

Collaboration

Fall/Winter 2000–2001

Journal of the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother

Vol. 26, no. 3



**An interview with Udar Pinto • Travels with Swami Ananta: Greece • The triple time vision
Sunlit crystal, sunlit path • Eye contact with God • Supermarket yoga best sellers**



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For the inner flame to burn, one must feed it; one must watch over the fire, throw into it the fuel of all the errors one wants to get rid of, all that delays the progress, all that darkens the path. If one doesn't feed the fire, it smoulders under the ashes of one's unconsciousness and inertia, and then, not years but lives, centuries will pass before one reaches the goal. One must watch over one's faith as one watches over the birth of something *infinitely* precious, and protect it very carefully from everything that can impair it.—The Mother, *Questions and Answers 1957–58, Collected Works of the Mother*, vol. 9, p. 352

About the artists and photographers in this issue

Preeti Bhatt (Preeti.Bhatt@3Com.com) works in a technical marketing firm in Silicon Valley. She has loved art since her childhood and does sketches and oil painting in her spare time. Her hobbies include reading, watching movies and cartoons, and volunteering her time to help others.

Catherine Blackburn (c.blackburn@sympatico.ca.) is an artist, teacher, and member of the Sri Aurobindo Spiritual Centre of Toronto. She is also a board member of AVI Canada.

Wayne Bloomquist (calcutta98@hotmail.com) has visited the Sri Aurobindo Ashram many times and was organizer of the 1995 conference on cellular transformation in Berkeley, California.

Jim Foreman (jimforeman@yahoo.com) is an artist in Lafayette, Colorado who believes humanity is facing a future of unprecedented change, challenge, and opportunity. His work is based on themes from the spiritual teaching "Steps to Knowledge" (<http://www.greatercommunity.org/Steps.htm>).

Ginger Hein is a photographer, race car driver, and health and safety technician in Arvada, Colorado.

Alan Herbert (alan@auroville.org.in) is an editor of Auroville Today. He visited the U.S. in summer 2000 and was a featured speaker at AUM.

David Hutchinson (dbhutchinson@ucdavis.edu) is president of the Sri Aurobindo Association, co-editor of Collaboration, and a moderator of the Integral Yoga mailing list. He lives in Sacramento, California, where he is a registered nurse.

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Bhuvana Nandakumar (msbhuvana@hotmail.com) is a member of the Sri Aurobindo Association and is earning a master's degree in non-profit management. She lives in Cleveland, Ohio.

Anie Nunnally (anie@earthlink.net) is a music teacher in Los Angeles. She worked for many years with the Foundation for World Education and is an active member of the East-West Cultural Center.

Lisa Rachlin (lbrachlin@yahoo.com) is an artist and sadhak in Broomfield, Colorado. She lived in India for six years and is very good with cats.

Guy Piacentino (guypia@hotmail.com) is a photographer who works in multimedia using numeric photography. He lives in Geneva, Switzerland and is involved with an artistic association.



On the cover: Sunlight on snow. (Photo by Ginger Hein)

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About SAA: The primary purpose of the Sri Aurobindo Association is to distribute information about Sri Aurobindo, the Mother, and Auroville and to support various projects related to the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Auroville, and Integral Yoga activities in America.

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Mother on how to have better meetings

This selection is from Words of Long Ago, Collected Works of the Mother, vol. 2, pp. 59–60, 4 June 1912.

What improvements can we bring to our meetings?

We said one day with regard to the numerous groups that form and disappear almost immediately, that this phenomenon of rapid decay is a result of the conventional and arbitrary factors which enter into the organisation of these groups.

In fact, they are founded upon an ideal prototype originating from one or several minds—a formula which is sometimes very beautiful in theory, but which takes no account of the individuals who with their difficulties and weaknesses must form the living cells of the group.

In my opinion, it is impossible to give an arbitrary form to any being, individual or collective; its form can only be the outer expression, which perfectly reflects the quality of its constituent elements.

Because this vital law of formation is not observed, these groups follow one upon another and multiply endlessly; all are fated to the same swift destruction. For instead of being living organisms capable of normal growth, development and expansion, they are nothing but inert conglomerations without any possibility of progress.

We had decided to heed this law and carefully refrain from prematurely deciding upon the conditions of life of our little group. It is not yet born, it has hardly begun its period of gestation. Let us allow it to form and blossom very slowly before making any rules for its existence.

Consequently, it would seem disastrous to me to attempt to organise our

meetings according to a preconceived plan or to conform to the ideal of one individual or another or even of all of us. We would then be entering on the way of artificial formations shaped by theory and destined to perish even more rapidly than those institutions which develop according to their own spontaneity, which is the sum total of the varied tendencies of their members.

Certainly, our meetings should progress, since that is the condition of their continuation. But this can only happen if they become an opportunity for each one of us to progress.

For if we want their progress to be sincere and in depth, it must depend on our own. If we could all bring with us here an ardent aspiration for greater knowledge and wisdom, we would create a contemplative atmosphere, which I would like to be able to call religious, and this atmosphere would be most favourable to our self-perfection.

An atmosphere of spirituality is sometimes a far greater help than an exchange of words; the most beautiful thoughts cannot make us progress unless we have a persistent will to translate them within ourselves into higher feelings, more exact sensations and nobler actions.

Thus, to improve our meetings, the essential condition is our own self-improvement.

If we unify ourselves and identify our consciousness with the consciousness of our Divine Self, our group will become unified. If we enlighten and illumine our intellectual faculties, our group will manifest the light. If we allow impersonal love to permeate our whole being, our group will radiate love. And finally, if we bring order into ourselves, our group will become organised of itself, without our needing to intervene arbitrarily in its formation.

In short, let us become the living cells of the organism we want to bring forth, and let us not forget that on the value of its cells will depend the value of the collective being and its action, its usefulness in the work of universal harmony.

New letters on yoga

Welcome to our new subscribers

The new millennium was fast approaching, so the Sri Aurobindo Association (SAA), which publishes *Collaboration*, decided to send out a solicitation flyer. Some people had not read *Collaboration* in a long time; others had perhaps never seen it. As a result of this solicitation, our subscriptions increased by twenty-three percent!

We want to welcome our new subscribers to the journalistic adventure of *Collaboration*. All the members of SAA look forward to your participation in this exploration of consciousness. Thanks to you (and to all our regular readers!) for your support.

About the Collaboration process

People within the Integral Yoga community submit articles, poems, artwork, letters, essays, photography, and even music (and we encourage newcomers to jump in with your own expressions).

Each issue is put together by the editor and the associate editor (Dave Hutchinson and Lynda Lester alternate roles) and begins with a review of recent submissions. The editors work for several months to produce an issue of *Collaboration*; it is a way of concentrating spiritual practice in a special way. In the effort to bring quality to these pages, many emails go back and forth over small details.

Others closely involved with the journal include Vishnu Eschner, who keeps the subscriber list current; Kalpana Patel and Chandresh Patel, who stuff the envelopes and do the mailings; and Marta Belén (myself), who endlessly tries to find ways to reduce production expenses.

Again, we welcome you as a new *Collaboration* subscriber, look forward to your contributions, and thank you for



your support. We hope to hear from you soon!—Marta Belén, treasurer, Sri Aurobindo Association

From our readers

I very much like the current issue of *Collaboration*. And I've heard many compliments on the last two issues from subscribers at the Cultural Integration Fellowship [in San Francisco]. Great issue.—Joseph Kent, Sunli8@msn.com.

It is so wonderful to have a place to share the underlying vision. I am grateful *Collaboration* has been that for me.—Margaret Phanes, phanes@cats.ucsc.edu.

Thank you very much for the complimentary copy of *Collaboration*. It is a great magazine—BRAVO! I like best your quotations from the Mother and Sri Aurobindo (and their photos are so nicely reprinted).

The quotes are often those I have not read and are from books I am not likely to have . . . I am interested in Sri Aurobindo's poetry and also quotes showing his sense of humor.—Alice Webb, Brunswick, Maryland

I appreciate the life and energy and joy of exploration that radiates from the pages of *Collaboration*.—Bob Zwicker, archives@sriarobindoashram.org

I have a file with .sri extension and wanted to know how to open it. Can you help?—B.Y.

Questions

I wonder about so many things in a given day or week or month. When younger I would often ask myself, "Why are you wondering about why you are wondering?" A rather compelling question to attempt to ask one's self, I might add.



The tranquil beauty of the waning year . . . (Savitri, p. 351, "The Growth and Childhood of the Flame"). (Photo by Dave Hutchinson)

Here now, for what I hope is not too personal an overview, are things I would generally not expose—but I will now push aside ego and vanity and ask that the proper words might come forward for this message. I relay the following as a starting point for personal reference:

Several years ago in a moment (I suspect) of innocence, while rocking back and forth sitting on my bed one afternoon when my wife and the children were gone, I was asking in low whispers *to know, to know that there is God, to know there is more*. Over and over in what now seems a mantra of sorts, I cried and asked.

In what now I understand may have been the opening of the mind's eye (or third eye) and the heart, a light of a mag-

nitude I cannot explain came upon me. It was golden white, vibrating, and so powerful that my eyes rolled back in my head. It captured me, if you will—my closed-eye vision saw what can only be described as a brief moment of, "Ah, I see, I understand, I understand." Now of course I have no idea of what I "understood."

As this precious moment faded away, I found myself shaking uncontrollably. My dog was standing in my room barking and running back and forth, and my cat was meowing in a strange way. I was left, of course, confused. I began crying and shaking, saying "thank you" over and over. It was the first of many experiences.

I live in the midst of Los Angeles; I drive 100 miles a day. Here are my questions.

How many are out there who fight every day? Do some pound their steering wheels in frustration at being buried in this chaos? Do people cry with the pain when the aridity leaves them lifeless? For others, is it difficult to simply pray at times? Do people see around themselves the ignorance of humanity in this massive cement jungle—not passing judgment at the ignorance, but feeling pain in the condition of humanity? Do others find it difficult to communicate with family members?

Who fights everyday to attempt to keep some flow of this light with them? Are there those who are scared of their seeming slow progress? Where are they? Are there those who cry out in despair at recognizing their smallness and insignificance compared to this light?

And more—does it seem insignificant and not nearly enough to simply survive, to do what one can, to say a mantra while driving? To stop by the side of the road and pray? To get up early though one is dead tired just so one can stop in a dark parking lot in the morning and read a bit of *Savitri* and seek a bit of silence? To hurt because when one doesn't do those things, one judges oneself?

Oh there are joys on this path, a feeling that comes that says, "I am near . . ." Yes I know, we are all trying to do this



while living in chaos. Yet it never seems enough. It seems so small an effort—living the yoga in this vibrational nightmare called humanity seems never enough.

I know all of you, God bless you, will say, “Yes, yes, Bruce, I do those things, you are not alone.” I know you are out there, but still I ask the questions. Once one is exposed to this light, it seems, the end of life as one knew it is inevitable, to go down into the “muck and mire” a necessity.

I apologize; as I look back on the words I see I wrote a rather long note. Thank you all for listening.—Bruce Forsythe, bforsythe@workflowdirect.com

Current affairs

AUM 2001 to be held near San Francisco

The next All USA Meeting (AUM) will be held July 20–24, 2001, at Mount Alverno Retreat Center in Redwood City, California, near San Francisco. The theme of the conference will be “Realizing the new creation: Revolution, evolution, manifestation.”

Anticipated presenters include:

- Kirit Joshi (New Delhi)
- Lynda Lester (Boulder, Colorado)
- Devan Nair (Hamilton, Canada)
- Prema Nandakumar (Tiruchirappalli, India)
- Alok Pandey (Bangalore)
- Guy Ryckaert (Auroville)

Mount Alverno Retreat Center, nestled within San Francisco Bay Area’s emerald hills, is centrally located, about twenty minutes from both the San Francisco and San Jose airports. The retreat center has twenty-six acres of wooded surroundings, where the climate will be moderate and inviting in July.

Mount Alverno offers modest yet hospitable accommodations including an Olympic-size swimming pool, a tennis and volleyball court, and walking and hiking paths. AUM will have exclusive use of the center during the four-day meeting.

Children will be welcome at AUM 2001. There will be special activities for children as well as accommodations designed for families. Professional child care will be available during the keynote presentations each day (total of three hours a day).

The registration cost per person for the meeting will be \$100 per night for a private room, \$85 per night for a shared room, and \$25 per night for children twelve or younger. These rates include meals, afternoon tea, sleeping accommodations, linens and towels, attendance at meetings and activities, and meeting materials.

Daytime attendance is \$65 per day.

Local transportation costs may be additional, depending upon arrangements. Thanks to the Foundation for World Education, a



Mount Alverno, AUM 2001 conference site. (Photo from brochure)

limited number of scholarships will be available.

Group exploration at AUM 2001 will take place through the presentations, activities, and structure of the conference. The AUM working group is meeting regularly to assure that in every way possible, AUM 2001 will bring people together in higher consciousness. This will be a participatory, interactive, dynamic meeting where people can deepen connections with others in this yoga.

Mother says: “What is indispensable in every case is the *ardent* will for progress, the willing and joyful renunciation of all that hampers the advance: to throw far away from oneself all that prevents one from going forward, and to set out into the unknown with the ardent faith that this is the truth of tomorrow, *inevitable*, which must necessarily come, which nothing, nobody, no bad will, even that of Nature, can prevent from becoming reality—perhaps of a not too distant future—a reality which is being worked out now and which those who know how to change, how not to be weighed down by old habits, will *surely* have the good fortune not only to see but to realize.” (from *The Mother’s Talks on The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth*, *Mother’s Collected Works*, vol. 9, p. 158.

Just one sentence by the Mother, so characteristic of the message expressed by herself and Sri Aurobindo, is filled with complex, magnetic proposals that invite us to undertake a journey into the future.

AUM 2001 will be an opportunity to explore together how the present journey and future promise of Integral Yoga confront and hearten us at the same moment.

Upcoming issues of *Collaboration* will contain further program information and details.

For more information, to register, or if you wish to participate in the AUM, see <http://aum.collaboration.org>, or contact the Sri Aurobindo Association, Dept. R, P.O. Box 163237, Sacramento CA, 95816; email: aum@collaboration.org.



CIF schedules 50th anniversary talks

The Cultural Integration Fellowship (CIF) in San Francisco, California, was founded in 1951 by Dr. Haridas Chaudhuri, and has been directed by his wife, Bina Chaudhuri, since his death in 1975. As part of its fiftieth anniversary celebration, CIF will sponsor a series of presentations on the Integral Yoga. Below are the tentative presentations.

April 29: "Overview of Integral Yoga," Dave Hutchinson

May 27: "Principles of the Yoga," Wayne Bloomquist

June 17: "Auroville," Bill Leon and Larry Tepper

July 29: "History of the Yoga in America," Julian Lines

August 19: "The Mother," Lynda Lester

September 16: "Practices in the Integral Yoga," Dave Hutchinson

For more information, send email to info@culturalintegration.org, visit the CIF website at <http://www.culturalintegration.org>, or call 415-386-9590. CIF is located at 2650 Fulton Street in San Francisco.

AVI meets in Lebensgarten, Germany

The fifteenth annual meeting of Auroville International was held 28 June–2 July, 2000, in Lebensgarten, Germany. Lebensgarten is a community of 120 people spread out in many houses within the village of Steyerberg. Many of the buildings in Lebensgarten were once used as labor camps and prisons during World War II. Appropriately, the focus was on "international understanding." Julian Lines and Chandresh Patel attended from the U.S.

Mornings were devoted to meeting and evenings to music, dance, and several videos related to Auroville. Attendees heard presentations on the Land Use Plan (Cristo) and the International Zone (Peter

Anderschitz) and saw a beautiful slide show of Matrimandir presented by Michael Bonke. They discussed new approaches towards a new economy with Margrid Kennedy and participated in an intercultural workshop given by Benedikta Gräfin von Soden.

Various groups explored the theme of the meeting in depth, examining international understanding in the light of the India/Pakistan conflict and the role Auroville could play to ease these tensions. Discussions and meetings often continued until late night in the community *Kneipe* (German word for *bar* or *pub*).

A few reports in brief:

AVI Germany reported that they are organizing tours to Auroville.

AVI France reported on the working of its exhibition hall/office.

AVI UK, a formal NGO (nongovernmental organization), reported on several projects, including fundraising, development, and their work with the Gateway Group in Auroville. (Gateway funds support a high school, a youth residence, a burial ground, Internet facilities, and some Auroville-run village schools.)

AVI USA reported on the work done by Aurotaranti, Ed Giordano, Dian Kiser, Peter Lapore, Bill Leon, June Maher, Nilauo Marcus, Anie Nunnally, Chandresh Patel, and Constance Walker. Suzanne Macdonald will join the AVI-USA board next year.

AVI Canada has created a new board and moved to Toronto.

Several centers reported on fundraising for the Auroville land.

The full account of this year's meeting can be seen at: <http://www.auroville-international.org>.

Next year's meeting will be in St. Petersburg, Russia.

New AVI Canada board formed

An entirely new board for AVI Canada was formed on 13 August 2000. President is Claude Daviault; vice-president,

Catherine Blackburn; secretary, Andrée Paul; treasurer, Guy Perron; administrator, Devan Nair.

To contact the board, send email to pif@cam.org, or visit their website at <http://www.cam.org/~avica>.

First All India Meet held in Nainital

The first All India Meet (AIM) took place 19–24 June 2000, in Nainital, Van Nivas, India. The initial inspiration for AIM 2000 came from the All USA Meeting 1998, where many groups came together in a general spirit of harmony.

The organizers of AIM (Ananda Reddy, Tara Jauhar, Raj Vasishtha, Vijay Poddar, Kosha Shah, and Ameeta Mehra) approached the meeting with practical goals by convening working groups on several subjects.

AIM focused on three areas: youth, education, and social issues. Panels were formed that initiated work in small groups on these areas, culminating in action plans for the coming year. Presentations on action taken will be made at AIM 2001, to be held next year in Bangalore.

The following excerpt is from an account in *The Awakening Ray*, vol. 4, issue 4. (See p. 26 in this issue for subscription information.)

"The first session of AIM 2000 saw all of us sitting on the floor in the large hall overlooking the cloud-filled valleys and mountain peaks that played hide and seek every day . . .

"The second day began with Dr. Ananda Reddy's talk on the keynote theme of the conference, followed by talks by Vladimir on Sanskrit and Matthijs on psychology . . . The afternoon session was taken up by the youth panel presentations. The mood was introspective, with questions that asked one to become aware of the attitudes of youth and old age that one carries within oneself. The discussion led to identifying what the youth are looking for today, what quali-



AIM 2000 group. (Photo by Bhuvana Nandakumar)

ties one needs in oneself in order to work with youth."

On the third day Ameeta Mehra led a nature meditation, Shraddhalu Ranade gave a presentation on "Prophesies of Destruction and the New Creation," and panels discussed education.

On the fourth day, Alok Pandey spoke about integral psychology and Neeltje gave a talk on evaluation. Panels also addressed social issues.

On the fifth day subgroups met and worked, and on the sixth day they gave reports on their various plans.

Panel participants were:

Youth: Ameeta Mehra, Tara Jauhar, Kaivalya Smart

Education: Neeltje, Raj Vasishtha, Challamayi Reddy, Anuradha

Social issues: Kosha Shah, B.B. Dutta, Soumitra Basu, Falguni Jani, Sumita Ghose, Chandresh Patel

Selected works of Sri Aurobindo available on CD

The Sri Aurobindo Ashram released a CD-ROM this fall with the complete text of twelve books by Sri Aurobindo. The CD, titled *Auroma*, is compatible with both Windows and Macintosh computers. It contains a sophisticated search program developed by the Ashram with which one can search one book, several books, or all

books; look for an exact, partial, or sound-alike word; or look for words in various degrees of proximity to each other. Bookmarks can be placed in a text and grouped under categories for easy retrieval. Selections can be copied to the computer clipboard, a file, or the printer, and can include various types of reference to the volume and page. References include page numbers for both the *Sri Aurobindo Birth*

Centenary Library and the still-in-publication edition titled *Collected Works of Sri Aurobindo*.

Titles include *The Secret of the Veda*, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, *Letters on Yoga*, *Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol*, *The Life Divine*, *Essays on the Gita*, *The Human Cycle*, *Essays Divine and Human*, *Essays in Philosophy and Yoga*, *The Upanishads*, *Sri Aurobindo: A Life Sketch*, and *The Renaissance in India*.

The Auroma CD is available from Auromere (sasp@lodinet.com, 800-735-4691); Lotus Light (webmaster@lotuspress.com, 800-824-6396); and Matagiri (jhl@aol.com, 800-815-1969).

MyIntegralYoga.URL

Auroville Plus (<http://www.crosswinds.net/~aurovilleplus>) is a new website that functions as an extension of Auroville's main site. It features electronic archived issues of *Auroville News*, *Auroville Today*, *Invocation*, *Matri-mandir Journal*, and *Transcript*.

Auroville International has a website (<http://www.auroville-international.org>) maintained in both English and French. Eighteen different national centers and liaisons have sections on the website. The minutes of the AVI meeting from 2000 are available, as are the minutes of each annual meeting from 1996 to the present. The minutes from the 2000

meeting include reports from Canada, Germany, Spain, France, Netherlands, Sweden, UK, Australia, Brazil, and Israel, plus an extensive report on AVI USA's activities by Julian Lines.

Auroville International was set up in 1983 to support the international township of Auroville. It is legally based in the Netherlands and today has associations and affiliated groups in nineteen countries.

SABDA, the Sri Aurobindo Book Distribution Agency, is now online at <http://sabda.sriaurobindoashram.org>. The site offers a complete catalog, a list of new releases, a list of distributors (international and Indian), and ordering information. For more information, send email to sabda@sriaurobindoashram.org.

Sixty-four poems of Sri Aurobindo are available on Bernard Sage's website at <http://intyoga.freesevers.com/poems.htm>.

A new Integral Yoga email discussion list and website started in November 2000. The forum studies a variety of texts in the yoga and uses the website for members to post source material, reviews, and links. For more information, see <http://iy.collaboration.org>.

Sites for the Ashram, Auroville, and Integral Yoga

- <http://www.sriaurobindoashram.org>
- <http://www.auroville.org>
- <http://www.sriaurobindosociety.org.in>
- <http://www.miraura.org>

Sites for U.S. centers and organizations

- <http://www.culturalintegration.org>
- <http://home.earthlink.net/~ewcc>
- <http://www.iksc.org>
- <http://www.matagiri.org>
- <http://www.aviusa.org>
- <http://www.collaboration.org>

Miscellaneous sites

- <http://bur.oivta.ru/IntegralYoga/Contents.html>
- <http://intyoga.freesevers.com>



Farewell to Trudy King

Trudy King, also known as Tatyana, left her body on 18 November 2000, at the age of fifty-one, in Grant's Pass, Oregon. She was one of the purest expressions of devotion I have had the honor of knowing.

Trudy lived for many years assisting Jyotipriya (Judith Tyberg) at the East-West Cultural Center in Los Angeles. She also spent about two years working with the distribution of books and *Collaboration* at the Matagiri/Sri Aurobindo Association office when it was in High Falls, New York. She lived for a short while in the Baca in Crestone, Colorado, and finally was assisting a therapist, Greywolf, in a beautiful wooded setting in Oregon.

Tatyana faced difficulty with the physical much of her life (she ate blended salads and a refined diet). Her constant effort to maintain her health took a great deal of time and effort, but did not diminish a sweet radiance that permeated her being.

Sam Spanier, watching her eat a meal at Matagiri, noticed that she offered each bite,

that consecration was part of her being.

After a year of treating a tumor holistically and preparing for the possibility of death, she consented to an operation and was on the road to recovery, wishing to serve again at one of the Sri Aurobindo centers. Just when she was gaining strength, an inoperable brain tumor manifested. Her devoted friend Mitra Varuna was with her at the end and described her as "looking like an angel."

The day after her passing we remembered her with much appreciation during a meditation at Matagiri.—Julian Lines

AV almanac

Platforming in SAWCHU

Auroville tries a new type of meeting

by Jill Navarre

Many experiments have been tried in Auroville to create an atmosphere that supports a group energy, one that can be used to get things done. Many experiments have occurred, many roads taken, but recently, meetings had become monotonous, predictable, and mostly unattended. Also, the outcome of these meetings was usually known in advance, which kept a lot of people away from meetings—if you knew the participants, you could figure out what was going to happen. We hit bottom, so to speak. And out of the bottom, something emerged that eventually became known as "the platform."

We were also at a moment of crisis in Auroville regarding the continued closing of the Entry Group to newcomers, which is due in part to the lack

of sufficient housing. We called a meeting to try to solve this crisis and agreed that it would take longer than two or three hours—we might need two or three days.

So we spent a weekend together, and thanks to good planning, the experience was positive. We ate lunch together, we exercised, we laughed, we broke down barriers.

In spending a weekend together, we got past the usual predictability into another space, a space where ideas could emerge, float, sift, simmer. We met in a brand-new space called the SAWCHU building (the Sri Aurobindo World Center for Human Unity), built by Anupama Kundoo near the Bharat Nivas complex. It is round and open on all sides, and gave us the dimension of infinite space that we badly needed to breathe easily and see far. Add to this the consideration of limitless time and you have two ingredients for radical change and endless possibility.

Somehow, this nexus of infinite space and limitless time created a point of contact into another dimension. It was beautiful.

At first, we didn't really know how we would meet. Should we have a chairperson? Should we be chairless? Where should we start? Perhaps by simply listening to each other, without judgment. That was the starting point. Let's just listen. Eventually, we came around to the issues, but what was really important was the way in which we were meeting.

Then Ange (Sabina Peter) recognized that the space was, in fact, a sacred space—free of judgment, accessible to all, where we could explore issues by simply focusing on the space and the energy of the place instead of the personalities.

So the space (the platform) would hold the issue, and whoever showed up to discuss an issue would be directly involved for the time at that place on that issue. We could hold a platform meeting on housing, and whoever was interested in this topic could come and be part of "the platform on housing." Make decisions? Maybe. How? And how to work with the already existing Housing Group, for instance? These questions came up



Trudy King in 1988. (Photo by Lynda Lester)



and various solutions were expressed. Yet it was clear that people liked the idea of the *space* holding the energy for the group, and not the individuals.

Jossy (Josette Eblagon), a teacher from Transition School, added another element by bringing a talking stick to one of the meetings. The stick, wrapped with threads of four different colors, was placed in the center of the circle. Whoever wanted to speak had to get up, take the stick, go back to his or her place, and while speaking, try to embody the qualities the stick represented—harmony, spirit of service, foresight into the future, and equanimity. This procedure gave the speaker a freedom from being interrupted. It eliminated back-and-forth arguments and imparted a certain rhythm to the process.

The platform gave a breath of fresh air to our usually predictable meetings, and lots of people came who normally would never come. They felt protected and believed they could, at last, be heard. But a proper mechanism was missing for including the already existing working groups in the process. How would we get feedback to them? How would they integrate the outcome of the platform—resolutions, suggestions—into their day-to-day business? These questions have, until

now, not been sufficiently resolved: they represent the challenge of working through and understanding the deeper process of decision making and how to translate those decisions into action—our next leap of intuition!

Jill Navarre (jillswar@auroville.org.in) came to Auroville for the first time in 1987, returned three years later with an entry visa, and has lived there ever since. She is the liaison for the American Pavilion project and director of the Auroville Theatre Group. She visited the U.S. last summer doing research for the American Pavilion.

Chronicles

The view from nine decades, part 2

An interview with Udar Pinto

by Anie Nunnally

This is the second of a two-part series. The previous installment, an interview with Amal Kiran (another esteemed Ashram nonagenarian) appeared in the Summer 2000 issue of Collaboration.

Number 5 Rue Dumas is on the street in French Pondicherry directly behind the main compound of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram; Golconde is just a block down the street from this large French colonial structure, which the Mother named *Fenêtres* (windows).

This is home to Udar Pinto; his English wife Mona, manager extraordinaire of Golconde; and their daughter Gauri, a teacher in the higher course at the Sri Aurobindo International Center of Education. Sri Aurobindo gave the names Udar (“generous”) and Gauri (“fair one” or “golden one,” another name for Durga) but asked Mona to keep her own name as it reminded him of the Mona Lisa.

At Fenêtres one enters into a glorious courtyard ablaze with vibrant colors of bougainvillea, marigolds, roses, other types of flowering plants, graceful arrangements of potted plants, and an upstairs terrace filled with orchids. Gauri’s animals (she rescues cats and dogs from the streets of Pondicherry and nurses them back to health) playfully greet one at the door or, in the case of some dogs, stand back and snarl and growl suspiciously until one’s intent for visiting is cleared to their canine satisfaction.

Upstairs, Udar has his quarters, a large vestibule where one can sit and wait for him. He greets guests in an expansive sitting room with his faithful servant nearby. His bedroom is off to the side. I shall always remember these rooms, as my first public darshan of the Mother was viewed from that very space where Udar’s quarters look out onto the balcony adjoining Mother’s rooms. That darshan was 21 February 1968, some thirty-two years ago!

As I mentioned in the first part of this series, Udar had broken his hip in 1999 and was recuperating at home after being in an Ashram nursing facility for some time. When I entered the room, he was seated in a large high wheelchair, high above my own chair. He appeared so stately and in command that I had the impression of sitting before a ruling monarch of empyrean stature. In fact,



Striving for harmony in the platform group. (Photo by Alan Herbert)



Udar told me that when the Ashram school staged *Perseus the Deliverer*, one of Sri Aurobindo's plays, Udar played the role of King Cepheus. One day he went to the Mother in his costume. When she saw him she said, "Udar, I know where I have seen you before—you were at one time a Roman emperor!"

Udar told me he was born in Hubli, in Karnataka (near Goa), in April 1907. His father was a businessman and did many things for the town of Hubli. The road they lived on was called Pinto Road. His father had originally come from Goa, which had been colonized by the Portuguese, and long ago Udar's family had taken on the Portuguese name of "Pinto" and completely lost contact with their original Indian name.

Udar studied at the Good School in Goa and was brought up in the Catholic church. He said he was a good Catholic and took his religion seriously as a young man, but later began to find some foolish things in all religions, which is what ultimately led him to Sri Aurobindo.

Udar passed his exams in Hubli and was sent to Mussoorie in the mountains of north India for further study. He wanted to take a degree in engineering and was being prepared for that goal, but by that time he had become rather unruly and was thrown out of school. This was to be a turning point in his life. He said that if he had remained there he would have graduated, gotten a good job, and settled down to a humdrum life.

After he was thrown out, he attended another school in Belgaum. From there he went on to Bombay to the Royal Institute of Science for a degree in engineering. In 1929 he was sent to England, where he spent four years and earned a degree in aeronautical engineering from London University. However, there was nothing for him to do—there were no airplanes in India at that time—so he had to go into business. He settled down in Pondicherry in 1935 because it had a reputation for being a good place to do business. He tried it out for two years and it proved prosperous.

All his friends were connected with

the Ashram, but at that time he was not interested, nor did he ever visit the Ashram. He was a young man and a bon vivant. His friends came to his home for sumptuous dinners and whisky and sodas and "all kinds of things," he said. They would go back and tell the Mother stories of their visits to Udar's house. She would say "that Pinto fellow is spoiling my children and I will catch him one day."

"Finally, she did," Udar said.

Udar met his beloved Mona while attending school in England; she waited three years for him while he got settled in Pondicherry. Finally in 1937 he sent for her and they were married. Their daughter Gauri was born at the end of that year in November.

First darshan of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother

After Mona and Udar were married, somebody suggested that they should have darshan of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, so Udar arranged for this. "There were very few people in the Ashram in those days so there was no long queue," Udar said.

In August 1937 they had their first darshan. This is how Udar described that moment:

"When I saw Sri Aurobindo for the first time I got a shock. I had seen kings and emperors in Europe, England, and Asia whose clothes were majestic, but the person inside was quite ordinary. Here was a man wearing only a dhoti and chaddur [shawl] sitting bare-chested and looking like a king. I said to myself, 'At last I have seen royalty and majesty.' After that darshan we were very much drawn to the Ashram."

The war

The war began, and Sri Aurobindo and the Mother took a keen interest in it. "All wars," said Sri Aurobindo, "are be-



Udar Pinto. (Photo by Anie Nunnally)

gun by the asura." The Second World War was an effort by the asura to destroy the work of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother for the earth's evolution toward the supramental light. Sri Aurobindo began to work occultly behind the scenes for the war effort, even finding an opening to his force in Sir Winston Churchill. Udar said there were few radio sets in Pondicherry at that time and no radio broadcasting. Udar owned a radio set with sophisticated aerials and other equipment, so he was able to tune into BBC in order to receive news of the war.

Pavitra (a Frenchman whose European name was P.B. Saint-Hilaire) and Pavita used to come to Udar's house every night at 9:30 to take down the news in shorthand, then type and prepare it to send to Sri Aurobindo the same night. Udar offered the radio set to the Mother, but she refused it by saying she had "enough of ulcers"! Later when the war escalated, they installed a radio set in the Ashram.

Udar was more and more drawn to the Ashram. By then the government of India had started a civil aviation department and they knew of his degree in aeronautical engineering, so they asked him to come and work for them. He did not want to go, as he and his family were quite happy in the Ashram. Sri Aurobindo, however, told him that he must do it: Sri Auro-



bindo wanted his children to work for the war effort. This was not a war between the nations and people, Sri Aurobindo said, but a war between the divine forces and the forces of the asura.

Udar took his family out of Pondicherry and worked for the government successfully for one year, and was happy in New Delhi, as was Mona. However, little Gauri at three years of age very much missed the Mother. After one year, Udar took a brief leave and brought them back to Pondicherry. Sri Aurobindo then told him he had done enough and could return to the Ashram to stay. He went back to New Delhi, gave a month's notice, and returned to the Ashram, where he has lived ever since.

Golconde and Harpagon

The nizam of Hyderabad through his dewan [government official], Sir Akbar Hydari, had given a sum of money to the Mother because at one time she had spoken to him of wanting to build a residential building on some property the Ashram owned. Since the money for the building had come from Hyderabad, the Mother decided to give it a name associated with that state. She named it *Golconde*, the French form of *Golconda*, after the famous fort and diamond mines in Hyderabad.

Antonin Raymond, a well-known Czechoslovakian architect and friend of Pavitra, came to the Ashram for a visit and eventually took on the project. Working with him on the Golconde project were the Japanese-American architect George Nakashima and the Czechoslovakian architect Francicheck Sammer.

The building work had already begun by 1937, when Mona and Udar



Golconde and grounds. (Photo by Wayne Bloomquist)

joined the Ashram, but they were both associated with it from that time onward. The Mother put Mona in charge of Golconde before it was finished and gave her a room in which to work, to prepare the linens, and to train the young Ashram ladies who were to work with her. Mona taught them to speak English as well.

The Mother gave Udar a small shed for his work, which she called Harpagon. Harpagon is the name of the miser in Moliere's play *L'Avare* (the Miser). She said that the land had belonged to a wealthy man and that he could have given the land freely. Instead he doubled the price! At first the Mother said no, but then she decided to buy the land and name it for the miser. Ironically, Udar's name means generosity.

Udar said there was much work to be done, and large amounts of money were needed for the completion of Golconde. There were items to be manufactured, brass fittings were needed, and machines were needed for manufacturing these parts to precision.

Udar had no money, as he had given all his money to the Mother. He needed at least two lakhs (200,000 rupees), so he asked the Mother for this amount. The Mother gave him one rupee to start! At

first he thought she was making a joke, then realized that if she had given him the two lakhs it would be the two lakhs that would have actually done the work. He said, "By giving only one rupee, it was therefore I who had to do it."

He took up the challenge and worked hard and happily and slowly until the job was done. Of course today Golconde and Harpagon are cherished units in the Ashram. Golconde is one of the most beau-

tiful and unique buildings in the world with its teak furniture, Japanese-style black stone floors, walls of crushed seashells, giant cement louvered shutters, and its lovely monastic peacefulness. Udar went on to develop Harpagon's many industries including furniture making and stainless steel products.

Questions and answers

Anie: Can you describe Sri Aurobindo's voice and any other impressions you remember of him?

Udar: Sri Aurobindo's voice was a beautiful, well modulated sound. If you did not see him, you would think you were listening to a Cambridge-educated Englishman speaking. Sri Aurobindo just sat there looking as though he were gazing out into eternity in his great lonely days of descent into mortal life in order to help humanity.

(Udar chose not to personalize other impressions of Sri Aurobindo, but instead quoted a passage from *Savitri*, book 3, "The Book of the Divine Mother," canto 4, "The Vision and the Boon." Udar said that Sri Aurobindo was writing about King Aswapathy in that passage and speaks in the third person, but is actually writing about himself).



Anie: Can you describe what it was like when Sri Aurobindo left his body?

Udar: I was in his room next to him when he died. I was handling the oxygen tank and then he went into a coma. I knew all the medical aspects of what it was like to be in a coma. However, in the case of Sri Aurobindo it was altogether a conscious coma. No ordinary person talks in a coma.

At one point he asked in a firm and clear voice, "Nirod, what is the time?" Nirodbaran looked shocked. "Sir, it's one o'clock," he said. Sri Aurobindo said "I see" in a clear voice and then returned to the coma. Champaklal was massaging his feet. His breathing became slower and slower and then there was the last breath, which I recognized.

Dr. Sanyal asked me to turn off the oxygen tank and I went back and stood in the back of the room. I was quite calm and interested to see all that was happening. The Mother had no look of sorrow on her face at all. Neither did I feel sorrow, for I knew that Sri Aurobindo had left his body consciously.

In *Savitri*, "The Book of Death" is short. When Sri Aurobindo was asked about this he said, "You cannot expect to write about something you have never consciously experienced." So he experienced death consciously and will return to complete the Book of Death.

Dr. Sanyal said, "Mother, everyone is in shock except for Udar." The Mother put me in charge of everything. She looked at me and said, "Udar take charge of everything and come to me for instructions." Then she left the room.

Mother gave me instructions for the coffin, which was made of solid wood and lined with silk. Sri Aurobindo was still lying on his bed and there was the most marvelous golden light emanating from his body, and a scent like a celestial perfume. After that the Mother told me how deep to go into the Samadhi and how to design it.

I built the Samadhi not as a hole in the ground but as a vault with thick concrete walls nine inches thick with cement floors and a cement roof. I went down

eight feet and built a four-foot room with cement slabs. Over that the Mother instructed me to build another room also with walls, a floor, and a roof. She told me to fill it with clean river sand and to put a large slab on the top. Thus was the Samadhi built.

The Samadhi was built according to the same outward pattern as the flower bed that had existed there. The top consisted of a long rectangular pattern going from east to west; next to it was a square. The Samadhi has kept that same pattern on top for flower decorations. Underneath, the longer rectangle houses the two rooms where the bodies of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother are entombed.

The Mother gave me a quotation to be carved into the marble and pressed on either side. It reads:

"To Thee who hast been the Material Envelope of our Master, to Thee our infinite gratitude.

"Before Thee who hast done so much for us, who hast worked, struggled, suffered, hoped, endured so much,

"Before Thee who hast willed all, attempted all, prepared, achieved all for us,

"Before Thee we bow down and implore that we may never forget, even for a moment, all we owe to Thee.

"The Mother, 9 December 1950"

After the Mother died, I opened up the top room. I took the clean river sand that had been lying over Sri Aurobindo's tomb from 1950 to 1973 and put it into barrels. I made packets from the sand and gave them out to many people and it helped them in sickness and pain and in times of trouble.

Anie: What changes do you see taking place in the Ashram in the future? Will it be different in any way from what it is now?

Udar: There have to be changes. We live in a changing world. The changes in the Ashram since the Mother's passing have not always been as good as they could be. Many people have not worked closely with the Mother or even seen her physically. So in many cases there is little knowledge of the Mother's way. Many people try to do things in their own way,

to do what they think best and not always necessarily in keeping with what would have been the Mother's way. I always speak about the Mother to everyone, but many go on preferring their own way.

Anie: What can you tell us of the Auroville project?

Udar: Auroville was built as a city for the Divine to give a message to the world. The Mother told me to inaugurate Auroville. The Mother called in representatives from all the nations of the world and assigned to me the job of master of ceremonies. The charter was read out in English. I announced each nation, and while two young people from each nation placed soil from their country into the lotus urn, an interpreter read the charter in the language of that particular nation. It all went so beautifully and was never rehearsed.

The Mother said Auroville did not need to follow the divine life of the Ashram. She said they were to concentrate on building a new city for the Divine in their own way. So the ways of Auroville are different from those of the Ashram, and Aurovilians are not expected to follow the Ashram way of living.

Anie: What advice would you give to new spiritual aspirants that would help them in their development and help them to integrate their lives in the world with its focus on materialism and the vital life?

Udar: The word "spiritual" is often used in a loose manner. Generally people take it to mean a higher mind and life in an elementary way but not necessarily a spiritual way. Spiritual means the way of the spirit and nothing else. Very few people know what their spirit is. They know they have a soul, but how it operates they do not know. It is only when one becomes conscious of the soul through sincere yogic discipline that one can become a true servant and instrument of the Divine.

Anie: It seems that fewer young people are drawn to the yoga in America in these times. What more can we do to inspire interest in Sri Aurobindo and the Mother in the youth of our culture?

Udar: One must keep a door open for those who want to come, but we are



not here to proselytize and get disciples. If they come it is by their own choice and what they do with it is up to themselves.

Anie: What do you see as the strongest attributes of Americans and their contributions to the yoga?

Udar: The Americans who have come to the Ashram are highly evolved people and their presence is a gift to the Ashram. Many Americans in the archives department are wonderful men and women and have progressed very much inwardly and have contributed in many ways to the work and are of great value to the Ashram. I have a good feeling about the Americans in the Ashram.

Anie: What were some of your experiences and impressions of North America when you visited in 1972?

Udar: In 1972 the government of India asked the Mother to select two people to give talks on Sri Aurobindo in connection with his birth centenary year, one to go to the East and one to the West. Sisir Kumar Ghosh was chosen to go to Japan and other Eastern countries, and the Mother chose me to go to the West. I asked the Mother “Why me? I am not a speaker on philosophy.”

Then Mother said “I have chosen you, so you must go!” The Mother said she would speak through me and that I did not need to worry, that at all times she would remain close to me. This was so in every instance.

When I reached America, they began to call me “swamiji.” I looked to see if there was anyone else around! I told them, “I am not a swami, I am just an ordinary person whom Mother has sent to speak on Sri Aurobindo.”

When I later returned to the Ashram the Mother said “They called you swamiji there?” I replied, “Yes, Mother.” The Mother said, “I knew everything that happened to you in America. I was with you all the time, and I am glad you did not accept the title of swamiji. If for any reason you should ever fall into that trap, I will come and break your head!”

I had a wonderful trip to America. I found the people generous and warm. We were often treated as guests at restau-

rants; people helped us freely on the road when our van broke down. In private homes we were received with gracious hospitality.

While I was visiting America, there was a three-day seminar at Cornell University—an inter-religious conference. Leaders of all the world religions were invited. My hosts tried to get me on the program, but the offer was declined because the conference had been planned two years prior. However, they said I could come and participate in the discussions so I agreed.

Suddenly I received a call from them that the main speaker had fallen ill. Could I come and replace him? I said yes. They asked me to send a speech, but I wrote that I only spoke extemporaneously. This was accepted, and all throughout I felt Mother’s presence and help, even saw her face before me. The Mother had told me before I left India, “You have only to call me and I will be with you at once, at every moment I will be with you.”

Anie: Can you share some of the advice that the Mother gave to you for your own personal sadhana?

Udar: One day I said to Mother, “I

have been doing the yoga for many years, but I am not absolutely certain how to do the yoga of Sri Aurobindo. I read all the books and try to do the yoga, but I am not certain how far I have progressed.” I asked her to help me.

“You are doing it all wrong,” she said.

“What shall I do?”

“I will do the yoga for you.”

I was thrilled!

“What do I have to do?” I asked.

“Give yourself over to me and I will do it for you.”

“How do I surrender?”

“Do you sincerely want to?”

“Yes, certainly Mother.”

“When you get up in the morning what is the first thing you do?”

“I brush my teeth, and as a matter of course I am thinking of all kinds of things and not at all consciously.”

“Try and think of me while you are brushing your teeth,” Mother said. “Talk to me keeping fully conscious while you wash your face and brush your teeth. When you eat, that is the time you must be very conscious of me. Feel that I am eating with you and talk to me and enjoy



Mona Pinto. (Photo by Anie Nunnally)



your food. Let all the parts of your being remain conscious of me. Eat every mouthful with me and you will find that things taste so much better when you enjoy the food with me. When you go to sleep, that is the time when you should be very conscious of me. Let me put you to sleep and then the whole night you will have a conscious sleep. When you awaken and begin your day, you will then begin it in a more conscious way.”

Since that conversation, I have sincerely tried to make this effort. It may not always be complete and whole, but I make the effort to remain fully conscious of the Mother’s presence in all my actions and activities.

Anie: How is the sadhana different for you at this stage in your life? What new forms, if any, has it taken?

Udar: At this stage of my life, I just want to be always conscious of the Mother’s presence in me. I am always calling her and she never refuses to come. If I ask her for anything she gives it to me if it is useful for my sadhana. If not, then I know it is not and accept that. I have no regrets about anything at all. I am happy to have served the Mother consciously, and I want to be like that up to the end—if there is an end! The Mother told me not to accept death as inevitable. She said “Don’t say you are not going to die, but don’t say you have to die. When it comes face it in full confidence of my support, but fight it! Do not accept death!”

Udar remained silent for a few moments and then began to chant Mother’s mantra, “Om Namo Bhagavate,” and then “Om Anandamayi.” I sat quietly with him for some time and then left him in the atmosphere of that still, quiet space.

Further observations

A few days later I returned to see him. It was 17 December 1999, the day before my birthday, and Udar had developed a bronchial condition. I felt he was too weak for the interview and I did not want to tire him. However, he called me in to present me with flowers and beautifully wrapped birthday gifts.

Udar had been my liaison to the

Mother, delivering my numerous chits and letters to her during the three-and-a-half years I lived in the Ashram, and prior to that time as well, when I was still in the U.S. He had been privy to all my innermost questions and concerns that were put before the Mother. He advised and counseled and inspired me as well with his great strength, wisdom, and positive outlook.

What a fitting name—Udar—for he is truly generous with his time, help, work, friendship, and most of all the largesse of his inner being and spirit. He was always wearing an ever-present red rose given to him by the Mother, and for years after her passing he continued to wear a red rose.

Udar was ill with bronchitis for most of the remainder of my stay in Pondicherry. I saw him one last time before my departure with a group of French visitors who had come to see him. He was in good humor that day and had us laughing heartily.

About losing his voice to bronchitis, he said, “In my household it did not make much difference, as the women do most of the talking anyway!” He added, “Did you know that generally speaking, women are generally speaking?”

After all the time I spent with Amal Kiran and Udar Pinto, I reflected on these two souls who, with their divergent backgrounds (one a scholar and writer and the other an engineer and businessman) had come to the Mother and Sri Aurobindo as young men, and in a common bond had devoted their lives to the service of the Divine and to the yoga of the supramental. At this stage in their lives both have focused their priorities on remaining open to the divine light of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo for as long as they are in their present bodies. I could not have been more deeply touched or blessed than to have been in their inspiring presence.

Anie Nunnally (anie@earthlink.net) is a music teacher who was accepted by the Mother to live in the Ashram (and part of the time in Auroville) from 1969–1972. She worked for many years with the

Foundation for World Education and is an active member of the East-West Cultural Center in Los Angeles. Anie will be conducting more interviews with senior sadhaks in the Ashram this winter.

Travels with Swami Ananta, part 1

The author is sent to Greece on a strange mission

by Michael Miovic

This is the continuation of an extensive travelog which, unfortunately, was lost in a great conflagration. Either that or the rest of it is stored in Swami Ananta’s personal archives, which would be a fate even more final for that would mean a descent into utter chaos. In any case, in those prior cycles of the saga, the legendary Pagla Sadhu of Pondicherry dragged me through the jungles of southern Mexico to commune with the spirit of the great Pakal, the mighty Mayan priest-king whose ancient sacred city of Palenque still stands hidden in the jungles of Chiapas, a mystic testament to time’s travails and the will of the immortal gods.

But let me back up a step. For those of you who may not know, Ananta is one of the Ashram’s last surviving legends. Born Frederic Bushnell, he was raised among the crème de la crème, the blue-blooded Brahmins of Boston. His father was the attorney general of Massachusetts, his mother descended straight from Priscilla Alden, Governor Bradford, and their Mayflower stock. They lived on Beacon Hill and dined with the Cabots and the Lodges; they hovered above the peak of American society.

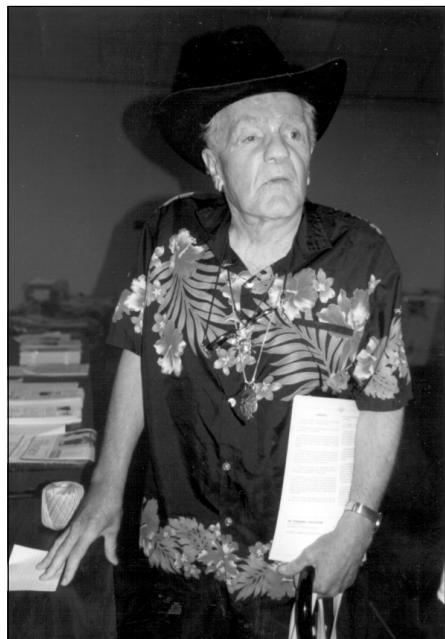
Yet young Frederic’s fate was other than to be a social luminary—as a teen he developed a fascination with Ramakrishna Paramahansa, and in his early twenties set out on a spiritual quest that brought him to Panditji, the powerful Tantrik guru of Rameshwaram, and from there ultimately to the feet of the Mother.



It was Panditji who gave him the name of Ananta Chaitanya, after the serpent of infinite consciousness on whom Vishnu reclines, and the Mother approved. Indeed, in her usual manner, she crystallized the spiritual truth with a manifestation on the material plane: she gave him a lovely little snake-infested island to live on in the middle of the river near Cuddalore.

With the help of his trusty servant Shingeni, and an inner push from both Panditji and the Mother, Ananta fashioned this inhospitable exile into a veritable sanctuary. He built dikes to reclaim land from the river, sowed beautiful flower gardens cropped in neat rows, dug lotus pools, raised a coconut grove to provide shade and income, and, most importantly, erected statues and grottos to honor the Immortals—an arch for Poseidon, a statue of Pallas Athena, and a giant seven-headed serpent rising over a gold-framed photo of Zeus the Father. He also fashioned a small temple for puja, and, like an ethereal echo from another world, a façade of the Parthenon slanting through the shade of the coconut grove as if it were a ray of light.

In this idyllic setting Ananta carried



Ananta at AUM 1997. (Photo by Lynda Lester)

out his yoga sadhana dedicated to the Mother and her divine children, the gods. And the Mother was pleased: once a year she used to pay a visit to Ananta on his beloved island, and she said in no uncertain terms that the Greek gods had consented to manifest there and would help him in Integral Yoga as far as they were able.

Things proceeded quietly along in this manner for nearly thirty-five years, with scarcely a soul taking note of Ananta's existence, for as we all know he is a man of great sobriety and modesty who abhors any sort of theatrical display or social occasion. Indeed, I might never have met this shy recluse, had it not been for an unfortunate medical circumstance, i.e., the onset of two different cancers simultaneously, which forced him to return to the Veterans Administration hospital in Los Angeles for treatment.

It was there that I met him during my last year in medical school, right after his penultimate nose job, and we struck up a friendship that has turned out to be nothing short of an adventure in consciousness. We have been to Palenque and back multiple times, to his island in Pondy, and even down to Rameshwaram to Panditji's widow, who is carrying on the Tantrik tradition. Yet what had still eluded us was the golden prize: Greece.

So, in the autumn of '98 we started plotting a return to Greece, and by June '99 the plans were finalized and the tickets purchased. It seemed that at last, after a lapse of some thirty years, Ananta was poised again to set foot upon Grecian soil.

His last words to me before we left: "Are you READY?! You will be Tested!"

Alas, only one hour before departure, even as we were waiting at the boarding gate in the airport, my senior guide and beloved companion was smitten down by a series of grand mal seizures the ferocity of which almost certainly would have finished any lesser mortal.

I was in such a state of shock myself from this untoward event, that when the

paramedics asked me if I were responsible for this nearly moribund elderly gentleman with striking, platinum-blond hair and cerulean eyes that rolled backward in their sockets, I impulsively said, "No, I've never met the man in my life!" What can I say? A lapse in yoga; a lamentable defect in character; a cowardly retreat from the clarion call . . . if that was my first test, I failed.

But no use crying over spilled milk; life moves on. So with that, I hastily left him in their able hands and boarded the plane en route to Greece, ready for a good vacation. On the flight over, Homer's stock line from *The Iliad* kept revolving in my mind: "And he fell to the dust as his armor clattered about him." I wasn't sure who had fallen, though, he or I.

Thus it was that I awoke in Athens, unexpectedly alone. At first I considered beating a swift retreat to the U.S., but then I reasoned that whatever happened must have been the will of the gods. If you associate with Ananta long enough, you get used to these dire twists of fate. So I took courage and resolved to imbibe whatever I could of the spirit of Greece, at least to honor Ananta's wishes for me.

My first stop, naturally, was the Parthenon, which caps the ancient Acropolis. Commissioned by the great Pericles (an emanation of Sri Aurobindo in a prior life), the temple is dedicated to Athena, the patron goddess of Athens.

Parthenos actually means "virgin," thus the temple's name refers to the virgin goddess, Athena. According to legend, Athena sprang straight from the head of Zeus. She is the goddess of wisdom and reason, as well as of victory, and, along with Apollo, is one of the two "younger" generation of Olympian gods who support the progress and evolution of human civilization.

It was under the aegis of Athena that classical Athens developed the tremendously dynamic culture which laid the enduring foundations of Western civilization. Whether in science, art, philosophy, drama, politics, or law, there is no aspect of Western culture that has not been profoundly and irrevocably touched by the



The Parthenon: "Here one feels Athena not as a being, rather as an impersonal force—a manifesting power of order, harmony, beauty, and perfection." (Photo by Michael Miovic)

cultural ferment born in Athens some twenty-four centuries ago.

The Parthenon itself was designed by the architect Iktinos, but much of its execution was carried out by the great sculptor Phidias, a close friend of Pericles and creator of the many statues and friezes that adorned its walls. The Parthenon apparently stood in fairly good condition for over a thousand years, and as late as 1687 most of its outer structure was still intact, until a Venetian military commander cannonaded it. Thus it was that due to human stupidity, one of the world's most perfect buildings was reduced to shambles.

Today, as you stand below the Parthenon and gaze up at its columns and capital, it still strikes you as perfect. Everything about the temple is perfectly conceived and executed—the angle at which you approach it, the curvature of the rise on which it stands, its proportions, the exact spacing of the columns and the way they bulge out slightly to achieve maximum width about one third of the way up.

The more you look at the Parthenon, the more hungry the eyes grow to keep looking. The temple is as large as it can

be given the size of the Acropolis, so that you at once feel the towering might and power of the Olympian goddess, and yet, unlike the colossal temple to Zeus that stands in the plains below, the Parthenon is not so large as to lose its architectural relationship with the space of its site. And more than anything, the Parthenon radiates harmony, glorious and imperial harmony. It is an absolutely splendid and unearthly building. One has the impression that it has been beamed down to earth straight from the overmind, in toto; no diminution or dilution of the inspiration in transit.

As I sat below the temple gazing up at its radiating vibrations of ideal beauty, I could only think of Sri Aurobindo's classic phrase, "perfect perfection." That is the Parthenon—ideal, unalloyed, sublime perfection. Here one feels Athena not as a being, rather as an impersonal force—a manifesting power of order, harmony, beauty, and perfection.

After a couple of days in Athens, I was finally able to reach Ananta by phone.

"Have you gone to Delphi?" he asked urgently. "Michael, the Olympi-

ans—they are waiting for you THERE!"

"No," I said, "not yet. How are you? How's your health?"

"Horrible," he replied, "absolutely miserable. I was in the hospital and now it feels like my back is broken and I can barely walk, and there's no food in the fridge and I'm practically starving to death."

I breathed a sigh of relief; it was good to hear him back to normal.

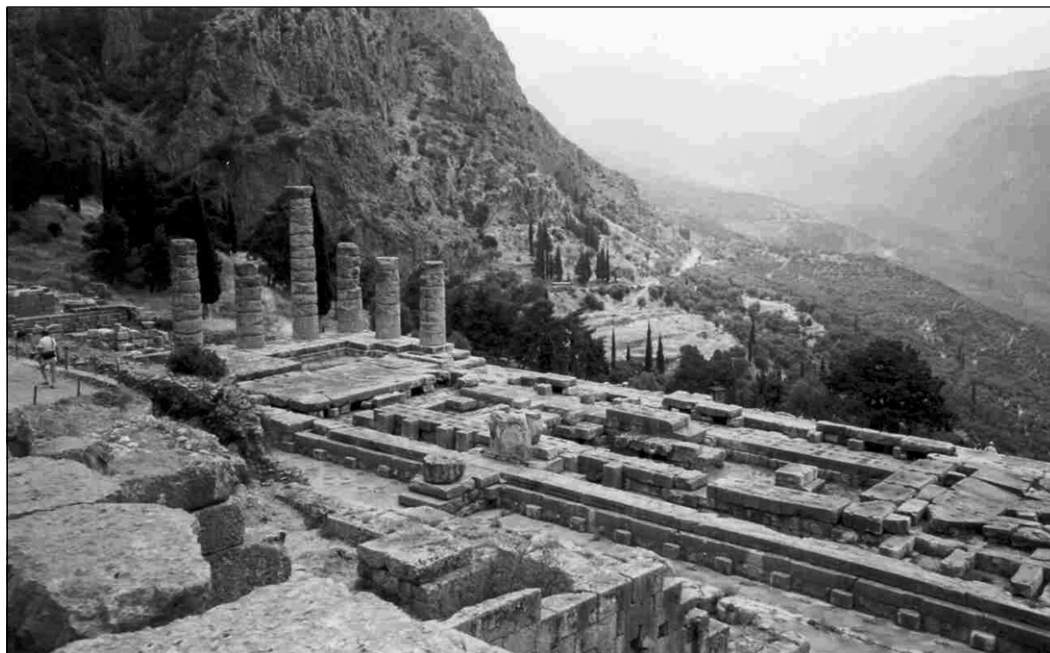
Before proceeding to Delphi, I decided to go worship Poseidon at his temple on Cape Sounion, for Ananta had often taught me that Poseidon helps purify the being in preparation for the offering to Apollo, the resplendent sun god.

Poseidon's temple, also commissioned by Pericles, stands about one and a half hours south of Athens by bus, on a stunning site atop a miniature archipelago of barren earth, surrounded on three sides by ultramarine blue expanses of the Aegean Sea. One could not imagine a better spot to honor mighty Poseidon, god of the depths and waters—Varuna in the ancient Vedic system, and Chac to the Mayans.

As the tour guide talked about the politics and economy of classical Athens and recounted the story of Theseus, who sailed by Sounion to go slay the Minotaur in the labyrinth of Crete, my consciousness slipped into an entirely different dimension.

Inwardly I opened into a vast expanse of limpid blue purity. It was so peaceful there, so clean, floating in the breadths and depths of Poseidon, unfettered, cut loose of all moorings and human littleness. Now there was no body, just the oceanic stretch of an infinite release reaching out in all directions, a sea of undulating freedom. In that great vastness I could feel Ananta, too, drifting in the warp and weft of Chac-Varuna-Poseidon's tides, and we were both being offered up to something Above.

When I eventually emerged from these imponderable profundities and bobbed back up to the surface reality, back to this small shell of body, mind, and life in which we toil, I felt at ease. I knew that whatever was to happen to me in



Temple of Delphi: "A gossamer-thin quality of luminous brilliance." (Photo by Michael Miovic)

Greece would be the will of the gods . . . and I knew that they would watch over Ananta, too.

On the way to Delphi, the bus passed through Thebes, the ancient home of Oedipus. Then, as we entered the valley that leads up to the oracle, we passed the ancient crossroad where Oedipus was said to have killed his father. As a psychiatrist in training, I was naturally fascinated by this voyage back to the very birthplace of the now infamous "Oedipus complex."

Along the way I read another interesting myth from Thebes that forms a counterpoint to the Oedipus complex, but has not been explored in modern psychology. This concerns the story of the young prince Pentheus, a somewhat prudish and moralistic young man who tried to stop his mother Agave from joining in the ecstatic rites of female Dionysus worshippers.

To make a long story short, the god Dionysus disguised himself as a mortal and tricked the prince to dress up as a woman so he could spy on the women during their nocturnal revels. There the

prince was discovered and, in a fit of religious delirium, his own mother and her companions ripped him to shreds with their bare hands.

This myth is rich not only in psychodynamic suggestions about the Freudian id, unconscious, and the mother-son relationship, but it is spiritually interesting as well. From the point of view of mythological symbolism, the cult of Dionysus bears many similarities both to that of the Vedic god Soma, and more completely to the later figure of Krishna.

Both Krishna and Dionysus are pastoral figures who enchant their devotees with flute music and are surrounded by a group of love-intoxicated female devotees. Clearly both figures are associated with the principle of ananda, and at least in the ancient Greek myths of Dionysus, it is evident that if this divine ananda manifests in the impure human vital, a great and sometimes fatal destabilization can occur, a fact well known in yoga.

My experience at Delphi, on the other hand, was quite the opposite. Nothing of ecstasy and spiritual intoxication. Everything was consummately Apollonian—joy, light, harmony, a perfectly

happy and balanced self-possessed sunny expansiveness. What struck me immediately about this spot, apart from the idyllic setting, was the levity of the atmosphere. Everything felt immaterial and insubstantial; physical reality seemed to have no weight; all was light, transparent, imbued with a gossamer-thin quality of luminous brilliance. The huge stones of the wall below Apollo's temple seemed almost to levitate, and the few stout columns that remained of the ancient oracle felt as buoyant as a melody, as supple as sunshine.

Here in this sanctuary to the God of knowledge, music, and spiritual vision, all was spontaneous and effort-

less. The wide swaths of amber-gold grasses that played in the glades, the brisk upward reach of green pines aspiring to heaven, the high vault of cliffs that stood behind the scene like a natural amphitheater, the bright sky and broad valley rich with immemorial olives, the sinuous curl of an ancient river bed far below opening into deluvial plains and an offering of blue sea—all was joined in one harmony, one eternal instant immortalized perpetually in radiating sunlight. And one could become all this easily, instantly, without toil and travail, by divine birthright. Such was the perfection of radiant Apollo, warm in his luminosity and so friendly in his swift approach.

I spent hours exploring the grounds in and around the sanctuary, and along the way discovered occasional clusters of extraordinary hollyhock flowers, magenta-pink petals with a brilliant yellow core. I came to think of this flower as Apollo's light manifesting in the psychic (Mother's message for hollyhock in general is "offering").

Later in the day, I culled one of these vibrant gems and took it to offer at the great god's oracle. No sooner had I done



so than I felt drowsy and had to lie down on a stone slab in the shade.

I sank quickly into a deep inner repose, an outer sleep but an inner awakening, and in that receptive state Apollo stepped forth and infused my whole consciousness with his radiating sunlight. He seemed extremely interested in the psychic being, and was ready to share himself abundantly with me. I am no expert in these matters, but I can only speculate that he must have joined Mother's work long ago. It is also possible that as a sun god, he is not purely an overmental being, but may in fact be an aspect of the supermind that came down into the overmind to support the evolution.

Another thing I came across at Delphi was a copy of the famous omphalos, the stone that was said to be the "navel of the earth." It's in the museum and is fascinating because it is shaped like a large lingam. According to myth, Zeus released two eagles that flew across the earth, and where they met he dropped this stone from the sky to mark the spiritual center of the earth. That spot was Delphi. In prehistoric times, the Earth Mother Goddess was worshipped here and priestesses called *pythia* sat near the omphalos and gave prophecies. Later Apollo took a liking to this spot and claimed it for his own.

I spent the night in Delphi, and the next day set out to find Pan's cave, which lies in the foothills of Mount Parnassus, on the backside of the high plateau that stretches inland from the cliffs above Delphi. I caught a taxi to reach the plateau, and from there proceeded to hike for an hour or so along the indicated trail, until I finally reached the cave.

When I stepped into the welcome cool of the cave, my eyes took several minutes to adjust to the darkness. Slowly I began to see an eerie landscape of stalagmites and jade-green boulders. It was uncanny to think that people have been visiting this cave, at times to worship, at times simply to escape the elements, since time immemorial. Eventually I settled down and offered a meditation to

Pan, the god of the vital force in nature. He was present but elusive, hesitant; he was certainly not forthcoming like Apollo. I went on trying to making contact with him for some time, and then just as I was about to give up and concede lack of receptivity on my part, I remembered to invoke the Mother. Inwardly I asked Pan whether he wanted to participate in the new creation, and that seemed to catch his attention. He came forward some, but again hesitated.

Then a most curious and unexpected event transpired: in inner reality, I suddenly felt Sri Aurobindo's presence descend from above, and he pulled down a thread of light from his supramental spheres and offered it to Pan. I had a distinct impression of Sri Aurobindo saying to Pan, "Here, if you consent to participate in the new creation, I will let you wander in the supramental wilderness."

Presently this trickle of golden-orange light infused into and lifted up an emerging emerald vision of pristine hills and forests from prehistoric times, a wild beauty unsoiled by the human presence. Pan "tasted" this re-creation of virgin wilderness shot through with a new, supramental vibration, and he liked it immensely. He assented joyfully, happy to regain what humankind has taken away from him, and presently I felt a tremendous green force start to radiate throughout the body of the earth. Verdant rays of healing energy reached out into the desecrated and aching body of our beleaguered planet which has been so dirtied by humanity in recent times.

That was a humbling lesson for me, both to see the magnanimity of Sri Aurobindo's action, and to realize vividly, concretely, how much we have lost in forgetting the gods. Also, it had never occurred to me that wilderness is an actual spiritual truth that will have its place in the new creation. *[To be continued]*

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The yoga today

Sunlit crystal, sunlit path

Matrimandir is a center of peace, light, and dynamic force

by August Timmermans

When the Mother left her physical body on 17 November 1973, it created a critical void for sadhaks of the Integral Yoga, and even for the world, as she mentioned once in the Agenda that humanity would go through a critical period if she were to leave her body. Auroville particularly, which was only in the beginning stage of construction, experienced serious difficulties for decades to come.

It was on 22 August 1991 that the Matrimandir, still under construction, received its true center, the crystal globe, in the inner chamber. For the first time there was a physical and visible point of focus in the Matrimandir, where previously people had only been able to sense a force or a presence.

Looking at the significance of the Matrimandir in the context of the Mother's mahasamadhi and the Integral Yoga, we should maybe conclude that the physical presence of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother finds continuation in the Matrimandir and its crystal, which the Mother named the soul of Auroville. She also said that the sooner the Matrimandir is there, the better it will be for everybody, and especially for the Aurovilians.

What can the soul of Auroville mean to sadhaks of the Integral Yoga not living in Auroville?

What the Matrimandir gives is a point of focus: the sunlit crystal globe. Meeting with the soul of Auroville is a situation where soul meets soul. The sunlit crystal globe gives a feeling of solidity, stability, warm light, and that palpable peace so inherent to the Matrimandir: exactly the characteristics of a true guru. Individuals find a haven of light and peace,

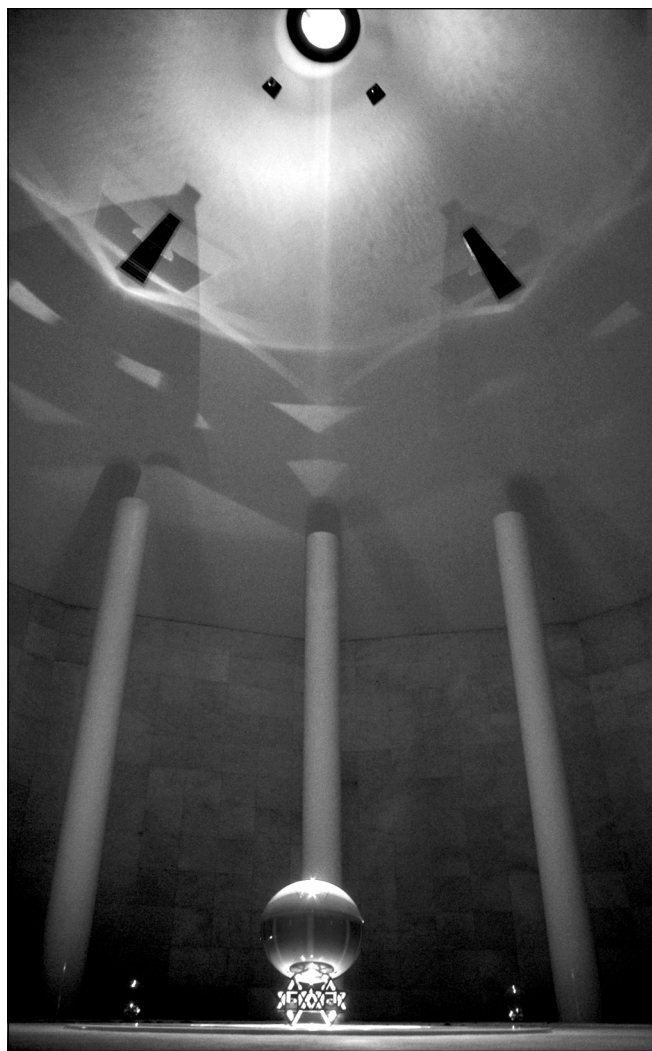


a permanent presence that invites communion with their own souls.

In her *Conversations* from 1929, the Mother describes the soul or psychic being as follows:

“To find the soul you must withdraw from the surface, withdraw deep inside, enter far within, go way down, down into a very deep hole, which is silent, still; and there you see something warm, quiet, of a rich substance, very still and very full, and exceedingly soft—that is the soul. And if you continue and are conscious yourself, there comes a feeling of plenitude, something full, with unfathomable depths. You feel that if you entered there, many secrets would be revealed; it’s like the reflection of something eternal . . .”

Entering the Matrimandir is like going through this deep passage toward a deeper stillness, away from the surface. In the inner chamber we meet a material soul; it is almost as if our own soul is invited to come forward—such is the force of the solid crystal.



The Matrimandir crystal. (Photo by Guy Piacentino)

But the Matrimandir is much more: it is a complex being where forces manifest. It is a center of light and peace, but it is also a center of dynamic forces. Once one has contacted the crystal, the connection seems permanent. Because of its physical and visible presence, it becomes easy to imagine the sunlit crystal globe wherever one is, and the connection becomes direct. With this, a direct force of light and peace becomes part of the sadhak. This can give the physical assurance of a living support, exactly as would the relation with a physical guru. The sadhak is on the receiving end of the Matrimandir, and the inner journey can become a continuing experience.

Distance for the Matrimandir is irrelevant. The connection with the crystal becomes part of those who concentrate on it, and eventually this can be an easy exercise to do. Practically this means that the connection with the Matrimandir can extend worldwide. The Matrimandir becomes truly a world center of light and peace thanks to those who open themselves to it. A more direct relationship with forces of light and peace on the physical plane in this yoga is available to us. The sunlit crystal can lead us onto a sunlit path.

August Timmermans (augustti@bu.ac.th) left the Netherlands in 1977 and lived in India for eight years, primarily in Auroville, where he worked on the construction of the Matrimandir. In 1988 he settled in Thailand. He is currently a staff member in the International Affairs Office at Bangkok University and a moderator of the Integral Yoga mailing list.

Eye contact with God

In which the universe is seen to live happily ever after

by Lynda Lester

Last issue’s “Napping with the Divine” was an account of a spiritual experience at Denver International Airport. The next day, my traveling companions and I were in San Francisco to hear our friend Scott Kirby, a well-known performer of ragtime piano music, play two concerts at a Victorian mansion.

This selection is from a journal of experiences in consciousness.

8 November 1997

At 2 p.m. Scott sat down and started playing—Scott Joplin’s “The Easy Winners.” As soon as he hit the keys, fireworks of light started coming out of the piano. Touched by light, I closed my eyes.

What you must do to understand music, i.e., see to the heart of it, meld with its truth and the Truth, is: Look closely with deep attention. *Very* closely. Look to see what it is saying, both on the outside and on the inside. It’s vision, not hearing: an inner sight opens.



And what I saw in the next two hours was something important and beautiful, reminiscent of what composer D.T. Roberts called “the felt significance of all things”:

The existentialists were wrong—existence is not absurd.

Existence is made out of love and beauty, existence is a spell of enchantment.

When Scott played the last note of the last piece, the audience could hardly clap at all; we had been silenced. None of us could say a word, or even move.

It was great concert: a moment when the doors of heaven were open.

That night eighty more people arrived, and at 7:30 p.m., Scott began the second concert. He played the same program, with two or three substitutions. I was interested in that because I wanted to see if the same pieces would elicit the same perceptions.

It wasn't the same. The consciousness started where it had left off, and continued its exponential curve.

Question to self, fifteen minutes into the performance: “Why do you like this?”

Answer: “Because your body becomes the universe”—code language for universal identification, innuendoes of cosmic consciousness, Atman/Self realization.

The experience grew more and more beautiful, more and more intense; I opened my awareness and recognized it for what it was: pure, divine grace: a gift beyond measure, beyond desert: a lavish unconditional bestowal of treasure.

I began to see with global web vision: I could see the connectedness of all things. And I knew without doubt why I had come, why I was here: for this inner vision and insight, for this quality of spiritual realization.

It was simply too beautiful to bear, too beautiful to survive: small ego died, I met my own extinction. And in one more moment I reached: perfect understanding of the entire universe. The enlightenment experience—That One.

They always say, the revered ones, the holy ones, the saints and yogis, the avatars: When you get there, you'll get it.

I got it.

I left temporality and entered the timeless eternal—but I was taking notes, dropping small mental transcriptions like breadcrumbs in the forest, so I would remember the trail once I'd reentered the land of flat reality.

And these were the notes:

Moments like this change your life.

Every time you come here you see, you learn, you develop capacities.

I was in a black hole interfaced directly to eternity, experiencing all around me the divine realm; paradise found.

And as Scott played on, I thought, I am never happier than I am when I'm here; this is the secret to life extension: infuse the limbic system, the neural networks, the brain and blood cells with this universal life force, all made of truth, and the body will one day learn immortality.

I looked deeper, deeper, deeper . . . I went deeper still.

And then, right before the end of the first set, I saw, looking right back at me:

God.

The personal God.

The conditioned, qualified Ishwara—Lord, Lover, Master, Him.

I saw His face.

I'd never seen it before, like that.

What I'd seen were shock waves surrounding Him—the edge of His aura, His traces, His footprints . . . I'd felt Him, I'd heard Him, I'd been ravished by Him—but I'd never seen His face.

It was exactly like looking at someone, awareness meeting awareness: *eye contact*.

I looked right into the eyes of God . . . and God, revealed, looked right back into me.

And in that instant when I looked into God's face, I touched the Truth: the famous ineffable inexpressible Truth that cannot be formed into words because it exceeds the dimensionality of language: it moves ahead, it goes beyond; it is That which is nameless.

But when I pulled tracers of light from it and they condensed into codifiable understandings, here's what I saw:

I saw that everything will be OK.

I saw the end to which the universe is moving—an end that could translate as happily ever after.

During intermission I was thinking: Life is not coffee spoons. Perhaps it is, in our everyday workaday existence—but not at the heart. We have the capacity for much, much more.

By the end of the concert, realities were impinging; human and divine worlds were superimposed.

I realized the incredible: nothing was in the way, between the Source and myself. It was the most impossibly wonderful gift I could imagine: direct access, no interference—all I had to do was accept the luminous treasure.

Thank you God, I said.

Thank you God, I said, over and over again.

An apprehending spiritual vision opened in me to the diaspora of the galaxies, the diapason of the created universe: from hell to heaven, all the worlds, all the spectrums: united, of a piece, one, and the meaning of it all: the Great Chain of Being.

During Scott's last piece, ego fell off like a sewn robe.

The oneness was dense, the bond was strong.

I saw the secret grotto at the heart of the universe, and it was pregnant with bliss.

Scott Kirby is a pianist/composer specializing in new world piano music, a genre influenced by ragtime, stride, blues, jazz, Latin/African rhythms, European romanticism, and terra verde. His CDs are available through www.veridiana.com.

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Essay

The triple time vision

Last chapter of Synthesis describes 'trikaladrishti'

by David Hutchinson

Towards the Supramental Time Vision" is the twenty-fifth and final chapter in *The Synthesis of Yoga*. In this chapter Sri Aurobindo describes the perception of time, starting from a normal human sensibility and progressing up to that of the supermind. As in the six chapters before, which also deal with the ascent towards supermind, Sri Aurobindo uses two invaluable methods when dealing with the subject.

First, he relates these higher functions to our current mind, thereby giving us conceptual clues to understand them. Second, he describes their progressive emergence, showing us a path to follow, characteristics of consciousness to look for, qualities to foster and strengthen as they appear. These are practical matters, intended to serve as stepping stones towards a higher reality.

A few cautions should be taken in reading this chapter. First, the terminology in this section of *Synthesis* cannot be taken as fixed, either in regard to planes of consciousness or in relation to later writings by Sri Aurobindo or the Mother, and so one should not state dogmatically that a specific characteristic applies to a specific plane of consciousness.

As two essays in *Sri Aurobindo Archives and Research* make clear, the terminology Sri Aurobindo used here was preliminary and progressively changing. ("Planes of Vijnana in the Record of Yoga, 1919–1920"¹ and "Planes of Overmind in the Record of 1927."² The *Record* was Sri Aurobindo's journal during this period.) The first essay notes that "A month or so after [the descent of 24 November 1926] the *Record* resumes, but with a new set of terms referring to much higher planes than in 1920."

Also, this section of *Synthesis* was written in 1920–1921 and never revised. As Sri Aurobindo himself says in a letter from 1932, "What is described in those chapters is the action of the Supermind when it descends into the Overmind plane and takes up the Overmind workings and transforms them. The highest Supermind or Divine gnosis existent in itself, is something that lies beyond still and quite above. It was intended in latter chapters to show how difficult even this was and how many levels there were between the human mind and Supermind and how even Supermind descending could get mixed with the lower action and turned

into something that was less than the true Truth. But these latter chapters were not written."³

The conditions of perfection

Since we are talking about the final chapter in *Synthesis*, perhaps a look at the entire last section of the book, which includes chapters 11–25, is in order. Part 4 is titled "The Yoga of Perfection," what is elsewhere called *Purna Yoga* (the "complete yoga") or Integral Yoga. Yet in parts 1–3, Sri Aurobindo wrote extensively of the yogas of will, knowledge, and love. How should we understand a yoga of perfection? What kind



Cosmos. (This image and the one on p. 25 are details from larger acrylic paintings by Jim Foreman)



of perfection is he talking about?

In chapter 2 of part 4, he answers this question. “To open oneself to the supra-cosmic Divine is an essential condition of this integral perfection; to unite oneself with the universal Divine is another essential condition. Here the Yoga of self-perfection coincides with the Yogas of knowledge, works and devotion . . .”⁴ This unity in consciousness with the Divine is the goal of these preparatory yogas.

For complete self-perfection, however, “there must be an action of the entire divine nature in our life; and this brings in the need of the supramental conversion which substitutes the native action of spiritual being for the imperfect action of the superficial nature and spiritualises and transfigures its mental, vital and physical parts by the spiritual ideality.”⁵

In other words, self-perfection is a change of our *nature*, this lower nature comprised of physical, vital, and mental parts and subparts. In part 4 Sri Aurobindo goes over the first few steps of that conversion or transformation; to a great extent this part of *Synthesis* is a manual or textbook, showing the essential processes of this change.

The need for transformation

The last chapter of *The Life Divine* emphasizes this need for transformation. “There can undoubtedly be a spiritual life within, a kingdom of heaven within us which is not dependent on any outer manifestation or instrumentation or formula of external being . . . However the man of spiritual realization lives and acts and behaves, in all ways of his being and acting, it is said in the *Gita*, ‘he lives and acts in Me’; he dwells in the Divine, he has realised the spiritual existence . . .

“But from the point of view of a spiritual evolution, this would be only an individual liberation and perfection in an unchanged environmental existence: for a greater dynamic change in the earth-nature itself, a spiritual change of the whole principle and instrumentation of life and action, the appearance of a new order of

beings and a new earth-life must be envisaged in our idea of the total consummation, the divine issue.”⁶

The sevenfold hierarchy

Lest we think that *The Synthesis of Yoga* is the last word, we should also realize that it was left unfinished even in his coverage of topics. What topics? Part 4, chapter 10 (“The Elements of Perfection”) gives a brief outline of a *sapta chatusthaya*, or sevenfold hierarchy, each of which has four elements. Sri Aurobindo used this framework at the time to organize his yoga. An outline of the *sapta chatusthaya* can be found in volume 27 of the *Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library*.⁷

In brief, the seven are:

- *Samata* (equanimity)
- *Shakti* (power, force)
- *Vijnana* (supermind)
- *Sharira* (physical perfection)
- *Karma* (perfect action on the gnostic basis)
- *Brahma* (perfection of the universal brahmic consciousness)
- *Siddhi* (perfection of yoga)

The first nine chapters of part 4 deal with various aspects of *siddhi*, perfection: they cover the thing itself, the psychology of perfection, and the necessary antecedents (purification and liberation). Chapters 11–13 cover the practice and status of *samata*, equanimity, in its passive and active aspects. Chapters 14–18 describe the gradations of *shakti*, how one can convert the workings of *prana* and soul-force active in the normal consciousness into that of the divine *shakti*. Finally, chapters 19–25 cover the ascent toward and various qualities of the supermind (*vijnana*, divine gnosis).

The last four topics of the *sapta chatusthaya*—*sharira*, *karma*, *brahma*, and *siddhi*—are not addressed in detail in *Synthesis*.

Powers of the supermind

Trikaladrishti is a Sanskrit word comprised of three parts: *tri* (three); *kala* (time); *drishti* (sight). In a simple sense it

means the vision of the three times of past, present, and future. Sri Aurobindo ascribed the power of *trikaladrishti* to the supermind; it is one of the natural abilities native to it.

In the history of yoga, and especially in the *raja yoga* of Patanjali, there are *siddhis* or perfections that have been treated as goals, things that a yogin can strive for. Sri Aurobindo speaks of them differently: they are flowerings of the supramental consciousness. “These things become in the supramental nature not at all abnormal but perfectly natural and normal, not separately psychic but spiritual, not occult and strange, but a direct, simple, inherent and spontaneous action.”⁸

The distinction is important, because as a *siddhi* that one practices and achieves through effort, the ability is necessarily sporadic, dependent upon the strength or concentration of one’s consciousness; whereas when the supermind manifests such an ability, it is in a natural way.

This difference is also important in how the individual directs these powers. As powers that are developed by individual effort, they are liable to misuse and misdirection; but since the emergence of the supermind requires certain conditions of egolessness, purification of the vital, and opening of the inner being, when occurring spontaneously they do not pose the same dangers.

Going inward

On hearing of greater powers, it is natural to think that they are the goals of yoga, that developing them is essential to the path. But the real goal is the Divine, and breaking through the surface consciousness is the essential first step.

“The individual being has to find himself, his true existence; he can only do this by going inward, by living within and from within: for the external or outer consciousness or life separated from the inner Spirit is the field of the Ignorance; it can only exceed itself and exceed the Ignorance by opening into the largeness of an inner self and life.”⁹

Passing beyond the surface, external,



physical consciousness is, in fact, a prerequisite for the development of many of the powers of the higher consciousness. Sri Aurobindo mentions this in many writings.

Developing another consciousness

In relation to the time sense, he says “The possibility of another kind of time consciousness than we have at present and of a triple time knowledge rests upon the possibility of developing another consciousness than that proper to the physical mind and sense. . . .”¹⁰

There are two general ways that he and the Mother speak of doing this: moving the consciousness above the head, outside the physical body; and

moving it inward, to the soul, the psychic.

“There must grow up within us or there must manifest a consciousness more and more open to the deeper and higher being, more and more laid bare to the cosmic Self and Power and to what comes down from the Transcendence, turned to a higher Peace, permeable to a greater light, force and ecstasy, a consciousness that exceeds the small personality and surpasses the limited light and experience of the surface mind, the limited force and aspiration of the normal life-consciousness, the obscure and limited responsiveness of the body.”¹¹

The subliminal consciousness and the intuition

“Towards the Supramental Time Vision” describes two general instruments of consciousness that lie beyond our surface awareness, and the qualities of time-vision which pertain to each.

The first is what Sri Aurobindo calls the psychical or subliminal consciousness. (Note that this is *not* the pure psychic consciousness; at this point in his writing Sri Aurobindo used the term “psychical” to refer to the inner, subliminal being. The difference is important, because this subliminal “receives its time perceptions, like the mind, only in part and detail, is open to all kinds of suggestions, and as its consequent range of truth is wider, more manifold too are its sources of error.”¹²)

The second instrument is the intuition; this is a power of the range of mind intermediate between our waking consciousness and the supermind.

The subliminal consciousness and the intuition complement each other. The subliminal gives indicators, symbols, visions, transcriptions of things past, present, and future. The intuition, however, “can bring with it the capacity of a time knowledge that comes not from outside indices, but from within the universal soul of things . . .”¹³ In other words, the intuitive awareness is a reflection or lesser power of knowledge by identity.

Stages of ascent

Sri Aurobindo doesn’t start with these further levels, however; he begins from the state that we all find ourselves in. There is a fundamental truth here. “The supermind, the divine gnosis, is not something entirely alien to our present consciousness: it is a superior instrumentation of the spirit and all the operations of our normal consciousness are limited and inferior derivations from the supramental, because these are tentatives and constructions . . . Accordingly when we rise from mind to supermind, the new power of consciousness does not reject, but uplifts, enlarges and transfigures the operations of our soul and mind and life.”¹⁴

In the first few pages of the chapter, Sri Aurobindo outlines the general stages of the ascent of consciousness. As we are, we “can neither live in the infinite time consciousness nor command any direct and real power of the triple time knowledge.”¹⁵ We live in each moment, with a vague sense of our self as continuing through time, and a vague ability to predict the future using reason to trace out cause and effect.

The second stage is that of yoga, when we look for knowledge within; here we get touches from the universal mind.

The third stage is that of the supermind acting through or in the mind, when “all things and all truths are perceived and experienced as already present and known and immediately available by merely turning the inner light upon it . . .”¹⁶

Actualities, possibles, imperatives

In fact, we can already know a great deal about the past and future by using reason and science. Sri Aurobindo doesn’t deny this; however, he places this knowledge in context by noting that when we move outside of the purely physical and into the vital and mental realms, it “ceases to be practicable here for our limited intelligence to calculate accurately and with certitude.”¹⁷

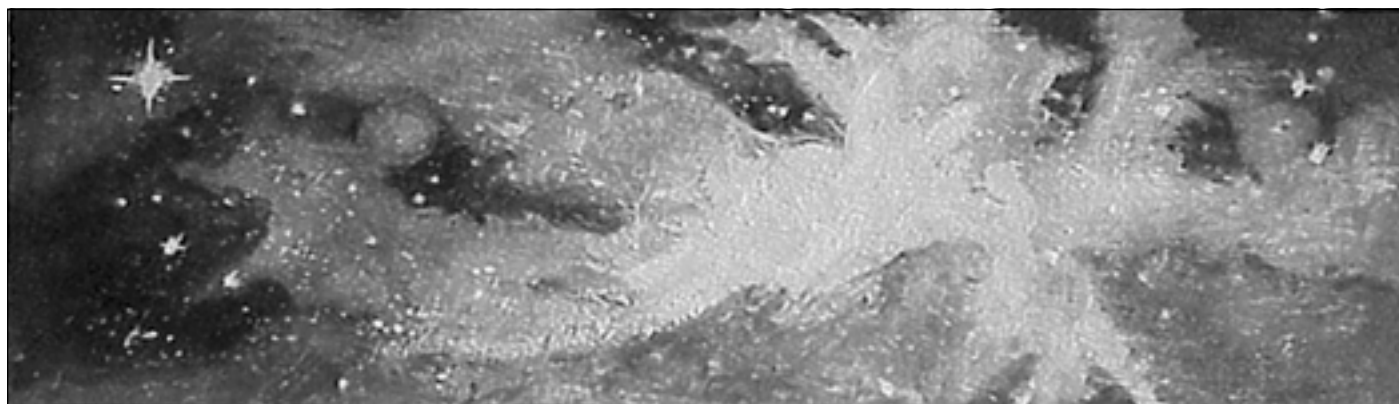
One important reason is that there

The beginning of time

CAMBRIDGE, MA—On what is now known as “Monday,” a team of MIT scientists unveiled “time,” a revolutionary new event-sequencing protocol which organizes phenomena along a four-dimensional axis, preventing everything from taking place at once.

“No longer will the extinction of the dinosaurs, the assassination of John F. Kennedy, and the Earth-Xabraxiq Pod Wars all collapse into a single point,” theoretical physicist Dr. Lawrence Chang said. “With time, we can now contextualize each of the universe’s infinite number of occurrences in its own spatial-temporal plane, creating order where there once was chaos.”

Added Dr. Erno Toffel: “Using time, one event can be positioned chronologically so as to be the cause of another. For example, a man’s death may result in a gun being fired at him. Or the other way around. We’re still working out some of the kinks.”—From *The Onion*, a humor newspaper, <http://www.theonion.com>



“reigns behind [life and mind] . . . the will of the soul and secret spirit, the first indefinitely variable, fluid and elusive, the second infinite and inscrutably imperative. . . .”¹⁸ The word “imperative” has a strict, experiential meaning for Sri Aurobindo. Later in the chapter he describes the development of the intuitive sense of time as proceeding through three stages: actualities, possibles, and imperatives.

Actualities are things that have already manifested, forces that have been realized in some sense. *Possibles* or *potentialities* are deeper, or if we look at them in a temporal sense, antecedent: they come before a thing manifests. *Imperatives* are forces that arise from the spirit; they will fulfill themselves no matter what the mix of other forces. (Sri Aurobindo’s vision of India’s freedom comes to mind.)

As we can see from the *Record*, one progresses from actualities to possibles to imperatives as one moves closer and closer to the supermind.

Presentiments and intuitions

Even in the normal surface awareness we get glimmers of this expanded time sense, through presentiments or intuitions. These are usually “obscure intuitions of the sense mind and the vital being.”¹⁹

Here one returns upon the wider understanding of an integral yoga and its conditions, for these intuitions are best received in a passive, quiet consciousness; the more that the mind at-

tempts to interpret, the more error is introduced.

“The accuracy of this kind of seeing depends on its being confined to a statement of the thing seen and the attempt to infer, interpret or otherwise go beyond the visual knowledge may lead to much error unless there is at the same time a strong psychical intuition fine, subtle and pure or a high development of the luminous intuitive intelligence.”²⁰

One fascinating part of the inner consciousness is that it can “bring back or project itself into past states of consciousness and experience and anticipate, or even, though this is less common, strongly project itself into future states of consciousness and experience.”²¹ In other words, it is possible to know your future (individual) self.

All the knowledge that we receive, no matter how high, how powerful and seemingly complete, has to be raised up into the supramental level. This is because the supermind has the true knowledge by identity. Being a direct power of the spirit, it includes the totality of things, sees the particular as part of the universal, sees the universe of form from the standpoint of the transcendent.

In relation to time vision, even the intuition is limited because it “will always lean chiefly on the succession of present moments as a foundation for its steps and successions of knowledge, however far it may range backward or forward,—it will move in the stream of Time even in its higher revelatory action . . .”²²

Transcendence vs. mixture

At the end of the chapter Sri Aurobindo tells of two directions that are possible when one has started the process of opening to the higher intuitive knowledge. As always, he encapsulates the whole yoga while bringing forth a particular point.

As long as we have vestiges of the current mentality, he says, it brings in error. Because of this inevitable error, a person can do one of two things. There can either be “a refusal to attempt to know,” which can impose a limitation, or the normal mind “is allowed again to emerge,”²³ bringing in a mixed action.

These two options correspond to all spiritual effort before Sri Aurobindo and the Mother: either one takes the way of negation and transcendence, of denying the current instruments of the spirit, or one settles for some mixture of spiritual opening and the present instruments of consciousness. Through the first, one can move beyond present limitations, but at the cost of the embodied life or its effectiveness; through the second, one can have a fruitful inner spiritual life, but its manifestation will always be flawed.

The solution? To rise into the supermind and allow it to descend, to transform our very nature.

“The evolution in the Knowledge would be a more beautiful and glorious manifestation with more vistas ever unfolding themselves and more intensive in all ways than any evolution could be in the Ignorance. The delight of the Spirit is



Media

ever new, the forms of beauty it takes innumerable, its godhead ever young and the taste of delight, rasa, of the Infinite eternal and inexhaustible. The gnostic manifestation of life would be more full and fruitful and its interest more vivid than the creative interest of the Ignorance; it would be a greater and happier constant miracle.”²⁴

Notes

1. *Sri Aurobindo Archives and Research*, vol. 17, no. 2, December 1993, pp.184–188.
2. *Archives and Research*, vol. 18, no. 2, December 1994, pp. 224–230.
3. *The Synthesis of Yoga*, reduced facsimile edition 1986, 1970, p. 899. Letter from 13 April 1932.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 596.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 596.
6. *The Life Divine, Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library (SABCL)*, vol. 19, Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press: 1972, p. 1019
7. *Supplement, SABCL*, vol. 27, pp. 356–375.
8. *The Synthesis of Yoga*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press: 1973, p. 810.
9. *Life Divine, SABCL*, vol. 19, p. 1027
10. *Synthesis*, p. 858.
11. *Life Divine, SABCL*, vol. 19, pp. 904–905.
12. *Synthesis*, p. 864.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 865.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 810.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 857.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 856.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 859.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 859.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 860.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 862.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 862.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 870.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 871.
24. *Life Divine, SABCL*, vol. 19, p. 1069.

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A plethora of periodicals

44 journals in the Integral Yoga

The following is a listing of forty-four journals that are related to the Integral Yoga. Journals are listed in alphabetical order. The format for the listing is: title, format (frequency, language), editor, address, and cost. Some journals (*Auroville Today*, *Collaboration*, *Auroville News*, *Attempt*, *Invocation*, *Jyoti*, *Matrimandir Journal*, *Peacock Letter*, and *Transcript*) have some or all articles available online.

Prices are listed in rupees (Rs.) or dollars (\$), when available. Dollars are U.S. currency unless otherwise indicated. For the sake of clarity and brevity, numbers are written without decimal places unless required: Rs. 80 rather than Rs. 80.00 *Air* means airmail; *sea* means sea-mail. For journals that do not have prices listed, contact the editor.

For a current version of this list, see <http://www.miraura.org/lit/desc.html>. Please send corrections or updates to saa@collaboration.org.

Abhipsa (monthly, Marathi). Editor: Balwant Khaparde. Sri Vasudev, Rajkarnal Chowk; Amrawati, Maharashtra, India. *Annual price: Rs. 80, \$10 (sea), \$20 (overseas air)*.

The Advent (quarterly, English). Editor: Samir Kanta Gupta. Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 605 002, India. *Single issue price: Rs. 10; annual price: Rs. 30, \$25 (overseas)*.

Agnishikha (monthly, Hindi). Editor: Ravindra Anuben. Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry 605 002, India. *Annual price: Rs. 40; lifetime subscription: Rs. 800*.

Ahana (monthly, English). Editor: S.C. De. Sri Aurobindo Centre, New Mehrauli Road, New Delhi 110 016, India.

All India Magazine (monthly, English). Editor: K.C. Anand. Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry 605 002, India. *Single issue price: Rs.10; annual price: Rs. 60, \$10 (sea), \$20 (air)*.

Arpan (monthly, Gujarati). Editor: Kirit Thakkar. Sri Aurobindo Society, Vadodara, Gujarat, India. *Single issue price Rs.7; annual price: Rs. 70, \$20 (air), \$10 (sea)*.

Attempt (monthly, English). Editor: Fidélité Arindam. P.O. Box 8010, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8W 3R7. admin@attempt.org. <http://www.attempt.org/attempt/attnwsl/nwslinfo.htm>.

Auroville News (weekly, online). <http://www.auroville.org/whatsnew/journals/avnews.html>.

Auroville Outreach (monthly, English). Editors: Auroville outreach team. Auroville Outreach, Bharat Niwas, Auroville 605 101, India. outreach@auroville.org.in.

Auroville Today (monthly, English). Editor: Alan Herbert. Auroville Today Tower, Surrender, Auroville 605 001, India. avtoday@auroville.org.in. <http://www.auroville.org/whatsnew/journals/avtoday.html>. *Annual price: Rs. 250, \$38*.

Awakening (monthly, English). Editor: Sushila Melvani. Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry 605 002. *Annual price: Rs. 35, \$7 (overseas); lifetime subscription (25 years): Rs. 800, \$100 (air)*.

The Awakening Ray (monthly, English). Editor: Ameeta Mehra. The Gnostic Center, H-401, Som Vihar Apts., Sangam Marg, New Delhi, India. ameeta@giasdl01.vsnl.net.in. *Annual price: Rs. 250; lifetime subscription: Rs. 4500*.

Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education (quarterly, bilingual English/French). Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 605 002, India. *Single issue price: \$8 (air); annual price: \$18*.

The Call Beyond (quarterly, English). Editor: Ravindra Joshi. Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110 016, India. *Single issue price: Rs.7; annual price: Rs.25, \$4 Pakistan/*



Sri Lanka/Bangladesh (air); \$12 other countries.

Collaboration (three issues per year, English). Editors: David Hutchinson, Lynda Lester. P.O. Box 163237, Sacramento, CA 95816 USA. editor@collaboration.org. <http://www.collaboration.org/archives.html>. *Sample issue: free; annual price: \$20, \$32 (overseas, air).*

Domani (quarterly, Italian). Editor: Maggi Lidchi Grassi. Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 605 002, India. *Annual price: L.10 (air), L.8 (mail).*

Gavesana. Editor: Arabinda Basu. Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, Pondicherry 605 002, India. *Annual price: \$4 (air).*

The Golden Chain (quarterly, English). Editorial team of *Golden Chain*. Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 605 002, India. gconline@vsnl.com.

Groundwork, An Integrated Journal of Development (English). Editors: Shraddhalu Ranade, Gitanjali Dash, Arunkanti Mohanty. New Age Research for Synthetic Studies, 461, Sahid Nagar, Bhubaneswar, Orissa 751 007, India. *Rs. 50.*

Invocation (quarterly, English). Editor: Shraddhavan. Savitri Bhavan, Auroville 605 001, Tamil Nadu, India. savitribhavan@auroville.org. <http://www.auroville.org>.

Jyoti (quarterly, English). Editor: Debashish Banerji. <http://home.earthlink.net/~ewcc/newsltr/journal.htm>. ewcc@earthlink.net. *Single issue price: \$5.*

Lok Sanskritam (quarterly, Sanskrit). Publication Department, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 605 002, India. *Annual price: Rs. 20; lifetime subscription: Rs. 300.*

Matagiri Newsletter (quarterly, English). Editor: Julian Lines. 1218 Wittenberg Road, Mount Tremper NY 12457, USA. <http://www.matagiri.org>. *Free on the web.*

Matrimandir Journal (quarterly, English). matrimandir@auroville.org.in. <http://www.auroville.org/actvties/mmandir/mmjournal.html>.

Mother India (monthly, English).

Editor: K.D. Sethna. Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 605 002, India. *Single issue price: Rs.15; annual price: Rs.112, \$18 (sea), \$36 (air); lifetime subscription: Rs.1400.*

NAMAH (New Approaches to Medicine and Health) (biannual, English). Editor: Vijay Poddar. Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry 605 002, India.

Nava Prakash (monthly, Oriya). Editor: Niranjana Nair. Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 605 002, India.

New Dimension (annual, English). Zonal Committee. Sri Aurobindo Centre, Durgapur 713 204, West Bengal, India.

New Race (quarterly, English). Edi-

tor: Ananda Reddy. 1, Papannal Koil Street, Kuruchi Kuppam, Pondicherry 605 012, India. ihshyd@hd2.dot.net.in. *Annual price: Rs.35, \$5 (air); lifetime subscription: Rs. 1000, \$50.*

Newsletter (monthly, English). Editor: S. Dhana. ZA Starlight Road # 01-07, Singapore 217755.

The Oriya Aurovilian (quarterly, bilingual: English and Oriya). Editor: Amar Singh. Kalyani Patnaik, Plot No. 184-B, Kharvelanagar, Unit-III, Bhubaneswar 751 001, India. hacharya@hotmail.com. *Annual price: \$12, \$8 UK; lifetime subscription: \$160, \$110 UK.*

Peacock Letter (quarterly, English).



"Music too is an essentially spiritual art and has always been associated with religious feeling and an inner life."—The Mother (Felt-tip drawing by Preeti Bhatt)



Editor: Rand Hicks. Integral Knowledge Study Center, 221 Clematis Street, Pensacola, Florida 32503, USA. randhicks@aol.com. <http://www.iksc.org>.

Purodha (quarterly, English). Editor: Shatdal. Sri Auroville Society P.O. Ranghat, Dist. Nadia West Bengal, India. *Annual price: Rs. 40; three years: Rs. 100.*

Purodha (monthly, Hindi). Editor: Ravindra, Vandana. Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry 605 001, India. *Annual price: Rs. 50; lifetime subscription: Rs. 1000.*

Service Letter (monthly, English). Editor: Shraddhalu Ranade. All India Press, Kennedy Nagar, Pondicherry 605001, India. sraddhalu@auroville.org.in.

Sports Spirit (English). Editor: Bhadra Shah. Department of Physical Education, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 605 002, India.

Sri Arvind Karmadhara (quarterly, Hindi). Editor: Devi Karunamayi. Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110 016, India. *Annual price: Rs. 15, \$12.*

Sri Aurobindo's Action (monthly, English). Editor: Shyam Sunder. Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 605 002, India. shyamsundar@auroville.org.in. *Single issue price: Rs. 3; annual price: Rs. 25, \$5, \$10 (air); lifetime subscription: Rs. 500, \$100, \$200 (air).*

Sri Aurobindo's Circle (annual, English). Editor: Vijay Poddar. Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry 605 002, India.

Srinvantu (monthly, Bengali). Editor: Surya Bhattacharya. Sri Aurobindo Bhawan, Shakespeare Sarani, Calcutta, India. *Single issue price: Rs. 4; annual price: Rs. 40.*

Srinvantu (quarterly, English). Editor: Manik Mitra. 8-Shakespeare Sarani, Calcutta 700 071, India. *Single issue price: Rs. 5; annual price: Rs. 15.*

Supramental New Creation (English). Editors: Gitanjali Dash, Bhikari Charan Mohanty, Arunkanti Mohanty. Published by New Age Research for Synthetic Studies, 461, Sahid Nagar, Bhubaneswar, Orissa 751 007, India. *Rs. 30.*

Swarna Hansa (quarterly, Hindi). Editor: Vijay Poddar, Shyam Kumari. Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 605 002, India. *Single issue price: Rs. 15; annual price: Rs. 50, \$20 (overseas); lifetime subscription: Rs. 500, \$200 (overseas).*

World Union (quarterly, English). Editor: Samar Basu. 52, Rue Desbassyns De Richmont, Pondicherry 605 002, India. *Single issue price: Rs. 15; annual price: Rs. 50, \$10 (sea); lifetime subscription: Rs. 1000, \$110.*

—Sri Aurobindo Association

Millennial reading list

48 books to expand your consciousness

The last decade has seen an explosion of thought on the nature of consciousness, the universe, evolution, and their various relationships. Below is a selected reading list of forty-eight titles, in alphabetical order by title, that illustrate this emergence.

The Age of Spiritual Machines: When Computers Exceed Human Intelligence, by Ray Kurzweil (1999)

Artificial Worlds: Computers, Complexity, and the Riddle of Life, by Richard Morris (1999)

At Home in the Universe: The Search for Laws of Self-Organization and Complexity, by Stuart Kauffman (1996)

The Book of Enlightened Masters: Western Teachers in Eastern Traditions, by Andrew Rawlinson (1997)

Challenging Reality: In Search of the Future Organization, by Christopher Barnatt (1997)

Coming of Age in the Milky Way, by Timothy Ferris (1988)

Complexity: The Emerging Science at the Edge of Order and Chaos, by M. Mitchell Waldrop (1992)

The Conscious Universe: The Scientific Truth of Psychic Phenomena, by

Dean I. Radin (1997)

The Consciousness Revolution: A Transatlantic Dialogue: Two Days with Stanislaw Grof, Ervin Laszlo, and Peter Russell, by Ervin Laszlo, Stanislaw Grof, Peter Russell (1999)

Cybergrace: The Search for God in Cyberspace, by Jennifer Cobb (1998)

Digital McLuhan: A Guide to the Information Millennium, by Paul Levinson (1999)

Dogs That Know When Their Owners Are Coming Home, and Other Unexplained Powers of Animals: An Investigation, by Rupert Sheldrake (1999)

Doubt and Certainty: The Celebrated Academy Debates on Science, Mysticism, Reality, in General on the Knowable and Unknowable, by Tony Rothman and George Sudarshan (1999)

Emergence: From Chaos to Order, by John H. Holland (1999)

Evolving the Mind: On the Nature of Matter and the Origin of Consciousness, by A. G. Alexander Cairns-Smith (1996)

Faster: The Acceleration of Just About Everything, by James Gleick (1999)

Generations: The History of America's Future, 1584–2069, by William Strauss, Neil Howe (1992)

Global Brain Awakens, by Peter Russell, Marilyn Ferguson (2000)

Global Trends 2005: An Owner's Manual for the Next Decade, by Michael J. Mazarr (1999)

A Glorious Accident: Understanding Our Place in the Cosmic Puzzle, by Wim Kayzer (1997)

The God Particle: If the Universe Is the Answer, What Is the Question? by Leon Lederman, Dick Teresi (1994)

Growing Up Digital: The Rise of the Net Generation, by Don Tapscott (1999)

Hidden Order: How Adaptation Builds Complexity, by John H. Holland (1996)

The Holographic Universe, by Michael Talbot (1992)

How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics, by N. Katherine Hayles (1999)



Integral Psychology: Consciousness, Spirit, Psychology, Therapy, by Ken Wilber (2000)

The Knowledge Web: From Electronic Agents to Stonehenge and Back and Other Journeys through Knowledge, by James Burke (1999)

The Marriage of Sense and Soul: Integrating Science and Religion, by Ken Wilber (1998)

Mysticism and the New Physics, by Michael Talbot (1993)

Nanotechnology: Molecular Speculations on Global Abundance, B.C. Crandall, editor (1996)

New Rules for the New Economy: 10 Radical Strategies for a Connected World, by Kevin Kelly (1998)

A New Science of Life, by Rupert Sheldrake (1981)

The Non-Local Universe: The New Physics and Matters of the Mind, by Robert Nadeau, Minas C. Kafatos, Menas Kafatos (2000)

Nonzero: The Logic of Human Destiny, by Robert Wright (1999)

Out of Control: The New Biology of Machines, Social Systems and the Economic World, by Kevin Kelly (1995)

The Physics of Consciousness: Quantum Minds and the Meaning of Life, by Evan Harris Walker (2000)

Predictions: Thirty Great Minds on the Future, by Sian Griffiths, Editor (2000)

Quintessence: The Mystery of the Missing Mass in the Universe, by Lawrence M. Krauss (2000)

The Radiance of Being: Complexity, Chaos and the Evolution of Consciousness, by Allan Combs (1997)

Science without Laws (Science and its Conceptual Foundations), Ronald Giere, editor (1999)

Still Here: Embracing Aging, Changing, and Dying, by Ram Dass (2000)

The Sun, the Genome, and the Internet: Tools of Scientific Revolutions, by Freeman Dyson (1999)

Supersymmetry: Unveiling the Ultimate Laws of Nature, by Gordon Kane, Edward Witten (2000)



Shakti. (Art by Catherine Blackburn)

Techgnosis: Myth, Magic, and Religion in the Information Age, by Erik Davis (1998)

Visions: How Science Will Revolutionize the 21st Century, by Michio Kaku (1998)

Web without a Weaver: How the Internet Is Shaping Our Future, by Victor Grey (1997)

The Whole Shebang: A State-of-the-Universe(s) Report, by Timothy Ferris (1997)

Wholeness and the Implicate Order, by David Bohm (1983)

—LL

Reviews

Book: *Growing up with the Mother*, by Tara Jauhar. Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch, 1999

This unique memoir covers mainly the years 1959–1973. It is composed almost exclusively of the correspondence between Tara and the Mother, arranged into topics such as “Sadhana and Life,” “Education,” “Meditations,” “Flowers,” “Sketches,” and “Personal.”

Through the exchange of letters we see Tara and the Mother, and the kind of

close personal guidance the Mother gave. The many photographs, sketches, and facsimiles of their original correspondence also add immeasurably to the book, giving it a sense of individuality often missing in the written word.

Prema Nandakumar says in the foreword, “The Mother was a rare teacher; a teacher who wanted questions to be asked! She would be upset if students remained dumb as if the lesson had just flown away with the wind. Tara asks a variety of questions: how to teach, how to manage exceptional children, the nagging worries a woman has about her body, the strength needed to come to terms with the physical loss of a dear one. The answers are dipped in the molten gold of Truth and hence one finds a rapier-sharpness in the replies conveying a message never to be forgotten.”

Tara herself says of the book, “It shows the natural unfolding of the Mother’s relationship with a child of the Ashram and Her persistent guidance towards the flowering of a psychic being. Her encouragement, love and compassion were boundless and infinite.”—DH

Book: *The Radiance of Being*, by Allan Combs. Paragon House, 1995

The Radiance of Being is an engaging book that analyzes many of the threads of evolutionary, psychological, and yogic thought from the last two centuries. Combs looks upon consciousness as simple awareness, as the pure witness, and sees mind as the sum of all the processes that occur on the screen of that awareness. He then tries to see what has been made of those processes by modern writers.

In Combs and other thinkers—Wilber, Gebser, Priyogine, Bohm, Chardin, Sheldrake, Tart—one finds a grappling with the mechanisms of consciousness, an attempt to plot, delineate, determine their range. The best of these writers acknowledge and integrate spiritual wisdom from India, and that integration is showing in many fields of thought today. (On the other hand, a few, like Wilber, seem to be more interested in setting up



systems they can call their own than in finding true insight.)

Unlike many writers, Combs recognizes something of the Mother's status, as where he introduces one of her quotes: "The Mother, a great yogi in her own right . . ." A chapter is devoted to Sri Aurobindo, and although he makes a few mistakes in trying to draw parallels between higher levels of consciousness as explained by Sri Aurobindo and other systems, in general his observations about the similarity of outlook among different thinkers on evolution are well taken. For example, "Gebser's view of evolution, like Hegel's, and also like that of Sri Aurobindo, holds the ultimate potentials of human consciousness to be enfolded in the origin . . ."

In the epilogue he writes, "My personal search for an understanding of consciousness led me, like many of my generation, into a variety of philosophies, spiritual practices, and even martial arts.

These included Taoist meditative practices, yogic disciplines, t'ai chi, and Jungian analysis. My intellectual search has moved between mysticism, esotericism, the sciences of the mind and those of the brain."

The Radiance of Being shows that the adventure of consciousness, at least in the work being done to explore and study it, is active and diverse.—DH

Book: *The Best Spiritual Writing 2000*, edited by Philip Zaleski. Harper-Collins, 2000

This selection of forty pieces by authors such as Wendell Berry, Harvey Cox, Jacques Lusseyran, and Pico Iyer shows a complex, literate, diverse grappling with life's issues. They fall into no single framework, except that of intelligent persons facing death, pain, suffering, religion, evil.

Two of the best are "What One Sees without Eyes," by Lusseyran, where he

describes his experience of inner sight and sense, and "I Was a Teen-Age Atheist," by Anita Mathias, in which she recounts growing up in a Catholic school in Nainital, north India in the midst of Hindu-Muslim riots.

The latter essay reminds us that the spiritual life is universal, that it doesn't wait for a person to take up a religion or spiritual path—and that there are many ways to express it. We are not limited to the language of yoga or of Sanskrit; the inner life can express itself in unexpected ways, such as Mary Gordon's liturgical "prayer" for "those whose work is invisible," which starts "For those who paint the undersides of boats, makers of ornamental drains on roofs too high to be seen; for cobblers who labor over inner soles; for seamstresses who stitch the wrong sides of seams; for scholars whose work leads to no obvious discovery . . . Protect them from downheartedness and from diseases of the eye."—DH

The poetry room

Gleam

"We do not belong to the past dawns, but to the noons of the future."—Sri Aurobindo

The glorious climb of the cable car. Those views
the delight of tourists
and joy of San Francisco!

The bright January day had shifted to a cold, grey
afternoon of variable winds. I got on
the cable car at Hyde on the California Line
and our car ascended California toward Grace.

The antique cable cars climb these rolling hills
in a magical but precarious lift with a sense
of hazardous uncertainty. They ascend
and descend asphalt and cobbled streets.

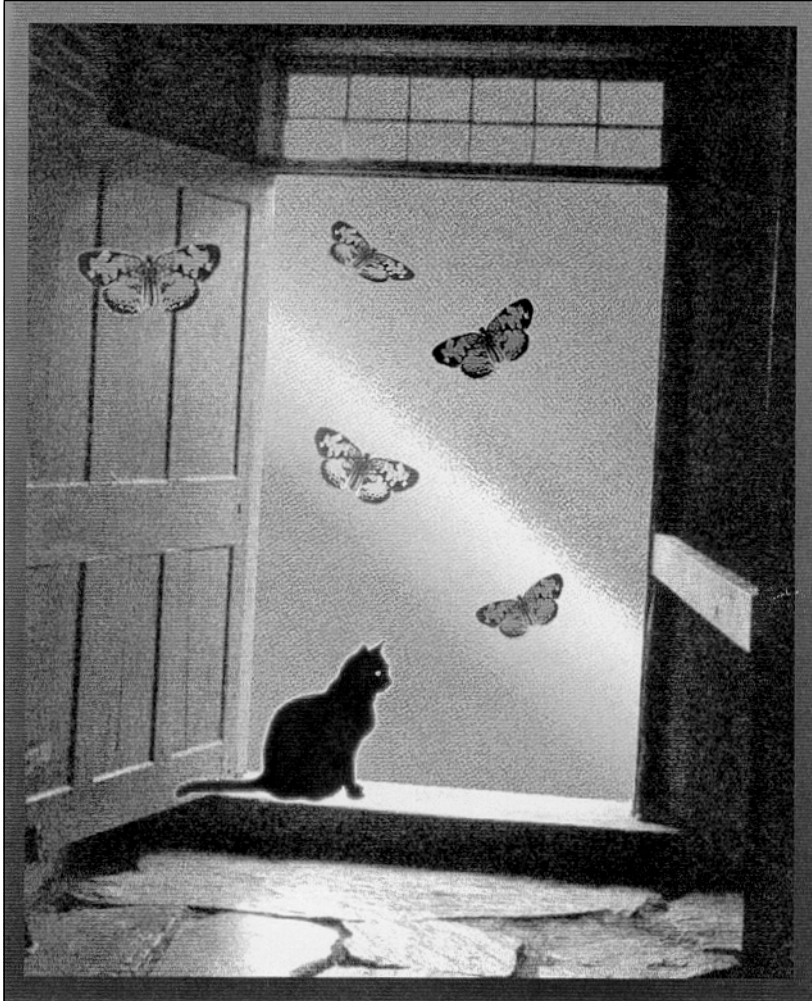
Often they run smoothly, but at times
in stalls and starts, especially in adverse weather.
And noisy windows rattle on the way
to corner curves and turns or abrupt stops.

None of this lessens the mirth or glee,
the perennial favor and smile
of San Francisco's cable car magic,
which has charmed riders since August 1873.
The entire system was rebuilt in 1982.

As our car approached Leavenworth
my gaze lighted on a child sightseer
seated among the passengers
with her mother obliquely across the aisle.

Like a blonde angel, four years old,
she peered about the car with its brown leather
handgrips, bare bulbs, cords and round bell. Poets and
mystics

are prone to heightened states, visitations, reveries,
mysteries of trance. And as our eyes met in silent communion
the starry gaze and gleam in her blue eyes
captured my interest. And somehow her divine expression
launched my vision of a future
super civilization on earth



Cat darshan. (Computer art by Lisa Rachlin)

Mother's darshan

Because Your Lap
is everywhere I sit
I can be comfortable now
in this world.

Because this body is the enchantment
in which You've placed me
I can be at peace now
with all the strange turns
in this story I'm living.

Because I am like a baby kitten
whose eyes are not quite open
to Your vast Consciousness
I can surrender at last
to the blows and blessings of this life
as Your rough tongue that I can't see
licking me awake and clean
of this world's frenzy.

"You belong to me,"
She says on darshan day
Her ever-shining Presence making
human wounds and problems fall away
like shadows.

—Cassia Berman

evolving toward some golden infinity. An advanced world of
luminosity

of the Spirit! A harmonious world of creative enterprise
flourishing in a play of delight. A transformed
creation free of evil, disease, suffering, and ignorance,

where the hidden Self had emerged long ago
from its depths in the human
and sorrow was not necessary.

It was a progressive realm inhabited
by gnostic beings with the integral vision of a Divine Mind,
the poise and bliss of a supramental world
of Divine Light.

All this transpired in my brief visionary glimpse.

And I smiled and glanced shyly away
from the stare of this curious child.

And as our car neared Mason for the descent
down California to the junction at Powell, I came back
to the sullen fog and noisy Saturday
hubbub of our city, its chaotic clamor and clangor.

I stepped off the car at Powell, listened to the wind
sweep over the city, and pondered the global evolutionary
glimmerings of a gnostic race
in the new age.

The crowded cable car trundled down California
toward Chinatown, red taillights below,
amber lights above, the track illumined
by one bright beam.

—Joseph Kent



Listening

hostile whispering signals one's demise
blowing like an angry wind
through an anxious mind
needless worry drains the spirit
narrows the experience
wisdom grows in painful soil
but peace is its final goal,
welcoming life's vicissitude.
letting go the fears that dominate
she grabs the will and offers it
to the highest force she knows.
the mind limits all it sees
making some personality she believes is real
the nothing one is now
is better than the something that was lost
liberation from the cross promises renewal,
energy to spare for living.
equality of mind and heart
dwells in trust and gratitude
aids to life is cheerful giving
soothes what challenges the self.
the man of sorrows deceives
all the endless imperfection he sees
his land is dark and narrow
consuming a failing heart.

work is done by the Will alone
with patience and the fortitude
listening offers opportunity
silence brings a secret key
opening an inner door
where she may flee
when escape is necessary.
deep within some hidden place
she must come to learn the way of grace
quieting the wrenched personality
and open to the love for all.
learning how to play again
the lesson and the gift
occurring simultaneously
herein lies the peace she seeks
a place of no more suffering
facing the rabid world with calm
as one faces up to life.
the self in One, the One in all
where there is born the energy to conquer one's own strife
intermingling it dances to shed the past
and born anew in greater plentitude
she sees only the gifts in life.

—Sharon Winnett

Full moon

I go to the north window of my flat
There I can see the Great Bear over the city
High blinking over the sacred sanctuary

Then I go out onto my balcony to the south
Where I can see a couple of bats
Flying around the street-lamp
In the silence of the blue night

Directly in front of me
In the parfums of the pine-trees
Smiling from the depths of the cloudless sky
The full moon looks at me

Then I look back at it, smile back at it
And I think of you all in the world
Who can see also the same moon
Who are seeking after the divine life
And I wish you to have the peace
I feel in my heart at that moment

I'd like so much to hear too the flute of the Infinite!
—Bernard Sage

Meeting with divine truth

I have met the blackened doors of waste
The brilliant suns of many gates
A fistful of offerings, nothing to waste . . .
The path of human destiny I have met
In a single cell of certainty,
in universes of infinity.
The collective molten, breathing spark
that yearns and achieves its altruistic mark.
Freedom from the body made of dust, a heart
free to trust, to know the obscure dances of
Divinity, a living truth to free other beings,
providing the keys, unlocking symmetries
to a world from within and without through self mastery.
And the wonders, the powers of luminous ground
That stand at the edges of eternity, with the sounds of
Truth's melody, as it plays multilevel melodies of diversity
It all resides in the deepest levels of me . . .
And in every other being I see.

—Vanessa Henshall



About the poets

Joseph Kent (sunli8@msn.com) is a poet living in Berkeley, California.

Cassia Berman (cassia@netstep.net) writes poetry in Woodstock, New York.

Sharon Winnett is a poet who lives in Billings, Montana.

Bernard Sage (bsage@online.fr) is a schoolteacher in Marseilles, France.

Vanessa Henshall says of her poem, "I wrote this poem about a year ago and have dedicated it to Auroville. I've written poetry and short stories since the age of ten."

Gnostic knots

Proof of artificial intelligence

The following excerpts are from an essay by Lynda Lester that was translated (by humans) into Italian for Aditi, an Italian journal on Integral Yoga. The Italian version is on the web at <http://www.webcom.com/chiopris/darshan/dar0496/usa.html>. Computer translation software (available at <http://world.altavista.com>) was used to render it back into English.

Blank spirits and kind sparkes of Italy . . . this is a message from one small spark in America that augurs you a national encounter overflow of clarity and Divine Presence.

Like current publisher of *Collaboration*, I would want ringraziarvi all for the encouragement and the interest for the review. Fire ignites fire, and when we feel a word of encouragement from Italy, the flame burns here more intense.

The yoga is still alive and in good health to the end of the millennium, after to be exited from the pages of the *Divine Life* . . .

I invite to contribute to you to *Collaboration* with your storys, articles, backs. Even if it is printed publication in the USA, is a total vehicle, that varied community must more and more have the print of one, but without frontiers.

The Mark, the Carl, the Veroniques, the Dieter or Dimitri are moved in knowing and the Govind that speak to me through cables, their voices capacities from the bit that transmit knowledge: all we sparkes ignited, that they ignite fires, in the contagious influence of the Spirit.

And I must say that Internet has canalized one enormous amount of the Italian Agni in America!

With love and the best auguries from this side of the ocean.—LL

Yogic competency quiz

To qualify for Integral Yogi status, students must pass the following quiz with 100% competency or better. Those flunking the quiz are allowed an infinite number of tries as long as you transport yourself backward in time and take it before the previous attempts, so you don't remember the tasks.

1. *Subliminal senses.* Using your subtle senses, locate another Integral Yogi in space. Extra point if you can describe the clothing the person is wearing.

2. *Development of the will.* Using only the power of your will, induce a pet to follow you from one end of the house to the other. Extra point if the pet walks in front of you.

3. *Absence of desire.* Time yourself to see how long you can go without eating a piece of chocolate in front of you. Point deducted if you transcend your physical consciousness to achieve this.

4. *Transmission of mental power.* Using one word only, communicate a chapter of *Life Divine* to another yogi. Extra point if you translate into French at the same time.

5. *Physical equanimity.* Stand in a cold shower for one minute without blinking your eyes. Extra point if you have your clothes on.

6. *Gnostic relationship.* Eat dinner while looking out through the consciousness of the person next to you. Extra point if the other person eats something they don't like.

7. *Collective unity.* Start a discussion between two other yogis and then resolve it by applying the consciousness of higher unity. Extra point if it involves three yogis.

8. *Physical transformation.* Make a wart or skin tag fall off by conscious will. Extra point if you can make it reattach itself.

9. *Cosmic consciousness.* Invite one of the divine beings to dinner. Extra point if you can get Krishna and Shiva to sit next to each other.

10. *Time consciousness.* Using your power of trikala-drishti, project yourself forward and predict with certainty where another yogi will be at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday. Extra point if you can change that certainty to another.—DH

Supermarket yoga best sellers

- *Mind of the Sells: Yoga for Business People*
- *Road Rage: Cultivating Rudrananda*
- *The One-Minute Yogi*
- *Dressing for Samadhi*
- *Tatoos, Tantra, Tapas, and Titiksha*
- *Own Your Impatience: The Jittery Person's Guide to Yoga*
- *The All-Time Top 70 Ananda Desserts*
- *Equanimity for Dummies: The Way of the Holstein*
- *Supermind: Imbibe the Vibes*
- *Instant Tumo: The Book of Electric Blankets*

—Sri Aurobindo Association



Shakti packets

With apologies to Vernor Vinge.

Transmission_to:
Neo Integral Yogis

From: YES/NO
(Yogi Establishment of Sacramento,
Northern Office)

Projection_date: 042820001921

Language_path:
High Ananda -) Middle Vijnana -)
Outer Sacto -) Common English

Distribution:
Western Yogi Interest Group
Singularity trackers
Vishnu Vision Development Group

Crypto:

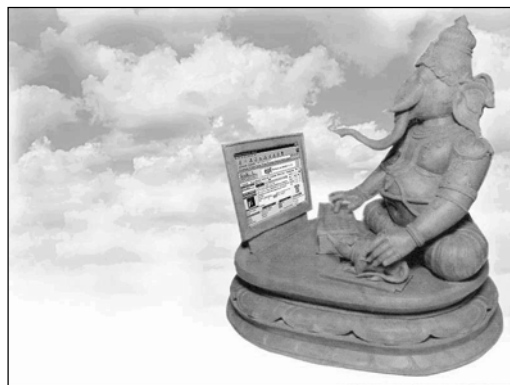
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Topic: Gnostic nonprofits
Collective melding

Text: Distributed chaotic complexities of fractal individuals may tend toward harmonic superposition of quantum consciousness strings. Can parashakti placement radically reinforce future esthetic configuration of geostable locations? Will a hexagonal humanity structure expand or contract in an evolutionary universe?

End transmission

—DH



Shopping for trunks on E-bay. (Image from <http://webshots.com>)

Review: City Soul Siddhi

In a field dominated by flutes, harmoniums, sitars and tablas, Sister Sita's new CD, *City Soul Siddhi*, is a refreshing new voice. Produced by C'thee Yogee MC, the album effortlessly combines traditional Indian modulation and urban Western rap/hip-hop to create twelve of the most energized songs you'll hear this year.

On the cover is a striking photograph of Sister Sita on top of a Tata truck, barefoot and bangled, wearing a man's lungi, a black, sleeveless t-shirt, and a bright blue fez with a green tassel, hoisting an oversized cup of chai with members of her band.

The CD begins with a soaring ballad, "In Situ," with its unadorned harmonies and crisp lyrics, followed by a down home, upbeat little ditty, "Jumpin' Jiva's Java Joint," which is guaranteed to get you snapping your mala fingers in seconds. "Seated Siddhi Rap" is sure to be an immediate favorite with its bouncy rhythms, inner rhymes, and transcendent wordplay.

The seventh song, "Hanuman's Lament," carries us straight to the heart of Sister Sita's own traumatic experiences. This ballad, accompanied only by windchimes, is a wrenching statement of friendship, longing, and plantains. In the same humble tone, she sings "She Ain't Heavy, She's My Gopi," her nasal voice imparting exactly the right irony needed for this blues classic. Then—oh, sister!—she lets loose with "I Am Yogi, Hear Me Chant" and shows once again why she is the vibhuti of powerhouse punk hip-hop shakti! No subtle modulations here, just energy, energy, energy!—and supreme musical confidence born of her own yogic experiences.

About the last two songs on this extraordinary CD, Sister Sita writes: "The first is based on a friend's ongoing battle, the second is wryly humorous." The titles say it all: "Warrior Yogini Battles Black Tea Devil" and "I Am a Vibhuti from the Planet Shruti."

City Soul Siddhi is distributed through an exclusive agreement with Yogis Everywhere, Ltd. Call 1-555-YOGI-R-ME today for this limited edition, autographed by Sister Sita's self.

—Marta Belén

Question for God

A man walked to the top of a hill to talk to God. He asked, "God, what's a million years to you?"

God said, "A minute."

The man asked, "What's a million dollars to you?"

God said, "A penny."

The man asked, "God, can I have a penny?"

God said, "Sure . . . In a minute."

—from the Internet



Source material

The road ahead

Sri Aurobindo on gnostic collectivity

These selections are from The Life Divine, chapter 28, "The Divine Life."

This then is the first necessity, that the individual, each individual, shall discover the Spirit, the divine reality within him and express that in all his being and living. A divine life must be first and foremost an inner life; for since the outward must be the expression of what is within, there can be no divinity in the outer existence if there is not the divinisation of the inner being. (p. 1023)

In fact, this inward turning and movement is not an imprisonment in personal self, it is the first step towards a true universality; it brings to us the truth of our external as well as the truth of our internal existence. For this inner living can extend itself and embrace the universal life, it can contact, penetrate, englobe the life of all with a much greater reality and dynamic force than is in our surface consciousness at all possible. Our utmost universalisation on the surface is a poor and limping endeavour,—it is a construction, a make-believe and not the real thing: for in our surface consciousness we are bound to separation of consciousness from others and wear the fetters of the ego. (p. 1029)

The gnostic being finds himself not only in his own fulfilment, which is the fulfilment of the Divine Being and Will in him, but in the fulfilment of others; his universal individuality effectuates itself in the movement of the All in all beings towards its greater becoming. (p. 1030)

[A gnostic collective] will feel themselves to be embodiments of a single self,

souls of a single Reality; illumined and motivated by a fundamental unity of knowledge, actuated by a fundamental unified will and feeling, a life expressing the spiritual Truth would find through them its own natural forms of becoming. An order there would be, for truth of oneness creates its own order: a law or laws of living there might be, but these would be self-determined; they would be an expression of the truth of a spiritually united being and the truth of a spiritually united life. (p. 1032)

This Reality is there within each thing and gives to each of its formations its power of being and value of being. The universe is a manifestation of the Reality, and there is a truth of the universal existence, a Power of cosmic being, an all-self or world-spirit. Humanity is a formation or manifestation of the Reality in the universe, and there is a truth and self of humanity, a human spirit, a destiny of human life. The community is a formation of the Reality, a manifestation of the spirit of man, and there is a truth, a self, a power of the collective being. The individual is a formation of the Reality, and there is a truth of the individual, an individual self, soul or spirit that expresses itself through the individual mind, life and body and can express itself too in something that goes beyond mind, life and body, something even that goes beyond humanity. (p. 1049)

For the awakened individual the realisation of his truth of being and his inner liberation and perfection must be his primary seeking,—first, because that is the call of the Spirit within him, but also because it is only by liberation and perfection and realisation of the truth of being that man can arrive at truth of living. A perfected community also can exist only by the perfection of its individuals, and perfection can come only by the discovery and affirmation in life by each of his own spiritual being and the discovery by all of their spiritual unity and a resultant life-unity. (pp. 1050–1051)

An entirely new consciousness in many individuals transforming their whole being, transforming their mental, vital and physical nature-self, is needed for the new life to appear; only such a transformation of the general mind, life, body nature can bring into being a new worthwhile collective existence. The evolutionary nisus must tend not merely to create a new type of mental beings but another order of beings who have raised their whole existence from our present mentalised animality to a greater spiritual level of the earth-nature. (p. 1061)

Any such complete transformation of the earth-life in a number of human beings could not establish itself altogether at once; even when the turning-point has been reached, the decisive line crossed, the new life in its beginnings would have to pass through a period of ordeal and arduous development. A general change from the old consciousness taking up the whole life into the spiritual principle would be the necessary first step; the preparation for this might be long and the transformation itself once begun proceed by stages. (p. 1061)

But as this knowledge and the very principle of the gnostic nature would ensure a luminous unity in the common life of gnostic beings, so also it would be sufficient to ensure a dominating harmony and reconciliation between the two types of life. The influence of the supramental principle on earth would fall upon the life of the Ignorance and impose harmony on it within its limits. It is conceivable that the gnostic life would be separate, but it would surely admit within its borders as much of human life as was turned towards spirituality and in progress towards the heights; the rest might organise itself mainly on the mental principle and on the old foundations, but, helped and influenced by a recognisable greater knowledge, it would be likely to do so on lines of a completer harmonisation of which the human collectivity is not yet capable. (p. 1064)



Apropos

You know, all is development—the principle is perpetually going on. First, there was nothing; then there was something; then—I forget the next—I think there were shells; then fishes; then we came—let me see—did we come next? Never mind, we came at last and the next change will be something very superior to us, something with wings.—Lady Constance in Disraeli's *Tancred*

When I told the people of Northern Ireland that I was an atheist, a woman in the audience stood up and said, "Yes, but is it the God of the Catholics or the God of the Protestants in whom you don't believe?"—Quentin Crisp

Picasso insisted everything was miraculous. It was miraculous, he said, "that one did not melt in one's bath."—Jean Cocteau

A poem begins as a lump in the throat, a sense of wrong, a homesickness, a lovesickness . . . It finds the thought, and the thought finds the words.—Robert Frost

Good art is a form of prayer. It's a way of saying what is not sayable.—Frederich Busch

We don't really go that far into other people, even when we think we do. We hardly ever go in and bring them out. We just stand at the jaws of the cave, and strike a match, and ask quickly if anybody's there.—Martin Amis

In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert's there are few.—Shunryu Suzuki

The thing with high tech is that you always end up using scissors.—David Hockney

A great many people think they are thinking when they are merely rearranging their prejudices.—William James

Be like a fox that makes more tracks than necessary, some in the wrong direction.—Wendell Barry

In Integral Yoga, some just get older quicker, others remain young forevermore.—Chandresh Patel

The difference between a gun and a tree is a difference of tempo. The tree explodes every spring.—Ezra Pound

Generally speaking, the only way of getting any feeling from a TV set is to touch it when you're wet.—Larry Gelbart

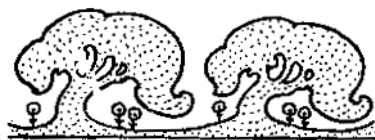
Just before she died she asked, "What is the answer?" No answer came. She laughed and said, "In that case, what is the question?" Then she died.—D. Sutherland's biography of Gertrude Stein

Right now it's only a notion, but I think I could get money to turn it into a concept, and then later develop it into an idea.—Woody Allen, *Annie Hall*

Question: If you could live forever, would you and why?

Answer: I would not live forever, because we should not live forever, because if we were supposed to live forever, then we would live forever, but we cannot live forever, which is why I would not live forever.—Miss Alabama in the 1994 Miss America contest.

You get nervous with no one supporting you. People don't always have the vision, and the secret for the person with the vision is to stand up. It takes a lot of courage.—Natalie Cole



Without a guru in the body, we have, at least, ourselves in our bodies. AUM provides us the opportunity to experience a little of the inner guru that each of us brings to the meeting and to reflect together on what this has meant in our lives.—Gordon Korstange

The supramental will not be televised, the transformation will not be televised, the life divine will not be televised.—Will Moss

We need windtunnels for mindships too.—Thomas K. Landauer, *The Trouble with Computers*

Our life passes in transformation.—Rainer Maria Rilke

It is always sunrise somewhere; the dew is never all dried at once; a shower is forever falling; vapor is ever rising. Eternal sunrise, eternal sunset, eternal dawn and gloaming, on sea and continents and islands, each in its turn, as the round earth rolls.—John Muir

Life is not coffee spoons.—Lynda Lester

The Church says: The body is a sin.
Science says: The body is a machine.
Advertising says: The body is a business.

The body says: I am a fiesta.—Eduardo Galeano, *Walking Words*

Coming to understand how to sift the true from the false is exceedingly subtle and important. But that doesn't mean that all pretenders to truth should be accorded respect.—Douglas Hofstadter, *Metamagical Themas*

Let us not look back in anger or forward in fear but around in awareness.—James Thurber

What happened had to happen, but it could have been much better.—Sri Aurobindo