slide presentations at the University of Colorado recently, one to a class in Indian art and architecture and the other to a class in contemporary religions. Another presentation, sponsored by Reshad Feild at the Mevlana Foundation (a Sufi group), resulted in a contribution to Auroville. In July a presentation was given at the Iliad Bookstore in Livingston, Montana.

In May the center participated in the Rocky Mountain Conference of the Association for Humanistic Psychology at Regis College in Denver and in June in the Celebration 1978 sponsored by the Hunger Project.

In August the Spaniers were interviewed on KGNU radio program *In the Moment*, speaking on Sri Aurobindo, the Mother and Auroville. Also during August Muriel gave a five-week seminar on the Mother, sponsored by the Colorado community, The Circle of Friends.

The center also publishes *Auroville Voice*, a quarterly with articles and letters of Aurovilians. A yearly minimum contribution of \$5.00 is requested for a subscription, which may be ordered directly from the center at the address above.

• **Auroville International, Quebec** (formerly Société pour le Développement d'Auroville) is the new name of the Auroville center in Montreal. According to Guy Lafond in their June newsletter, it is the result of the persistent efforts of Gaston Veronneau, who has worked for it a long time, and to the generosity of Robert Laroche, who undertook the necessary proceedings with the government of Quebec. Guy further reports that the group has a number of plans for the future and they regard their reorganization and new name as a sign of a new step for them.

Those interested in the French editions of the 3 volumes of *Mere* by Satprem, as well as the first volume of the *Agenda*, may obtain copies from this center.

They announce too that Micheline Thouin will be working with Janet Fearn, both residents of Auroville, in establishing a link be-

tween Quebecois in Auroville, and the Auroville International center in Montreal, and overseeing the funds which the center sends to Auroville. Janet has been doing this work alone for five years.

• **Centro Sri Aurobindo** (Diagonal, 434, 3º, 1ª, Barcelona 37 Spain) has published the first issue of its quarterly review *Savitri*. It contains Spanish translations of works by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, as well as essays and stories by Pavitra, Maggi, Nolini Kanta Gupta, Nata, Romen and Sunanda. The center also maintains a list of those works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother available in Spanish. Anyone interested in subscribing to this review should write directly to the center.

• **Auroville International UK** and the Sri Aurobindo Society of Great Britain (82 Bell St., London NW 1, England) have undertaken to enlarge and redecorate the center premises as part of their observance of the Mother's Centenary year. While they are doing most of the work themselves, they do need funds for purchase of the top-floor apartment and the structural alterations. (Donations for this project may be sent to Sri Aurobindo Trust, Ltd., c/o Dhirubhai Shah, 46 Windsor Crescent, Wembley Park, Middlesex, England.)

They announce also that they hoped that Max Payne would speak on Sri Aurobindo at the First National Yoga Seminar, planned by the Albion Yoga Movement in association with the British Wheel of Yoga. The seminar was slated to open on 10 June in Westminster.

The center's April newsletter noted the passing of Mr. M. Dawson, leader of the Sri Aurobindo group in Malaysia. He was 82.

Sri Aurobindo Ashram—Delhi Branch

Few travelers passing through Delhi on their way to and from Pondicherry realize that in Mehrauli, close to the Mother's International School, 8 kilometers from the city, they will find the Sri Aurobindo Ashram of Delhi. Though the Ashram has been functioning with the Mother's blessings since 1950, it is only recently that people have become aware of its services.

For the transient the Ashram has a number of guest rooms at nominal rates which include vegetarian meals. As many as 30 guests can be accommodated and provision can also be made for groups.

The library and reading room offer a good supply of books and publications, and everyone is welcome to attend regular evening satsang with music and meditation, and other programs.

The Ashram also has a small dispensary with a resident doctor, a printing press which publishes two monthlies, vegetable and flower gardens, a book-sales department and adult-education classes in Hindi and other languages, yoga asanas, music and art. In May and June the Ashram holds an International Camp at its Ban Nivas center close to Nainital.

Presently there are 25 persons from several nations living on the premises, some affiliated with the school, others dedicated to the maintenance of the Ashram.

A primary education unit is nearly completed and there are plans for a new secondary unit with gymnasium, auditorium, and swimming pool.

For further information, write Sri Aurobindo Ashram—Delhi Branch, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 11016, India.

L'Agenda de Mere 1951-1960. Paris: Institut de Recherches Evolutives, 1978. 567 pp.

This is the first volume in the projected 13-volume series under this title, being largely the recorded talks of the Mother with Satprem primarily concerning her work of transformation.

This volume contains several different kinds of material: handwritten notes of the Mother; recorded talks of the Mother; letters from Satprem to the Mother about his own sadhana and difficulties; letters from Satprem to the Mother concerning his Tantric guru who helped the Mother during a black-magic attack on her and from whom she learned certain details about occult procedures of pujas which were of help to her in her work.

While Satprem's letters about his own difficulties will strike familiar chords in others, particularly Westerners, one wonders why they are included in this Agenda, for if they can be considered part of the Agenda, so can the letters of numerous other disciples which are not included. Satprem's difficulties, with his active mind and restless vital nature, are apparent early on and remain the same throughout, so his letters in this area become tediously repetitious. He squirms under the atmosphere of the Ashram and conceives a score of plans to go on various adventures in the world—to Africa, to Brazil, to Afghanistan, etc.—and expresses highly romantic ideas. Most of the time the Mother did not give an outer reply to him, but when she did, she was always calling on him to forget himself and serve the ideal, through his love for her.

The Satprem letters constitute perhaps a third of the book. The rest is overwhelmingly rich, fascinating account of the progress of the transformation work in the Mother. (This Agenda, the Mother is quoted as saying on the dedication page, "is my gift to those who love me.")

For 50 years she was involved in the ascent, the raising of all the parts of the being (as well as, eventually, those of her disciples) to progressively higher levels of consciousness, integrating them, establishing the union, and acting "from above." But, she says, acting from above changes nothing in the lower nature.

Consequently, after Sri Aurobindo left his body, she was left alone to find the way to the transformation. And then began the descent, the second phase of the Integral Yoga Sri Aurobindo had outlined. The highest force, or Shakti, descends through the prepared and elevated instrumental being and undertakes all the work. And the Mother, gifted with French lucidity and eloquence, records the minute workings of the descending Shakti in her physical consciousness.

In the face of a harassing task of dealing with a large Ashram and a host of demanding sadhaks, and a torrent of letters ("They are assassinating me with letters," she says to Satprem, who himself continued to write to her). She was able to carry on a kind of double life, as it were, an inner life with a flood of new experiences which began to alter dramatically her way (that is, the body's way) of perceiving and acting in the world. Sri Aurobindo had indicated that as the consciousness became established in successively higher poises, radical reversals would take place, reversals in consciousness. And the Mother records these reversals. What she says will be of incalculable help to those who reach this stage of the sadhana of the Integral Yoga.

For instance, on a mantra: "And I realized that for this sadhana of the body, a mantra is essential. Sri Aurobindo didn't give any, he said that one should be able to do the whole work without recourse to exterior means. If he had reached where we are now, he would have seen that the purely psychological method is not sufficient and that a japa is necessary, because only a japa has a direct action on the body."

Mother also found her own progress, or perhaps better to say the progress of the transformation, to be linked to that of the collectivity around her and to the general human consciousness of the world. While she could attain the highest levels inwardly, the physical transformation demanded a certain level of collective progress before it could advance.

She touches on a wide variety of subjects which she views from her new poise of consciousness: karma and its workings, health and the cure of illness, meditation with a Tantric guru, the evolutionary function of what can be called "loose morals." [So far the book has been issued only in French and can be obtained from Auroville International, Quebec.]

—Eric

AFTER HEARING THE CENTENARY NEW YEAR MUSIC Maggi Lidchi

[The reference is to music composed and played by Sunil Bhattacharya, a longtime resident of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, for 1972. Sunil has composed music for many years, and when the Mother stopped improvising New Year music, as she had done for years, she allowed Sunil to prepare it. He is also writing music for Savitri.]

No longer glimpses, gleams or corridors of light
But light cascading undiminished,
Carolling and quick and bright,
God-music beckoning, God-music beckoning.

At first too stunned, too unaware to heed
We looked
And let the plectrum skate and slide upon the mirror of our soul
Then pluck a first deep chord like ruby's light.
Another shook and opened wide the door
On trembling matter's ear
And plunged within a hand to tune our substance to the dawn
Of change from night to light,
From dead to living day.

Pluck long arpeggios of deep, of strong delight from our
deep sleeping,
Pry loose our timid, nestling, guarded hearts
And make our beings sing and dance like this, like music
No unawakened voice may say;
At last, at last the first clear sign:
Earth's untried tongue will learn to sing,
Will rise against the palate of the skies
And ring and ring and ring.

From mountain peak to moving mountain peak
The message sounds and grows and echoes
And tells a word not occult but revealed;
A word both passionless and pure,
Earth's seas and trees and soil enriching it,
Sovereign, all there is and sure:

Earth, you are born anew
Baptised by music's reign.
You will sing and dance with Gods.
Your children are immortal,
Deep night has flown like mist.
You will not be the same again.

[From *Mother India*, August 1972.]

Memorial Day weekend M.P. Pandit gave a two-day seminar at Matagiri. More than 40 people were present. Mr. Pandit spoke on meditation, the role of the psychic being in the Integral Yoga, and *Savitri*. Vasanti Golikere gave a concert of devotional songs.

Mr. Pandit and Vasanti will be returning to the United States in 1979. From July 1979 to early September he will be in the East and Midwest; from September through November he will be in the California area. More precise information may be obtained from Matagiri.

On 12 August Matagiri observed its tenth birthday with a special meditation.

Recent visitors to Matagiri included Kalpana Das, of the Centre Monchanin in Montreal—a cross-cultural center interested in exploring the original values of different cultures, religions and ideologies, and cross-cultural understanding, and in the possibility of developing a truly cross-cultural or global life way in today's pluralistic world. Centre Monchanin maintains a resource staff, a consultation service, a library, and undertakes training sessions in cross-cultural education and publishes a bilingual journal. Address is 4917 St-Urbain, Montreal, Que. H2T 2W1.

Arthur Gregor, the well-known American poet, gave a reading of some recent work in June. He is the author of several volumes of poetry, the most recent being *Selected Poems* (available from Matagiri for \$2.95).

Robert McDermott, of Baruch College in New York, editor-author of *The Essential Aurobindo* and other works.

Four people from SOLAR, a community in Michigan where Sally Walton of Auroville taught a year ago. SOLAR is founded on the spiritual principles of the mystery schools.

Sri Chinmoy and Alo, with Chinmoy's sister Lily, who was in the United States on her first trip out of India. Lily lives in Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

MATAGIRI Richard Hartz

In a little house on a hill I dwelt
Where the light and peace of God were felt
Amid tall trees that yearned above
Enfolded by a Mother's love.

There in that sheltered spot a spark
Protected from life's winds of dark
Could grow into a little flame
Fed from the source from whence it came.

Sustained in the lap of a Might immense
It could live and grow in confidence
By doubts and worries undistressed
Like a happy child at its mother's breast.

The little flame in unison
With other flames of the Flame that is one
Will grow and spread till the windy Night
Will end in a world of God's peace and light.



M.P. Pandit at Matagiri.

In addition to those listed in our last issue, the following may be contacted by people interested in knowing more about Sri Aurobindo, the Ashram and Auroville:

Flagstaff, Ariz.: Dr. Vasant V. Merchant, 1436 N. Evergreen, Flagstaff, AZ 86001; tel. 602-523-3881 or 602-774-4793; study group.

Stamford, Conn.: Julian Lines, 118 Scofieldtown Road, Stamford, CT 06903; tel. 203-329-8816.

Tempe, Ariz.: Angela Mira Tomas, 615 S. Hardy Dr., Apt. 53, Tempe, AZ 85281; tel. 602-968-5717. A study group may be formed.

Chapel Hill, N.C.: Gayle Garrison (6 Lone Pine Rd., Chapel Hill, NC 27514; tel. 919-967-6281) would like to initiate an Integral Yoga fellowship. Anyone in North Carolina interested please write or call her.

To accept the uglinesses of the lower nature under the pretext that they exist—if that be what is meant by realism—does not form part of the sadhana [discipline]. Our aim is not to accept and enjoy them, but to get rid of them and create a life of spiritual beauty and perfection. That cannot be done so long as we accept these uglinesses.

To be aware that they are there and to reject them, not to let them touch us is one thing; to accept them and to submit to them is quite another. [From *On Beauty*.]

I have a horror of drama, I do not want to be tragic, I would rather laugh at everything than be tragic. [The Mother, in Satprem, *Mere: Le Matérialisme Divin*, 1976. Translation by the editor.]

AUROBINDO CENTERS

This list is not complete. We invite anyone to send us additions and corrections. Basic information should include name, address and phone number of the center. Additionally, the names of persons in charge and the title of any publication issued by the center are welcome.

The primary centers are the **Sri Aurobindo Ashram** (Pondicherry 605002, India) and **Auroville** (Unity, Auroville 605101, India and Service, Auroville 605104, India). Pondicherry is the headquarters for two organizations with branches throughout the world: **World Union** (Pondicherry 605002, India) and **Sri Aurobindo Society** (Pondicherry 605002, India). Most centers have libraries of the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother as well as regular programs of meditation, readings, study groups, special observances of Darshan days—

UNITED STATES

- Arizona:** Paradise Tau, 4335 N. 36th St., Phoenix, AZ 85018. (602) 955-7398.
- California:** Atmaniketan Ashram, 785 Alcott Ave., Pomona, CA 91766. (714) 629-8255.
- Auroville Association, 212 Farley Dr., Aptos, CA 95003. (408) 688-4173.
- Cultural Integration Fellowship, 2650 Fulton St., San Francisco, CA 94118. (415) 648-3949 & 386-9590.
- East-West Cultural Center, 2865 W. 9th St., Los Angeles, CA 90006. (213) 480-8325.
- Sadhana Sri Aurobindo, % Aspen, 13774 E. Teague, Clovis, CA 93612. (209) 298-8293.
- Colorado:** Sri Aurobindo's Action Center, Association for Auroville, P.O. Box 1977, Boulder, CO 80306. (303) 447-0982.
- Maryland:** Sri Aurobindo Society, % Raichura, 2322 Glenmont Circle, Apt. 212, Silver Spring, MD 20902. (301) 942-6168.
- Illinois:** Sri Aurobindo Center, % Sehgal, 2851 Dr. Martin L. King Dr., Apt. 1217, Chicago, IL 60616. (312) 842-5351.
- New York:** Matagiri, Mt. Tremper, NY 12457. (914) 679-8322.
- Sri Aurobindo Library, % Nunnally, 140 W. 58th Street, Apt. 8B, New York, NY 10019. (212) 757-7584. (Open by appointment only.)
- Ohio:** Human Potential Center, % Chitta Goswami, 209 E. Woodside Dr., Gambier, Ohio (Mailing address: P.O. Box 527, Gambier, OH 43022). (614) 427-4282.
- Also: Dr. A. Srinivasan, 666 Harley Dr., No. 3, Columbus, OH 43202. (614) 262-3648.
- Pennsylvania:** Arya, % Naren Bhatt, 2401 Ionoff Road, Harrisburg, PA 17110.

CANADA

- British Columbia:** Future Child (Discovery Train), Box 1419, Salmon Arm, BC V0E 2T0. (604) 832-2369.
- Sri Aurobindo Society and Auro-Book Store, 115-163 W. Hastings St., Vancouver, BC V6B 1H5.
- Quebec:** Centre Sri Aurobindo, 4127 Rue St. Denis, Montreal, Que. H2W 2M7. (514) 844-7675.
- Société pour le Développement d'Auroville, 4461 St. André, Montreal, Que. H2J 2Z5. (514) 524-7445.
- O-Pri-Zoiso, 1596 St. Laurent Blvd., Montreal, Que. H2X 2T1. (514) 845-2824.

SOUTH AMERICA

- Brazil:** Casa Sri Aurobindo, Caixa Postal 2378, 40,000 Salvador, Bahia.

AFRICA

- Kenya:** Sri Aurobindo Society, P.O. Box 1788, Nairobi.
- Uganda:** Sri Aurobindo Circle, P.B. 121, Jinja.
- Zambia:** Sri Aurobindo Society, % Miss Indu Shroff, P.O. Box 323, Chingola.

ASIA & THE FAR EAST

- India:**
- Baroda:** Sri Aurobindo Niwas, Dandia Bazaar, Baroda 390001. (Tel. 66487).
- Bhubaneswar:** Oriya-Aurovilian, % Amar Singh, 39 Udayanmarg, Bhubaneswar 751009.
- Bombay:** Sri Aurobindo Centre, 40-B Nalanda, 62 Peddar Road, Bombay 400026.
- Sri Aurobindo Society, E11 5th Floor Malabar Apts., Nepean Sea Rd., Bombay 400036.
- Calcutta:** Sri Aurobindo Bhavan, 8 Shakespeare Sarani, Calcutta 700016. (Tel. 44-3057).
- Sri Aurobindo Pathamandir, 15 Bankim Chatterjee St., Calcutta 73.
- Hyderabad:** Sri Aurobindo Library and Circle, % Dr. A.S. Ramchandran, Chinthamani 3-6-524, Himayathnagar, Hyderabad 500029.

New Delhi: Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 11016.

- The Mother's International School, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 11016.
- Madras:** Matri Bhavan, % K.R.S. Iyengar, 91 Kutchery Rd., Mylapore, Madras 600004.
- Sri Aurobindo Society, 4-A Smith Rd., Madras 600002.
- Shimoga:** Sri Aurobindo Society, % N.M. Kasetty, B.H. Road, Shimoga 577201, Karnataka.
- Visakhapatnam:** Mother's Centre, % Dr. Prema Nandakumar, D-11, B.H.P.B. Township, Visakhapatnam 530012.
- Bangladesh:** Sri Aurobindo Society, 17/2 Rankin St., Wari, Dacca 3. (Tel. 244671).
- Bhutan:** Sri Aurobindo Society, % R. Srinivasan, First Secretary, Indian Mission, India House, Thimphu.
- Japan:** Auroville Foundation, % Mrs. L. Hamsen, Kobe Port, P.O. Box 331, Ibura-bu, Kobe.
- Sri Aurobindo Society, 54/52 Chome, Awajimachi, Higashi-ku, Osaka. (Tel. 06.231.5426).
- Malaysia:** Sri Aurobindo Society, % P.P. Narayanan, 3 Jalan, 6/19 Petaling Jaya.
- Mauritius:** Sri Aurobindo Cultural Circle, 105 Pontre St., St. Croix, St. Louis.
- Nepal:** Sri Aurobindo Society, % K.P. Ramal, Indo-Nepal Friendship Society, Lagan Tole, Kathmandu.
- New Zealand:** Sri Aurobindo Study Center, Box 8564, Auckland.
- Singapore:** Sri Aurobindo Society, Trade Union House, Shenton Way, Singapore 1. (Tel. 2226555).
- Sri Lanka:** Sri Aurobindo Society 75 3/1 Hemas Building, York St., Colombo 1. (Tel. 29975).

EUROPE

- Belgium:** Sri Aurobindo Auroville Society, Mira Hoeve, Nieuwmoersesteenweg 17, Essen.
- England:** Integral Yoga Centre, % Patel, 139 St. John's Rd., Colchester, Essex, CO4 4JH. (Tel. Colchester 5224).
- Integral Yoga Group, % Michael Shenton, Charterhouse Adult Education Centre, London Rd., Coventry.
- Sri Aurobindo Society, 82 Bell St., London NW 2.
- Sri Aurobindo Society (South London), 10 Gosberton Rd., Balham, London SW12 8LF.
- Sri Aurobindo Group, % C.P. Patel, 84 Ashton Rd., Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV11 5EJ. (Tel. [0683] 66473).
- Sri Aurobindo Group % K. Patel, 28 Bourne St., Dudley, Warwickshire, West Midlands DY2 7AL.
- Sri Aurobindo Group, % K.B. Parmar, 42 Park Rd., Rugby, Coventry. (Tel. Rugby 76008).
- Sri Aurobindo Group, % Mrs. Marguerite Smithwhite, 24 Ian Rd., Billericay, Essex. (Tel. Billericay 57110).
- Sri Aurobindo Group, % D. Chauhan, 40 Glossop St., Leicester, LE 5 5HN.
- France:** Auroville International France, 67 rue de Rome, 75008 Paris. (Tel. 522 2619).
- Sri Aurobindo Center, 7 avenue Carnot, 75/Paris 17. (Tel. 380 1188).
- West Germany:** Atmaniketan Ashram, Merchstr. 49, 4715 Ascheberg-Herbern. (Tel. [02599] 1364).
- Aurora-Zentrale, D-8033 Planegg bei München, Elisabethweg 34. (Tel. [0-89] 859 6088).
- Freunde Aurovilles, % Brockhaus, Tengstr. 22/II, 8000 München 40.
- Sri Aurobindo Society, % Kappes, Belchenstr. 19, Karlsruhe 75. (Tel. 0721-881459).
- Italy:** Centro Anandamayai, Vicolo delle Terme 8, 60035 Iesi (An.).
- Centro Sri Aurobindo, Via Fonseca Pimental 4, 20127 Milano. (Tel. 28 47 325).
- Dr. Mariano Salemmé, Monte Larco, 00068 Rignano Flaminio, Rome.
- The Netherlands:** Auroville International, Namaste Aurowinkel, Bloemdwarsstraat 9, Amsterdam. (Tel. 020-66217).
- Sri Aurobindo Auroville Society, Th. Jeffersonlaan 311, Rijswijk Z.H. 2105.
- Poland:** Zbigniew Madeyski, Warszawa 00355, Tamka 49 m. 64.
- Spain:** Inaki & Manoli Ceballos, c/Oyarzun-1-40D, Irun.
- Lupe & Javier Garcia Penalver, Avenida José Antonio 727, Barcelona 13.
- Sweden:** Auroville International, Fack 6009, S-220 06 Lund. (Tel. 046 13 3871).
- Sri Aurobindo Center, Lilla Södergatan 16 III, S-223 53 Lund. (Tel. 046 13 3871).
- Switzerland:** Marinus Rykeboer, Artisanat d'Auroville-Inde, 1411 Vugelles-la-Mothe. (Tel. 024 371510).
- Sri Aurobindo Verlag, Seestrasse 34, CH-8702 Zollikon, Zurich. (Tel. 01 658189).