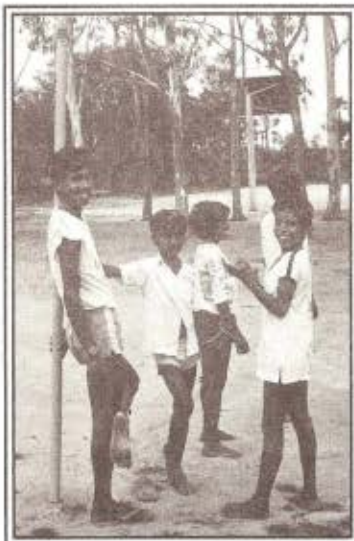


Collaboration

SPRING 1986

Vol. XII No. 3



In this issue:

Tamilians in Auroville

Table of Contents

Coevolution	2-3
<i>Gordon Korstange</i>	
Correspondence with Sri Aurobindo	3-5
<i>Nirodbaran</i>	
In the Beginning:	
An Interview with S. Thandapani	6-7
The Crochet Ladies	
of Kuilapalayam-Fraternity	8-9
<i>Fanou Walton</i>	
Tamil Aurovillians: Inside/Outside	
The Boundaries of Auroville	10-12
Kottakarai Amma	13
<i>Gordon Korstange</i>	
Poems by Meenakshi	14
The Mother on Tamil Villagers	15
Village Wedding	16
<i>Gordon Korstange</i>	
The Role of Beauty	
in the Supramental Transformation	17-18
<i>Wayne Bloomquist</i>	
The Mother—The Next Evolution	19
<i>Joe Spanier</i>	
Center News	20-22
A.U.M.	22-23

Collaboration (ISSN 0164-1522) is published by Matagiri-Sri Aurobindo Center, Inc., High Falls, NY, a non-profit, tax-exempt organization. 1986 by Matagiri-Sri Aurobindo Center, Inc. All passages from the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother are copyrighted by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram unless otherwise noted and are used here with the kind permission of the Ashram. Photographs of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother appearing in these pages are also copyrighted by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

A one-year subscription is \$12.00; airmail outside the U.S. and North America is \$24.00. All foreign subscriptions must be paid with a U.S. dollar draft on a New York bank or an International Money Order.

Larger contributions, all tax-deductible, are welcome for the work of the center. In addition, contributions to Auroville and the Sri Aurobindo Ashram may be made through Matagiri-Sri Aurobindo Center, Inc.

Subscriptions should be sent to Matagiri-Sri Aurobindo Center, Inc., High Falls, NY 12440.

Any editorial material should be sent to Jeanne Korstange, The Meeting School, Thomas Road, Rindge, NH 03461.

Printed in the United States of America.

The cover shows a few of the Tamilians in Auroville. Left to Right (from top): Rasamanikam and Rajaram; Rajagopal; 7; Kaliamma; New Creation Craftsman; Gajendra and friends; Kottakarai Colony Students.

Coevolution

There was a note in *India Today* recently about a campaign to officially change the name of the first man atop Mt. Everest from Edmund Hillary to Tensing Norgay, the Nepalese Sherpa who, like Tonto to the Lone Ranger (Tonto means 'stupid' in Spanish), was his faithful and mostly silent companion. Of course, Everest was Hillary's idea just as America was a European idea that the 'stupid' Indians refused to grasp.

There are 20,000 Indians who speak Tamil living in and around an idea called Auroville. Many of them understand this idea, and some are ready to participate wholeheartedly in it, for they are indeed people of the heart. Most, however, take a wait-and-see attitude. They are not ready to give up a way of life that has survived thousands of years for an experiment in the unknown. They can't afford to. Unlike most Westerners who seem to be able to return to their countries and find an economic niche, a villager's well-being is often dependent on continuity within family and community, a day-to-day, year-by-year arrangement that doesn't leave much room for taking a fling at the city of the future. Becoming a "Tamil Aurovilian" can put an individual in an ambiguous situation, not really a full and equal Aurovilian and no longer a part of a village.

Understanding the idea of Auroville is one thing—understanding the predominantly European and American Aurovillians is another.

"How can you leave your family?" they will ask. "Your father and mother must be lonely."

In Tamil Nadu one doesn't usually leave home unless there has been a fight or there are opportunities for employment. Except for the daughters who go to their husbands' homes, the family is a unit that is considered sacred. They are too polite to ask us how we can leave our spouses, but the question is silently there.

Villagers and other Tamilians also judge Westerners on how well they live up to the principles of a spiritual community, but the basis for these judgements tends to be the traditional images and practices of Indian philosophy and religion. Without direct person-to-person contact on a level both sides can understand, it is hard for them to find the kind of evidence of spirituality they would expect from their own culture.

And Westerners? At first we may be delighted with the quick smiles, affection, and gentleness of a young villager, may be fascinated with the exotic trappings of India; but after the first rip-off, the first brush with the bureaucracy, the first blast of film music at four in the morning, the glow subsides. Then there is the impossibility of understanding the rapid, tongue-tripping Tamil language, the inevitable misunderstandings, and finally the uneasy awareness of the symbiotic relationship that has developed between you and the woman who cooks your *dosai*, the man who drives your bullock cart, digs your tree pits, waters your hibiscus. Much of Auroville has been built and developed by the sweat of villagers. It could not exist without them, and they will not let it do so.

Kottakarai, Edaianchavadi, Kuilapalayam, Pettai, Boomayapalayam, Allankuppam—these villages and their people will not go away. It has been said often enough that the problems of the world are magnified in Auroville. Racism, colonialism, oppression, cultural identity—if you live there you cannot ignore the experience of these words we have heard so often in the abstract. The lessons of South Africa, Israel, Northern Ireland, and Pine Ridge Indian Reservation are clear: separation is not the answer.

The village will evolve by learning to read and write; to build earthen walls (bunds) around their fields to stop erosion; to stand up for their rights and values; and, like all cultures, to give full respect and equal consideration to women and minorities, especially Harijans, the people of the Untouchable colonies.

Western Aurovilians will evolve by learning to slow down; to understand hierarchy and the intricate structure of the Indian social fabric; to listen to the voices of the Indian earth; and to speak Tamil—for without an insight into this rich language it is difficult to appreciate the culture of a people who, like the Sherpas of the Himalayas and the natives of Turtle Island, have a relationship with the land they have been living on for thousands of years that must be a central part of that land's future.

Together, East and West, North and South, First World and Third, we evolve by pushing ourselves past the boundaries of our individual cultures into others' lives. It takes courage because we feel foolish and uncomfortable when our well-meaning gestures fall flat or receive responses we are not prepared for. Yet it is the only way to rise above the confinement of culture and move toward freedom.

Much has happened in Auroville already. We present in this issue three perspectives on this coevolution. One is by a Tamilian who joined Auroville in its beginning. The other two are from Aurovilians, French and American by birth, who, in their own way, joined the village. We offer this Collaboration as a salute to that possibility of interaction which is the basis and hope of Auroville and, indeed, of the world.



Pearl, a Kottakarai Aurovilian

Nirodbaran's Correspondence with Sri Aurobindo

Editor's Note: This is the second installment of extracts from Nirodbaran's book.

I still can't understand why you should bother to follow us doctors. The Divine can very easily act from the supramental consciousness directly; you don't really need a diagnosis given by ordinary men!

If things were like that, why the deuce should we have Doctors or a dispensary at all? We don't propose to do the whole business of the inside and outside off our own bat. You are as necessary for this as Chandulal for the building or others for their work.

Who told you we are acting from supramental consciousness? We aren't and can't until the confounded quarrel with Matter is settled.

If we doctors are important as mediums, you must tell me what our attitude should be in conducting a case.

Faith, openness, an alert and flexible intelligence. I mean by faith especially faith as a dynamic means of bringing about what has to be effected or realized.

February 1, 1935

We are a little puzzled when you give your own example to prove your arguments and defend your views, because that really proves nothing. I need not explain why: what Avatars can achieve is not possible for ordinary mortals like us to do. So when you say that you had a sudden "opening" in the appreciation and understanding of painting, or that you freed your mind from all thoughts in three days, or transformed your nature, it is very poor consolation for us. Then, again, when you state that you developed something that was not originally there in your nature, can it not be said that it was already there in your divya amsa (The divine part)?

I don't know what the devil you mean. My sadhana is not a freak or a monstrosity or a miracle done outside the laws of Nature and the conditions of life and consciousness on earth. If I could do these things or if they could happen in my Yoga, it means that they can be done and that therefore these developments and transformations are possible in the terrestrial consciousness.

February 8, 1935

You say that since "these things" have been possible in you, they are possible in the earth-consciousness. Quite true: but have they been done? Has any sweeper or street beggar been changed into a Buddha or a Chaitanya by the Divine? We see in the whole history of spirituality only one Christ, one Buddha, one Krishna, one Sri Aurobindo and one Mother. Has there been any breaking of this rule? Since it has not been done, it can't be done.

The question was not whether it had been done but whether it could be done. The street-beggar is a side-issue. The question was whether new faculties not at all manifested in the personality up to now in this life could appear, even suddenly appear, by force of Yoga. I say they can and I gave my own case as proof. I could have given others also. The question involved is also this—is a man bound to the character and qualities he has come with into this life—can he not become a new man by Yoga? That also I have proven in my sadhana, it can be done. When you say that I could do this only in my case because I am an Avatar(!) and it is impossible in any other case, you reduce my sadhana to an absurdity and Avatarhood also to an absurdity. For my Yoga is done not for myself who needs nothing and does not need salvation or anything else, but precisely for the earth-consciousness to change. Does the Divine need to come down to prove that he can do this or that, or has he any personal need of doing it? Your argument proves that I am not an Avatar but only a big human person. It may well be so as a matter of fact, but you start your argument from the other basis. Besides, even if I am only a big human person, what I achieve shows that that

*I should say that Avatars
are like well-fitted, well-equipped
Rolls Royce machines. All sufficient
to themselves—perfect and complete
from the beginning, hey?
Just roll, royce, and ripple!*

achievement is possible for humanity. Whether any street-beggar can do it or has done it is a side-issue. It is sufficient if others who have not the misfortune of being street-beggars can do it.

What a wonderful argument! Since it has not been done, it cannot be done! At that rate the whole history of the earth must have stopped long before the protoplasm. When it was a mass of gases, no life had been born, ergo, life could not be born—when only life was there, mind was not born, so mind could not be born. Since mind is there but nothing beyond, as there is no supermind manifested in anybody, so supermind can never be born. Sobhanallah! Glory, glory, glory to human reason!! Luckily the Divine or the Cosmic Spirit or Nature or whoever is there cares a damn for the human reason. He or she or it does what he or she or it has to do, whether it can or cannot be done.

I have never said that you are only a big human person. On the contrary, you are not, and hence nobody can be like you. Nevertheless, I don't quite follow what you mean when you state that whatever you achieve is possible for humanity to achieve, your attainments opening the way for others to follow.

It is singular that you cannot understand such a simple thing. I had no urge towards spirituality in me, I developed spirituality. I was incapable of understanding metaphysics, I developed into a philosopher. I had no eye for painting, I developed it by Yoga. I transformed my nature from what it was to what it was not. I did it by a special manner, not by a miracle and I did it to show

what could be done and how it could be done. I did not do it out of any personal necessity of my own or by a miracle without any process. I say that if it is not so, then my Yoga is useless and my life was a mistake—a mere absurd freak of Nature without meaning or consequence. You all seem to think it a great compliment to me to say that what I have done has no meaning for anybody except myself—it is the most damaging criticism on my work that could be made.

If a man has transformed his nature, he couldn't have done it all by himself, as you have done.

I also did not do it all by myself, if you mean by myself the Aurobindo that was. He did it with the help of Krishna and the Divine Shakti. I had help from the embodied sources also.

I should say that Avatars are like well-fitted, well-equipped Rolls Royce machines.

All sufficient to themselves—perfect and complete from the beginning, hey? Just roll, royce, and ripple!

February 13, 1935

You say, if I understand you right, that since the inner being is open to the universal, anything can manifest through it even if it is not there latent; you further add that it is impossible to say what will or will not manifest once the universal acts upon it. But is this impossible for Yogis also? For example, can't you say whether a man has a capacity for Yoga or for something else? Do you simply gamble when you accept someone?

I have never said anything about how I choose people. I was answering the argument that what has not been or is not in manifestation, cannot be. That was very clearly the point in the discussion—that the Divine cannot manifest what is not yet there—even He is impotent to do that. He can only manifest what is either already manifest or else latent in the field (person) he is working in. I say no—he can bring in new things. He can bring it in from the universal or he can bring it down from the transcendent. For in the Divine cosmic and transcendent all things are. Whether He will do so or not in a particular case is quite another matter. My argument was directed towards dissipating this “can't, can't” with which people try to stop all possibility of progress.

February 15, 1935

The Overmind seems so distant from us, and your Himalayan austerity and grandeur takes my breath away, making my heart palpitate!

O rubbish! I am austere and grand, firm and stern! Every blasted thing that I never was I groan in unAurobindonian despair when I hear such things. What has happened to the common sense of all you people? In order to reach the Overmind it is not at all necessary to take leave of this simple but useful quality. Common sense by the way is not logic (which is the least commonsense-like thing in the world), it is simply looking at things as they are without inflation or deflation—not

imagining wild imaginations—or for that matter despairing “I know not why” despairs.

February 23, 1935

And why so many illnesses all on a sudden? Is the Supramental then too near?

No, it is the material which has become too uppish.

People are saying that it has come down into the physical, evidenced by great peace and calm. Is this then that calm and peace or the deluge before the new creation?

Into whose physical? I shall be very glad to know—for I myself have not got so far, otherwise I would not have a queasy eye. But if you know anybody who has got it (the Supramental in the physical, not the eye) tell me like a shot. I will acclaim him “Grand First Supramental” at once.

March 17, 1935

You said, I hear, that you have conquered Death, not only personally, but for others as well.

I am unaware of having made any such statement. To whom did I make it? I have not said even that personally I have conquered it. All these are the usual Ashram legends.

The conquest of Death would mean the conquest of illness and of the psychological and functional necessity of death of the body—that is one of the ideals of the Yoga, but it can be accomplished only if and when the supramental has driven its roots into Matter. All that has been acting here up to now is an Overmind force which is getting gradually supramentalised in parts—the utmost that it can do in this respect is to keep death at a distance and that is what has been done. The absence of death in the Ashram for so many years has been due to that. But it is not impossible—especially when death is accepted.

March 25, 1935

About yourself there is already a strong conviction “based on fact” that you have made yourself immortal.

On what fact?

In one of our talks in the early days you seem to have acclaimed yourself as immortal except under three conditions—accident, poison and Ichchha Mrityu (Death by an act of will).

It must have been a joke taken as a self-acclamation. Or perhaps what I said was that I have the power to overcome Illness, but accident and poison and the I.M. still remain as possible means of death. Of course, the Mother and myself have hundreds of times thrown back the forces of illness and death by a slight concentration of force or even a use of will merely.

Another conviction which all of us shared is that you could

never have any illness; but your “eye,” due to whatever cause, has shattered it.

It is long since I have had anything but slight fragments of illness—(e.g. sneezes, occasional twitches of rheumatism or neuralgia; but the last is mostly now outside the body and does not penetrate)—with the exception of the eye and the throat (only one kind of cough, though, the others can’t come) which are still vulnerable points. As yes, there is also prickly-heat; but that has diminished to almost nothing these last years. There is sometimes an attempt at headache, but it remains above the head, tries to butt in and then recedes. Giddiness also the same. I don’t just now remember anything else. These are the facts about “having illness.” As for the conclusion, well, you can make a medical one or a Yogic one according to your state of knowledge.

*O rubbish! I am austere and grand,
firm and stern! Every blasted thing
that I never was. I groan
in unAurobindonian despair when I hear
such things. What has happened
to the common sense
of all you people? In order to reach
the Overmind it is not at all necessary
to take leave of this simple
but useful quality.*

Can the supramental really make immortal a tottering old man with all his anatomy and physiology pathological?

Well, don’t you know that old men sometimes get a new or third set of teeth in their old age? And if monkey glands can renew functionings and even make hair grow on a bald head, as Boronoff has proved by living examples,—well? And mark that Science is only at the beginning of these experiments. If these possibilities are opening before Science, why should one declare their absolute impossibility by other means?

In Yogic Sadhan I find that by Yoga every cell in the body can be changed in structure and function; but to expect that in a grand old man—well, isn’t it too much even for the Yogic Force?

Now that the omnipotence of this Force is being questioned, will you kindly write that promised letter “by means of examples” on what Yogic Force can do?

There is a difference between Yogic Force on the mental and inferior planes and the Supramental Nature. What is acquired and held by the Yoga-Force in the mind-and-body consciousness is in the supramental inherent and exists not by achievement but by nature—it is self-existent and absolute.

March 26, 1935

¹Urdu term meaning “Glory to God.”

In The Beginning: An Interview with S. Thandapani

Editors' Note: Bob and Deborah Lawlor started Forecomers in the late 1960's. As with all Auroville homesteading, it couldn't have been done without the help of the local villagers. Along with the workers came the *thambi* (literally, "young brother") tagging along to see just what these white folks were like, a pattern that occurred again and again in other Auroville settlements. These young boys were curious, open, could learn European languages quickly, and were eager for new experiences. We present here a conversation with S. Thandapani who was, as far as we know, the first *thambi* and one of the first "Tamil Aurovilians." He is now a trustee at Aurelec, Auroville's thriving computer company, and has a wife, Mohana, who also works there, and two children.

Collaboration: What was your first contact with Auroville, Thanda?

Thandapani: I was at the inauguration of the amphitheater (where earth from 23 states of India and 121 countries was placed in a marble urn in the center of Auroville). My father was working there. I was just a small guy, that short. My mother also started digging the amphitheater.

Collab: What did village people think about the amphitheater?

Thanda: Well, I thought it was a big dam, like the village pond. It was just desert there—one banyan tree with one or two branches. Very dry. It was not very happy, that tree, at that time. We went there for shade on our lunch break.

*I liked the place so much . . .
the flowers. I felt 'Something is nice—
that I came to Auroville to be here.'
We reached her room.
Mother was sitting there.*

Collab: What was the inauguration like?

Thanda: It was the first time I ever saw so many people. So many. Cars. Bikes. All the surrounding villages were there. Somebody said that Mother was going to come. We saw posters of her there. The students from the Ashram school came and made *kolams* (geometric designs) and other decorations. There was a huge balloon tied to the banyan tree, a huge one. And a very, very big ceremony. I was standing in one corner and looking. Then they came marching with flags, two people at a time, with something in their hands. People from different places, looking different. Sometimes people were looking at the sky. They were saying, "Mother, Mother." I looked—I didn't

see anything. They said she was going to come, but nobody like that came. Finally the ceremony was over, late in the evening at 7 o'clock. Then we had nice food to eat. Lorries and lorries of packets came. The whole village, all the people, got fed vegetable pullao, I think. My mother gave me some the next day—she had kept it.

Collab: Tell us about Forecomers. You lived in Edaianchavadi, right, not far away?

Thanda: Yes. My father found work with Bob and Deborah. They were starting to build things. He was a watchman there, took care of the place, and looked after the workers and purchasing.

Collab: There were no other Westerners around then. What did the people in the village think about Bob and Deborah moving in?

Thanda: Well, when they saw white people start to come around they thought that maybe they were going to conquer the place and the villages and take over like long ago when the British were here.



Thanda on a school trip to Kodiakanal, 1975.

Collab: So they could remember?

Thanda: Yes. Like my father. He could remember when the French would come from Pondicherry to hunt. He was a hunter also and worked for them, helping to chase the rabbits out of the bush. Well, when he was working at Forecomers I would come to visit him. I wanted to know how the white people looked. Then they asked me if I wanted to stay. They liked me. I was the first guy from the village to stay with Bob and Deborah. I wasn't going to school. My mother was very worried about me. She was thinking that maybe these white people would take me away or something. After some time that's what happened. A friend of Bob's asked if she could take me abroad and do some schooling. My father agreed, but the whole village came to know that they wanted to take me. The villagers were not happy and spoke to my mother, and she didn't agree to my going. She thought maybe I wouldn't come back and would forget Tamil. I myself wasn't sure about these new people.

So Bob and Deborah said that I had to study, to read and write. It was strange. I didn't know what was study. I was only saying one or two words of English which were totally wrong. Like for pumping the bicycle tire I would say, "Put wind inside the tube" (a literal translation of the Tamil). So Bob and Deborah would take me wherever they would go, and I began to pick up some English. Then I started doing message work, taking small pieces of paper to other people who were living then in Auroville. I had to learn to cycle to take these messages. So Deborah taught me on the big cycle—I didn't have a small one. I would go, not sitting on the seat.

Then I started to go to school, and Rod (Rod Hemsall, now living in Houston, Texas) was there. He had a little house in Center Field. There were three other boys from Edaianchavadi. The first day I went to school I was so shy. Rod gave me a pencil and a paper and some crayons. For three days I didn't look in his face! I was too scared. He had a beard. Every day I would go and not do much. One day I made a drawing, a donkey, the first painting I made.

Then it was decided I would go to another school in Pondy. So I had to have shorts, tennis shoes. Before that I only wore a *neesil* (loincloth), not even shorts. My hair was oiled and combed, and I started walking from Forecomers to Aspiration. There were about six or seven people living there, and I went into Pondy with a Frenchman who had a car. For a month I went to Equals One (A school begun by Yvonne Artaud).

Finally the school started in Aspiration, and I joined. Rod was there. Til now I didn't know anything about Sri Aurobindo and The Mother. People were showing pictures of them, but I didn't know anything. People were reading all the time, and I didn't understand. One day, when I could speak a little English, Rod said that we were going to see Mother. We went together. We waited outside on the balcony. Then we went in. It was fantastic inside, all kinds of treasures... the first time I saw... it made me so happy. I liked the place so much... the flowers. I felt, 'Something is nice—that I came to Auroville to be here.' We reached her room. Mother was sitting there. She didn't talk to us. I kneeled down in front of her, and she looked at me so sharp! She just looked at me for a few minutes. Then she lifted her arm, touched my head and smiled. She gave me a packet and a painting.

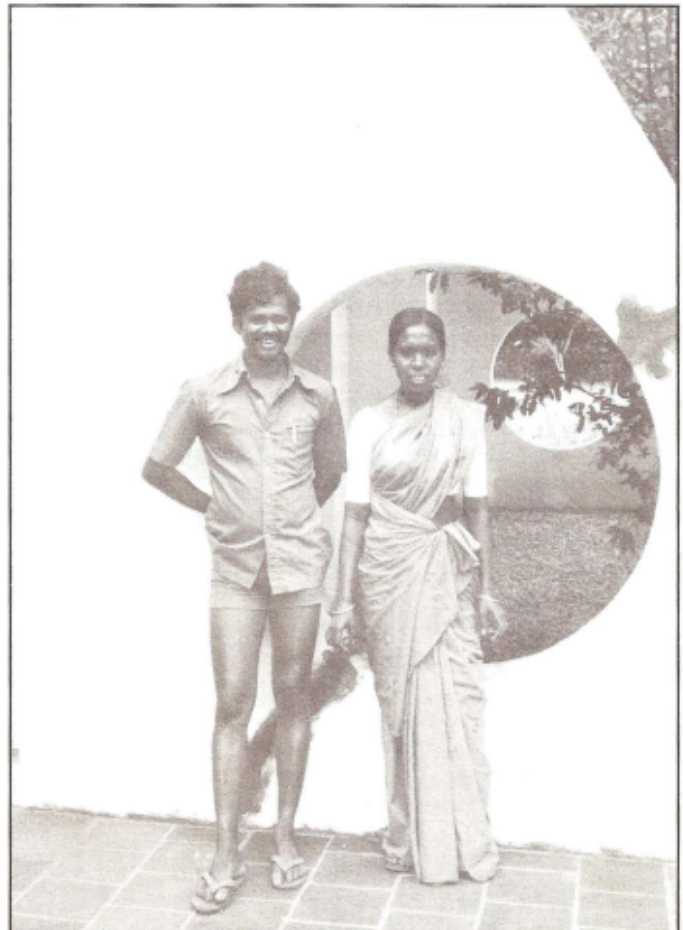
Collab: Was it your birthday?

Thanda: I didn't even know my birthday then.

Collab: So you kept going to the Aspiration school?

Thanda: There were many boys from Kuilapalayam (the village adjacent to Aspiration). I remember the first time I went to the sea. It was a special day. We came from Pondy to Auroville on a fishing boat. Halfway there I got sea-sick! We came to Aurobeach where Austin was living. We slept that night in a graveyard! We didn't know it was a graveyard at night.

The whole thing moved so fast. I couldn't keep track of the days, the years. When I moved to Aspiration with my brother, Gajendra, the village people were happy that somebody from the village went to stay with the Europeans. When they saw that I was in Auroville for some time and nothing happened—I didn't stop speaking Tamil or anything—they had no more fear. So my mother allowed Gajendra to come with me. Then Bob left. My father had no more work and decided to open a tea shop in Edaiyanchavadi. He wanted me to come help him. So I had to quit the school and work in the tea shop. But the life was boring. If he went for purchasing I had to be there. One day I decided to go back to school, but my father forced me to stay. At that time the bus came from Pondy to Aspiration and brought a lot of kids to the school every day. It passed right by the tea stall at 8:30. I used to wave to my friends on the bus. Then one day I just stopped the bus, got on, and went back to school. My father came to Aspiration on his bicycle and took me home. The next day I did the same thing, and he had to come and get me. This happened every day until he finally gave up. He was too tired. He let me stay.



Thanda and Mohana at Aurelec kitchen, 1985.

The Crochet Ladies of Kulipalayam-Fraternity

By Fanou Walton

If I close my eyes, I see them, all the ladies of the Fraternity crochet workshop, sitting on their mats on the ground. Who are they, the ladies of the crochet? They are like you and me, ladies of the world. Instead of being born in New York, or somewhere in Minnesota or France, they were born in a small village in South India, which happened to be surrounded by Auroville. They are the ladies of Kulipalayam, a very typical Indian village.

They come with their flowers in their hair, every day a new garland of jasmine, and their babies on their hips. Every year a new baby.... They come with their crochet hooks stuck in their hair so they won't lose them, and their worries which they cannot lose and leave at home with their abusive mothers-in-law, or with their angry husbands who have not found work for many months.

They come with their smiles and laughter in their eyes, happy to be out of their homes, out of the village, happy to be here in our workshop in Fraternity, with a group of ladies and young girls. And I am happy to be with them. Except for my white skin and my short pants, I feel one of them, with my new baby on my knees and my crochet work in my hand. They too have their babies on their knees and their crochetwork in their hands, and we like to laugh together and I love to hear what is happening in their lives, in the village. Here we are certainly sisters....

Gandhimadi is sitting there, a beautiful young girl. We speak about boys and she giggles. She says she does not want to be married. Everyone laughs and makes jokes, but behind laughs and jokes, there is the reality of what marriage means and they all know what it means....Gandhimadi lives on the beach, among the fisherfolk, where life is more tough and men more rude than anywhere else. Gandhimadi so happy, so free. I think you are right, Gandhi, don't marry, or choose a good man who

makes you happy....But it is a stupid thought, as she cannot choose a good man. She cannot choose any man, she has to accept the one her family has chosen for her, and it is not only a husband she has to accept, but also an entire new family, with a mother-in-law to give her orders and directions. I think, choose a good mother-in-law, Gandhi, but it is a stupid idea indeed. Who would choose a mother-in-law?

Next to Gandhimadi sits Mohanna, she is 15. She too is beautiful and laughs most of the time. Today, she is wearing a new saree, one of the sarees she received for her maturation ceremony, yesterday.

*They come with their crochet hooks
stuck in their hair so they won't lose them,
and their worries which they cannot lose
and leave at home.*

I close my eyes for a moment and I see her, as she was yesterday, sitting on her throne, glowing and honored as a young living goddess. Her mother is attending her, washing and oiling her face and her feet, her girl-friend, combing and braiding her hair with garlands of flowers. It was a real gift to be there yesterday, Mohanna, to honor with everyone the woman and the goddess in you. Now I open my eyes again, and here you are laughing and joking as any other young girl. I say, you were like a goddess yesterday, Mohanna. She laughs at me and giggles again. Goddesses probably giggle most of the time!



(left to right) Vijaya, Janacum, Manama, Gandhi, and Mohana with Fanou and Aurelia at Fraternity.



Vijaya on her way to work in Fraternity.

Janacum laughs too. She does not think of Mohanna as a goddess, but she agrees the maturation ceremony was all right, it was what it was supposed to be. Janacum has four kids and she is expecting the fifth one. She is probably 35. She is strong and healthy. Her husband does not work regularly, so most of the time, she is the only one who brings money home. She comes every day with her two younger children. In two months there will be three to come here every day! In New York she would be a single woman, business woman or in public relations. Here she fits so perfectly in her life with five children and a husband to support.

I turn to Vijaya. She does not laugh. She does not laugh very often. She knows a lot about life in the village. She had four girls already and has just given birth to the fifth one. Another girl. She did not laugh either, believe me, when they told her it was a girl, and her husband did not laugh, he did not even speak to her for a week. A week is long, but it is not for life....After a week, her husband found that he had expressed his anger, and now he looks at their new baby with the same love he gave to the other ones. But Vijaya *should* have another baby and it *should* be a boy... This is why she worries so much, Vijaya. She knows how expensive girls are when it comes to marrying them and they already have five. What will happen if the sixth one is a girl? A lot of worries indeed....

And there sits Chinnaponnu, and Mani, and Rajan, and Mani-ma, and Purani and Surikandi, each one with her own story to be told....But today we have things to discuss, so let's forget about stories, jokes and worries for a while.

Tomorrow is Fraternity's birthday. Fraternity is our community. It's for all of us, and we want to have a nice celebration. What will we do? Will we sing? I ask. No, say the ladies, we cannot sing in front of men. Will we dance? No, they say, we cannot dance in front of men. But, we can cook a good lunch for all of us and have fun. This is what we will do. The ladies will come with their best sarees and a lot of flowers. We will sit together and thread miles of garlands of flowers and cook an excellent meal for all of us. We will eat together, women on one side, men on the other side. The oldest worker will perform a Puja before the meal, and afterwards men will sing for hours and women listen for hours....

I still remember all those days so vividly....Now things have changed a lot, and life for all of us has gone on. I don't know who Gandhimadi has married and if she is happy, but I know that Mohanna is married and happy. She has chosen her husband and he has chosen her! The goddess was really alive in her!¹

¹Mohana is married to S. Thandapani who is interviewed in this issue. See *In the Beginning*.

Editor's Note: Fanou Walton is a Frenchwoman now working for Global View, an import business of the Willow Gold Farm in Spring Green, Wis. She has two children who were born in Auroville, Marichi and Aurelia. Her third child, Auroleo, was born at Willow Gold. Fanou lived in Aspiration and worked in the Creche during her first years in Auroville. She then moved to Fraternity and started a crochet unit which employed Tamil women.



Vijaya and Janacum at Fraternity, 1979.

Tamil Aurovilians: Inside/Outside The Boundaries of Auroville

Kottakarai is not only a local Tamil village on the Western border of the Matrimandir, it is also an Auroville community. The origin of this community is a story of a group of Westerners whose first interest was living and working with Tamil villagers. They took up village-style agriculture with a group of five women and ten men. After ten years, they are still growing grain, milking cows, and caring for the land through tree planting and bunding. Over the years the community grew in diverse ways. An Aurevedic Health Center, a bakery, a silk-screen/crochet workshop called Harmony, and a pottery were integrated into the farming community. Tamilians have been part of all these projects. Many Aurovilians have come and gone but these projects have continued and the Tamil Aurovilians in Kottakarai are proud of their work for Auroville.

This interview with Dee, a woman from the U.S., was recorded when we, the editors, visited Auroville last July. As educators, we were interested in Isai Ambalam, which is the new school for village children from the Harijan colony which borders on Kottakarai. This school is a product of the work and commitment which Ivar, a Dutchman, has personally taken on.

Ivar began his life in Kottakarai growing bananas and digging wells to get the water that was needed for gardening. His involvement with the Tamil workers grew quickly and he began going into the colony as a teacher. His project soon became running night schools and he has received Indian government as well as international support for his work.

After talking with Dee, we felt that Isai Ambalam was representative of the process of village/Auroville interaction. Through this interview, we see the growth and development of a caring and dynamic relationship. This is one example of Western and village culture coming together to grow towards an appropriate life style in Auroville. We also enjoyed the very personal perceptions of the individuals who have made this workshop/educational project in Kottakarai. Thus we offer it to all our readers as one story about the lives of Aurovilians.

Collaboration: How did you get involved with working with Tamil villagers in Auroville?

Dee: First I was in Fertile Windmill where I saw myself as supporting the planting of trees and doing leatherwork that was commercially saleable. At that time, when I hired a young man to help me in leather work, I asked myself, Can I really give this guy four rupees and take eight hours of his time for work I didn't like to do? I couldn't live with that. So, I oriented all the leather work, as it grew, towards making it an atelier where the boys learned to do everything.

They developed their artistic skill and their sense of fun right there in the workshop. At first I was unsure about what I had to teach them. In my naive American egalitarian way, I treated them as if they had nothing to learn from me. Then I met Lisa of Aurosarjan and there was something about her way... she didn't refuse to believe that these people had something to learn from her. After that, I began to let them in on what was important to me in Auroville, and in life. The spirit of the workshop grew quite a lot after I began doing that.

About three years ago, I left Fertile Windmill in order to widen my horizons. There were two things that happened there: the quality of the finished product improved astronomically because they were eager to prove what they could do without me and they didn't have to put up with my wanting to use up every little bit of leather. The other was that they lost money. They didn't have anyone doing their marketing work. I couldn't leave them there doing such fine work and having it just sit around. We organized the workshop and moved it to Kottakarai where I was living and beginning to find a new place for myself. But they continued to run the workshop on their own. I only placed orders and gave them advances. They do the designs and production.

Well, Rangaswamy is a special person to me. When I first met him I had a dream that we were climbing mountains together. It was one of those dreams I couldn't forget. And when he said this I not only heard him, I saw it. He was very clear. He loves Auroville, but he lives in the village.

At this point in time I see the leather workshop as a major seven-year education project which is a success. These guys are productive and very happy about their workshop. They're on their own. They're businessmen whom I deal with and that makes such a difference. Now they even teach leather work.

So while they did leather, I went to work on the Matrimandir. One day Rangaswamy, one of the workers from Belle Aura, the leather workshop, was standing with me at the Matrimandir and



Isai Ambalam



Ivar with school children in Kottakarai Colony

he said: "You know, Auroville should make a school for worker's children." Well, Rangaswamy is a special person to me. When I first met him I had a dream that we were climbing mountains together. It was one of those dreams I couldn't forget. And when he said this I not only heard him, I saw it. He was very clear. He loves Auroville, but he lives in the village. He's very clear. He has his obligations there. But he wants a school for his kids. I knew I had to do that!

That was three years ago. There are a lot of barriers to something like school for workers' children in Auroville. There are 20,000 first Aurovilians living here and yet the villages where they live are somehow "outside" the Auroville campus. I feel that most westerners who come to Auroville are very open to Tamilians. They sincerely try to start from the basis of equality and fraternity. Then they get ripped off and they retreat in pain. They really begin to create emotional and physical barriers in the collective consciousness.

Collab: Yes, the trees have grown a lot . . . and the fences.

Dee: For instance this place. Ivar has let the fences disintegrate. The villagers seem to respect the boundaries now. But it also means a real surrender. It means you surrender your mangoes. They don't bring the goats and cows in here too much any more. We don't know if it's possible to make a garden. . . But Ivar believes that the fences should disintegrate.

So when it came to setting up the school for Rangasamy's children, Ivar was the most helpful. He's been in Kottakarai for at least 10 years doing gardening and village education and most recently managing the sweater workshop. He suggested we build something here and we wrote the project together. From my own personal point of view, I felt that my sadhana was to break through some of these blind areas in the collective consciousness.

Building the school got me started. I felt able to be someone Tamil people could come to. I began visiting Meenakshi and we

started to call my visits Co-evolution meetings. We sat in her house by ourselves, talking together. She and I made a strong formation. We felt that we must have a dedicated, high-minded social worker. Someone to do the outreach work to the village. And just as you might expect . . . just such a person turned up. Saraswati Devi had been Meenakshi's teacher in Gandhigram. She was just what we needed. She's self-motivated, dynamic, and open to the ideas of Auroville. She came and started working with youth clubs, women's clubs and whatever villagers are interested in.

Collab: Can you tell us more about Co-evolution?

Dee: Co-evolution is Auroville's village action group. It is made up of people who are already in the work. There are people like Andre at New Creation, who has a school for village children. There's Shymala and Varadarajan who have worked with villagers since Aspiration began. There are the young Tamil men in the High School in Aspiration. My involvement here has been part of my role in Co-evolution.

Collab: What goes on here?

Dee: This is something that grew out of Ivar's banana experience. He decided that the real work was with the people, not the plants . . . especially with the poorest children. He went to the Harijan colonies around here. He found people he could train as teachers and set up in schools. His approach is unique. It's all liveliness, stimulation—not even very mental—perceiving the colonies as something that simply needs stirring. He teaches by means of jokes, excursions, and lots of music.

Disco dancing is part of the curriculum! He had a nutrition program going. In 1981 the District Collector suggested that we use this Tri-Sem system of the Central Government. It pays the person for six months of training and they can be self-employed at the end of it. There's money for a teacher and for raw materials used in training. Several Auroville people got involved and we persuaded the government to let us find the



Ladies at work in Ivar's Kottakarai workshop.



Ivar at his night school in Kottakarai Colony

people for training. That's the key to the program. We only get highly motivated people. Seventy-five to 80 percent of those we trained still work with us or are self-employed.

The first group of women we trained looked pretty wild. We weren't sure how Ivar was going to teach them to crochet. But, he did it! Now, they're that group of nice-looking ladies in the other room. As soon as they had regular employment, they did it.

Ivar impresses me very much. He's not afraid to take on the impossible. He's completely unafraid. There's no caution. One time the Collector showed up with eight ladies to learn crochet and nobody knew what to do. But Ivar said, "Sure" and just opened the house here for them and they lived here. It brought in so much energy because they were educated and could serve as a model for these Harijan women. Each of these eight girls has trained ten other women to crochet. All of these women can now write their names, read bus signs, and work together. It has changed this whole place. It's not a private house anymore. Now there are 14 children who live here and study in the school. And most of the people in this house are from the colonies.

What is here is what Ivar began. The crocheting started in 1981 and went on to include the knitting and beading as an import business in Germany. The bulk of what is produced is sold in Germany. But this was just incidental to Ivar's schools. His priority was always the night schools in the colonies. Now the leather workshop and the boarding school are here.

The boarding school has just gotten two women teachers from Southern Tamil Nadu. We hope to improve the care we give these 14 children. Most of these kids come from homes where they are neglected. We're just trying to give them the education that will enable them to get out of that limitation. I see them returning to the colonies as whole people and perhaps working in Auroville. At least these boys and girls will have a choice. That's the hope of this school program.

Collab: How many kids are in the school?

Dee: In the day school there are 30. There are 20 in the creche.

We do an adult education program. There are 30 women in it and it runs for an hour a day. It's for these women who crochet. Work stops and they learn to read and write Tamil.

Collab: What about the school curriculum? What's their day like?

Dee: In the morning they have academic subjects like English, Math, Science, Tamil and Hindi. The last by popular demand. Let me explain. Ivar has a TV set donated by the government. He takes it to the night schools that he has set up in the colonies. But the hook-up only receives the broadcasts from New Delhi, at the moment, and most of those are in Hindi and English, not Tamil. So, they want to learn Hindi.

In the afternoon there are crafts and music. We have a very special teacher here. His name is Raghavancharay. Charay means teacher. We call him "Tata." He's old that's why we use "tata" which means grandfather for the Tamils. He's also a cured leper. His fingers are very much gone. It took a while to get used to his physical presence. But he's such an inspiring man! He's just an amazing music teacher. He teaches music from morning til night. The children love it. The school is now called *Isai Ambalam* or "Place of Music."

Last year we did more music than academics. We took the students out to Bangalore to do a music show. We took them all around in a bullock cart to perform their music in the villages and in Auroville.

We run a kitchen for the boarding and lunches for workers and students. The cook is a young widow from Alankuppam colony. She's what they call *samy* because she can go into trance. She's tremendously strong and can work from 5 a.m. til midnight. But she has no idea of cleanliness at all! It's absolutely hair-raising. I didn't know what to do. Gradually she is changing. The whole philosophy of a place like this is not to send someone of goodwill away if they have a fault. We are here to educate and train them to live more consciously.

Auroville is a growth opportunity. We need to care about our workers and our children. We need to encourage sports and music, adult education, literacy, women's programs, whatever activity or programs villagers want to have or participate in. There should be a doctor whose primary responsibility is the families of Auroville workers. Of course once you start listing things it's endless. The experience I have here with each of these people is what I have to do. It began as a leather workshop and a question. Now it's living and working with Tamilians in Auroville.

1969

Those who are in contact with the villagers should not forget that these people are worth as much as they are, that they know as much, that they think and feel as well as they do. They should therefore never have an attitude of ridiculous superiority. They are at home and you are the visitors.

The Mother on Auroville, Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, Pondicherry India, 1977.

Kottakarai Amma

Old Amma at the open door
fixes me with a scaly eye,
demanding her weekly due.
What use is this ancient village lady
but to call down a curse?
Why do we give her food?

What is it really, Amma,
that brings us together,
you squatting on my doorstep,
nailed there, never to rise,
and I, reading in my wicker chair,
trapped by your baleful eyes?

Was it like this in the early days
when you lived alone by the banyan tree?
You had a power, I'm told, and strange sons.
You were the owl-eyed guardian
of the temple of the city of dawn.
Then your eldest boy committed suicide.



Now you carry those memories
with a body bent in pain,
groaning outside my door for rupees.
I listen to your creaky dirge,
staring at your old boniness,
wondering at this bizarre seige.

But then my own grandmother
was worse than you, Amma.
She held us so fiercely
in her matriarchal debt,
wrangling and harping all day.
We silenced her with a TV set.

We are the Auroville neo-colonials,
the latest wistful white folks
to sip tea under the tropical sun
and think that we are different
from the chaps who ruled Rangoon.
Until old Amma comes along.

Then from a broad club veranda
I seem to faintly hear
the sly boasts of British ghosts
sniggering over their gin and beer
about the way to handle the natives
when they come a bit too near,

when like a sudden squall
comes the carrier of skulls,
comes Kali the glutton of worlds
calling out to old Amma
for some kind of fit response
before her terrible, sacred face.

I stare stupidly at the fiery eyes,
for I do not know the words
to speak to that fatal presence
smoldering under the wrinkled skin,

and I close my book, lose the place,
get up to fetch her rice.

Gordon Korstange

Editors' note: Old Amma lived near the banyan tree during the early years of the Matrimandir construction. She then moved to Kottakarai where she was taken care of by the Auroville community of that name. She passed away in 1984. Amma is shown in the photo with her granddaughter, Tushita, now a student in the Auroville school.

Poems by Meenakshi

Come, and on my shoulder lean,
Oh, dew drop!
Come and hold my wrist,
And if you further want to fall,
I will become a Thumbai flower,
Blossoming.
I am waiting,
And have placed a white chair out
Especially for you.



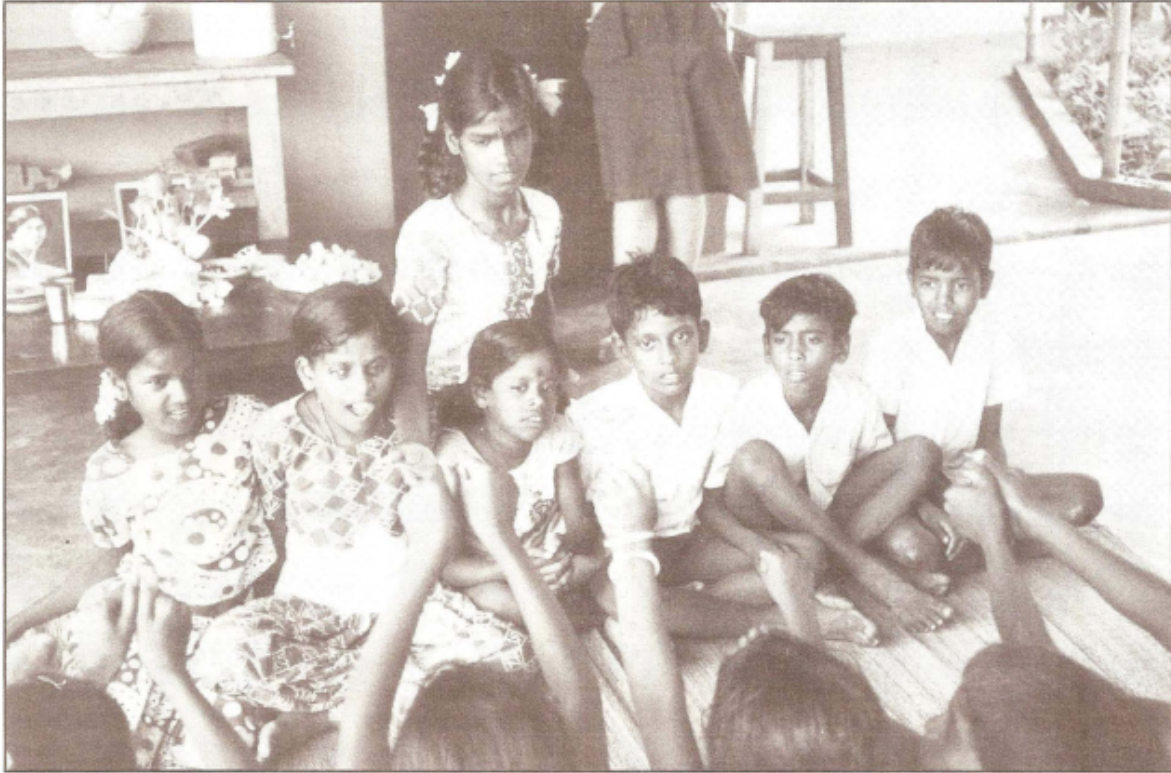
Lakshmi, a student at New Creation, at her house in Kulipalayam

I am the golden flame
Waiting for so long.
Where is the earthen lamp?
Where the milky oil?

I am the golden flame
Waiting for so long.
In my burning red and,
In my dreams, awake.
I am the golden flame.

*Editors' note: Meenakshi is a poet
and social worker who lives in the Centre, Auroville.*

The Mother on Tamil Villagers



Kulipalaym village children who attended Last School in 1976.

Aspiration Talks 31 March 1970

What news?

A: We have two questions to ask you, if you don't mind. The first is one about a young boy from the Tamil village next to Aspiration. For some time now he has been coming to work in the garden at Aspiration; and we feed him, and little by little he has started to participate, to live a little bit with the camp. And we have decided to take responsibility for this child, along with the whole group of course, but the three of us especially; and to look after him and little by little to integrate him into the life of the camp. Do you think it is all right?

It is all right, on condition that the parents agree. You should have someone talk with the parents and tell them, if they agree, ask them, explain to them. You cannot take a child, just like that, without the agreement of the parents, his father and mother.

A: L is looking after village relations. He is going to try and see the family and get in touch with the father and mother, to see whether it is possible.

And he will go there?

A: Yes, yes.

This is what I am saying. That is the condition. He must go there, talk to the father and mother, explain things to them, ask them whether they agree. If they do, it is very good, quite all right.

A: Because there is no question of cutting him off from his village. . .

No, no.

A: But to try little by little. . .

On the contrary. . .

A: We must not. . .

On the contrary, he must maintain the contact. Then it is fine.

Collected Works pp325-6
The Mother; Vol. 13

31 March 1970

The young Tamil boy who is coming—what are you teaching him, English or French?

A: Oh, for the moment we're not really teaching him anything.

Poor little fellow, you simply put him to work. . .

A: Oh no, not only that.

G: We feed him as well, Sweet Mother.

A: Gradually, as he comes more often, we will organize something and teach him French.

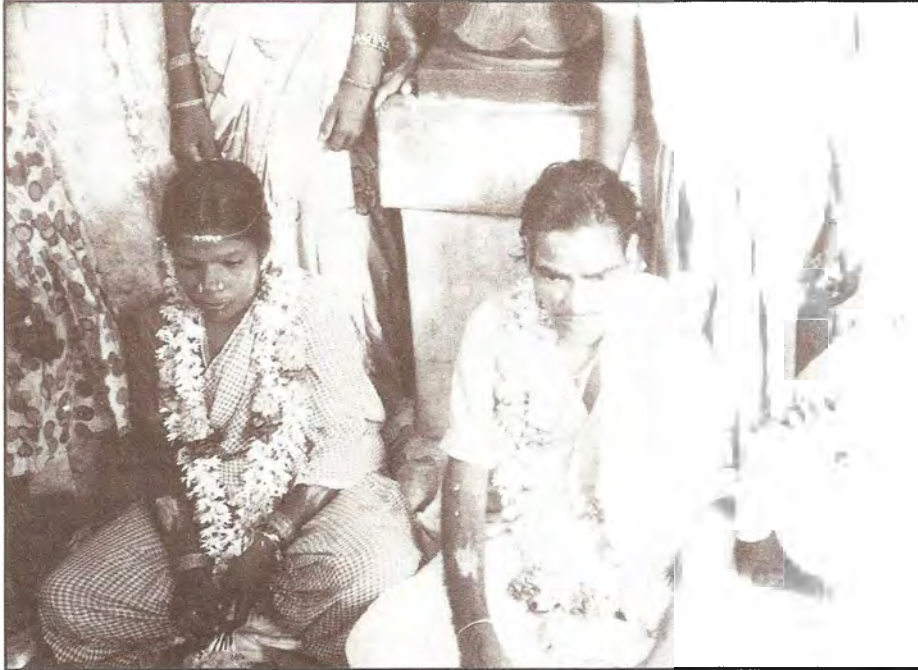
You must involve him in life there, and then it would be interesting. When children hear you speak, they want to know what is being said and they learn the language. Indians are wonderful at learning languages. They can learn four or five languages without mixing them up. This young boy would learn very well—it would be a good thing.

(Long Silence)

Good, it is all right. Then. . . Good-bye.

pp.330-1
The Mother Vol. 13

Village Wedding



Tonight once more the shrill assault.
From crackling speakers above a village hut
film music shrieks across the fields
routing the soft menace of the night.

Beneath a new-built pandal
and arching banana trees
the men patiently await tomorrow's feast,
adjusting crisp white clothes
in the harsh glare
of imported city lights,
while the women gather inside
to prepare the anxious bride
for an end to her quiet nights,

and the electric sexual howl
slams into the trembling darkness.
We lie still with open eyes
and share the ancient dread
of the demons that lie in wait
just beyond the marriage bed.

Gordon Korstange

The Role of Beauty in the Supramental Transformation

by Wayne E. Bloomquist

Pure beauty is universal, and one must be universal in order to see and recognize it.

The Mother

A seminar/workshop was held at the Cultural Integration Fellowship in San Francisco on January 25. A major portion of the program investigated the role of beauty in transformation. The two principal speakers were Dr. Rollo May, author of *Love and Will* and *The Courage to Create*, who is currently a psychotherapist in Tiburon, California, and Dr. V. Madhusudan Reddy, visiting Professor of Philosophy from Osmania University in Hyderabad, India. The keynoted address was given by Dr. May on the subject of his recent book, *My Quest for Beauty*.

A summary of the talks follows, along with some of my comments and observations. I would like to preface my remarks by saying I had heard these two speakers two years ago and was disappointed at too much "head-stuff." In fact, I had not planned to attend this event until I was asked to be chairman two nights prior. Dr. May gave his presentation Saturday morning for about 90 minutes, and I believe it was the most moving talk I have ever heard. Yet his presentation was very quiet and subtle in its impact. I also believe the audience shared much of my enthusiasm.

The following summary and highlights of the talks will not convey the beauty of the program, but it will give me an opportunity to expand upon this important subject.

Dr. May was supported in his presentation by a casting of the bust of Hygeia by Scopas (390 B.C.), whom he introduced as his friend. This was a useful tool with which to introduce and hold beauty before us throughout his talk.

Dr. May began by commenting on the ecology of our planet—how the birds in New Hampshire were forced to migrate to the rain forests in South America due to pollution. This proved to be their undoing when these forests were later cleared to graze cattle for Burger King. The metaphor is that we are sacrificing beauty for the buck.

When Dr. May attempted to promote his book *My Quest for Beauty* through television talk-shows, he was told the American public had no interest in beauty. At first he disagreed with them, but later concurred in their assessment.

He discussed art and pornography, which he defined as producing a work of art with the express purpose of eliciting an emotional response in the viewer. In his view, beauty does not come out of emotion but out of serenity, calmness and peace; he offered as an example the casting of Hygeia, which reveals the dignity of being from the depth of the soul.

Besides talking about beauty, ethics and the love of others, he also mentioned alienation and suicide, especially of school-age children. A professor had once called in to Dr. May on a talk-show and said he never had a problem with his students. When asked what he taught, he said, "I'm a professor of music." Participating in beauty—for example in music or in writing poetry—helps us to transcend despair.

Dr. May talked of the relationship between death and beauty: Death is the mother of beauty. Shortly prior to dying, our sense of beauty seems to be heightened. The autumn leaves are most beautiful as they are dying.

Beauty can bring peace to our world. Art is the only human institution which is never destructive.

Here are two quotes from *My Quest for Beauty*: "Beauty is not God, but it is the resplendent gown of God and of our spiritual life," and "Beauty is eternity born into human existences."

Compare the above to this from Sri Aurobindo:

Beauty is the special divine manifestation in the physical as Truth is in the mind, Love in the heart, Power in the vital.

Beauty is Ananda taking form—but the form need not be a physical shape. One speaks of a beautiful thought, a beautiful act, a beautiful soul. What we speak of as beauty is Ananda in Manifestation.

Dr. Reddy commented that Ananda in the transcendent triune of Satcitananda is comprised of three qualities or expressions on the physical plane: love, joy and beauty. They are interrelated and if one is present, so also are the other two. Beauty does not belong to this world, beauty only manifests.

Dr. Reddy thought the relationship between death and beauty was more of a psychological death and spiritual rebirth. Our personal death is not to be taken physically. He further talked about the necessity of destruction for the advent of a new world.

God woos his children through beauty.

...the birds in New Hampshire were forced to migrate to the rain forests in South America due to pollution. This proved to be their undoing when these forests were later cleared to graze cattle for Burger King.

Dr. Reddy concluded his segment by acknowledging Dr. May as a true sage who represented the ethos of this country. I am sure the audience concurred in this assessment.

Before I make some comments, I want to paraphrase from *My Quest for Beauty* a transformative experience Dr. May had in Greece in 1932 while on teaching assignment there.

After a year in Greece, Dr. May became very lonely, and that eventually led to a nervous breakdown. He was forced to bed for two weeks to regain some energy. A few weeks later at eleven o'clock one night in March, he started walking towards Mt. Hortiati, ten miles away. He walked all night, oblivious to the rain, and later, to the freezing snow and to the packs of wolves that surrounded him. At dawn, he arrived at a small village and rented a room for a few days.

After he returned home, he walked in a field of wild poppies. He was thrilled and intoxicated by the poppies, dancing in the breeze and revealing different colors. He then realized he had not been listening to his inner voice, which had tried to talk to him about beauty.

I would suggest you read the full account of this experience, but I wanted to relate to you the importance beauty has played in his life.

I personally think Dr. May has touched upon a sensitive chord in our society, or rather, one that has become insensitive due to neglect. After his talk, I told Dr. May that although the American people do not really care for beauty, they are starved for it!

The next morning I was reflecting on my choice of the word "starve." I reasoned that if this were true, the pathology must be expressed in our society. And it is. We seem to have had a plethora of cases of anorexia, starvation, and bulimia, insatiable appetite and regurgitation, which have primarily affected women, our beacons of beauty.

Anorexia is symptomatic of a starvation for beauty expressed through the rejection of food. Bulimia is mimicking society's insatiable desire for consumption without being satisfied. The victim unconsciously rejects the unfulfilling food which she can no longer "stomach." Amidst all of the affluence, we are starving—starving perhaps for beauty, for the food of the soul.

To continue this line of reasoning, let us examine AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) which has become rampant over the past two years. This is a very interesting disease to spring forth at this time in consciousness. We know that when we want to grow into a new life, a new being, we have to peel off or cast away layers of defenses that have served us throughout our life. Like the ego, what was once the helper is now the bar.

We know from studying the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother that the supramental transformation must ultimately occur in physical matter itself, in our case, the body. And it is becoming almost commonplace—I hear it frequently—that we are in a new age and a new consciousness. It is no longer a secret for the privileged few.

If our body is to be transformed into a body of light, or whatever; if Ananda is to manifest through love, joy, and beauty into our cells; if our cells are to become illuminated with the light of the supreme consciousness, then we are currently under a great deal of stress, which is caused by the friction from the higher energy meeting our lifelong formations or habit-patterns.

The pressure for change, for transformation, is working on our bodies, stripping them of the defenses they have used not only for this lifetime but for centuries. For the Force to work effectively, the immunity system itself has to be transformed. Once effective against life-threatening diseases, our immune system is now being laid bare during the transitional period as we adapt to the light. One of our greatest current dangers, AIDS, could possibly hold the key to our bodily transformation.

This reasoning, if correct, could be carried on to other diseases such as cancer, which has become so dominant in our thoughts. Through the process of dying, many cancer patients have experienced profound and unconditional love.

One solution for us, as I see it, is to avoid the disease route, and open *consciously* to the love, joy and beauty of Ananda.

As I was driving home on the freeway after Saturday's program, I was absorbed in my thoughts as well as in the very heavy traffic. All I could see was cars, cars and concrete. As I came around a curve headed for the Bay Bridge, I looked up, just over the traffic, and saw this tremendously huge and beautiful full moon. It was a surprise!

Superb beauty has an element of surprise because the mind cannot fully capture it. We can hold part of the experience in our memory, but each time we actually see a moon such as this, we are speechless. The experience transcends the thought and the emotion.

Earlier, I mentioned alienation and how serious and prevalent it is in our society. Alienation itself is not the problem. The truth is that we are all alienated and always have been. At the moment of our creation, from the one to the many, we became alienated from our source. The problem really is that we do not know we are alienated. Dr. May was fortunate. His trip up the mountain at an early age led to his reuniting with his Oneness. Many anorexic patients have not been so fortunate.

*Amidst all of the affluence,
we are starving—starving perhaps
for beauty, for the food of the soul.*

We have covered up our alienation in countless ways: work, family, pleasure, etc. But Americans have discarded many of the traditional ways which really avoid this fundamental alienation. The family unit has broken down; the work ethic is crumbling; pleasure through affluence is no longer satisfying. Spectator sports are at an all-time high. Eventually, alienation will manifest to the point of absurdity (if it has not already!).

I was grateful to have been given the opportunity to meet and hear Dr. May and Dr. Reddy speak on beauty. Through the topic of beauty itself, their presence, the audience, Sri Aurobindo and the Mother's presence, the presence of other Sri Aurobindo followers (such as the organizers of the conference, Francene and Andre), the program had a profound impact on me.

Finally, there is also another element involved. I believe "beauty" provides not so much the missing link as the concept that cements an idea I have had for some time. I believe personally that a new consciousness (supramental or truth consciousness) is trying to manifest. It certainly has the power to manifest whenever it wishes. But to do so at full strength would annihilate us. Our minds, emotions, and bodies could not withstand the impact because of the resistances that we have built up.

I have experimented with a technique while speaking before a group of invoking a Force of Transformation through my vision, and intent and receptivity. I wrote about this in the January issue about using poetry, music, speaking from the heart, personal experience, etc. The one thing that I felt missing was the glue that binds this all together. And that binding force is beauty.

In addition to the above, we could also meditate on a tree or a sunset, or if indoors we could meditate on flowers and their meaning as given by the Mother. We could meditate on other objects of nature, as Dr. May did when he gazed at Mt. Blanc in France and saw the subtle forms take shape to reveal a oneness of nature. We can speak individually in a group to the question of "What is important in our life now?"

As Sri Aurobindo has said, there are many forms of beauty. We can relate beauty to Ananda in the physical, for in essence we are Ananda. Perhaps our personal and global transformation will come through beauty.

Presently, my wife Surama and I are developing a four- to six-hour workshop on beauty within an Internal Yoga context which we plan to present in May-June to ten to twelve people at our home in Berkeley. If anyone is interested in attending, please write to me at 1780 Highland Place, Berkeley, CA 94709, or call (415) 540-0265.

The Mother— The Next Step in Evolution

by Joseph Spanier

How is one to describe infinity or even define time? We may compose dictionaries in languages used the world over, but how to find a word or a phrase to convey one's feelings toward the Mother? The totality of expression in this area will, of necessity, be limited to a minute fragment of one's mental being, for the Mother represents infinity heaped upon infinity. Be that as it may, the overflowing of the love she represents, the possibilities she has presented to man for the next future require at least an attempt for such expression.

The Mother is the essence of Love in all its purity, perfection and universality and represents Sri Aurobindo's concept of detachment without indifference. The Love that flows from her Being is as mighty and powerful as a majestic waterfall, and yet it is as soft as the caress of a slow, cool stream of water on a hot summer day.

The Mother is the power, the great Shakti force, which is a part of all of us and which flows through the arteries of our fallible beings to aid and regenerate us into a higher state of consciousness. She is the force which enlarges our vision from one that is narrow and demands a loyalty to it alone, to that which is as wide as infinity itself and which demands no loyalty except to that divine essence within each of us.

The Mother represents the past, present and future—the perfection within each of these spheres of time. And although not physically present, be certain that she and all that she represents is here now and is the infusion of the new consciousness of this Age. Our mortal minds somehow cannot envisage that, since they are limited to the physical state of being. And yet we have within us the possibility of experiencing her presence and all she represents, since she is within the depths of our being, for that is part of the process of our evolutionary development.

How does a rational, mental being open oneself to this power? It is by way of her own path—the Integral Yoga—a path within many paths, not one limited by ritual, practices, creed, dogma or organization—one without restraint but based upon evolutionary growth. The Yoga is therefore one of struggle, not one where peace of mind is the objective, but rather the revolutionary objective of a transformation of one's nature. Its first requisite is to see and understand the source of our human frailties, and then to aspire, act and seek perfection. Though there is a struggle with the very nature of our being, it is not dolorous but carries with it the joy of the slightest movement upwards.

And so we plod along this dusty climb with such burdensome companions as insincerity, ego, self-doubt, untruthfulness and others of that ilk, attempting on each step of the journey to shake off these albatrosses which constantly impede our way. But that spark within each of us is there and pushes us ahead to aid us in shedding these burdens—and that spark is the Force—involved in the evolutionary process of man from what he is now to what possibilities he has latent within his being.

A mental being who believes in evolution must go the whole hog. He cannot believe solely in the physical evolutionary theory of Darwin without having a belief in the evolution of the

spirit of man—the energy within, the life force—call it x, y or z, it matters not. Evolution is a cumulative process and does not occur within the lifetime of one of nature's species. Therefore, if one recognizes that physical evolution requires time, why not the evolution of the mind and of the spirit of man? Time, of course is not the essence of all of this, but consciousness is, for that is the first step towards the development of the psychic being. In addition, if man believes in physical evolution alone, he is degrading the very essence of his being since such a belief is based on the assumption that the body of man comprises the totality of his being. This is contrary to the knowledge we already have that man is an emotional, mental and psychic being and that these elements also are integrally woven into the evolutionary process. The Mother has clearly demonstrated that the application of consciousness to action becomes a dynamic meditation and a catalyst which pushes and pulls the totality of our being upwards to the next rung in the evolutionary spiral.

The rational being, like the scientist before he proceeds with his experiments which lead to scientific discovery, must first have a belief in what he wishes to prove. From the psychological point of view, a belief is begotten by way of a personal experience, and although it may not be empirically provable is nevertheless a fact.

We are like the ant in terms of our understanding of time and space. If an ant is placed alongside a railroad track and subsequently a train speeds by, the ant cannot with its limited vision understand the force and speed of the train. And the human being, like that tiny ant, lacks the mental vision and the consciousness to understand time and space in all their grandeur and infinity, despite the enormous effect time and space have in our evolutionary development. It is the force and power of the Mother which aids our aspiration to seek the essential consciousness necessary to begin to understand time and space, and hence offers us the possibility to advance beyond our present stage of evolution. We then begin to come to the realization that the function of man on earth is to evolve to a higher state of being, and all else is merely peripheral.

The road is wide open, the opportunity is now here to make the leap forward and begin our journey from the rational to the suprarational. How is this to be accomplished? There are many paths, some with pitfalls which keep us mired in a particular place in time, and others which keep the momentum of the aspiration going, stimulating us to continue seeking and searching for further unknowns, but not unknowables. For the mental person, it is simply a will to open oneself to fulfill man's purpose on earth—to evolve. The will to believe and then to do the work inherent with all its risks, its struggles, its failures, as well as its bliss and beauty. And in this work one begins to understand little by little that the meaning of life is being fulfilled by the very search for such meaning. As one journeys on he comes to a plateau in the evolutionary process and views the horizon which presents higher and higher plateaus casting shadows in one direction and light in another direction.

How is one to go on and on? Cannot we rest and remain where we are? The dark discouragement that one may encounter for a moment is suddenly emblazoned by the light, the joy and the love of the Mother—and with her aid and sustenance we are able to cast aside our blinders which cause the shadows, and then view the horizon in all its vastness, in the broadest and most glorious way. The Force is then in the inspiration of the Mother—the Shakti Force in each of us—and her perfection and beauty.

Center News

Sri Aurobindo Study Circle, Tucson, Ariz.

Meets every Sunday evening. We are reading *The Synthesis of Yoga*, and taking passages from Savitri for a meditation focus each week. Our group is small at present; anyone in the area who is interested is very welcome to join. Contact David Hutchinson, 3255 E. Patricia, Tucson, 85716.

A Proposal for the Readers of Collaboration

At the A.U.M. last year we discussed using Collaboration as an expression of the variety of individuals and groups in this country. Towards that goal, I am proposing the following. Below there are three broad topics, ones which hopefully are of interest to some of the readers. Whoever has thoughts on one of these can write to me, putting them in any form you wish (e.g. unconnected ideas, an off-the-cuff paragraph, a finished piece). I will collect them, edit and arrange as necessary, and send them on to Collaboration. In this way your ideas and perceptions can be expressed in Collaboration without you needing to write a lengthy article, or labor at the mechanics of writing. If you are part of a group, perhaps it could brainstorm for one meeting and send the results. Indicate whether your writing is a fixed piece or if paraphrasing/re-writing is acceptable (in the latter case I would correspond with you for approval of the altered form before submitting), and whether your name may be used in connection with it. The deadline for these will be three weeks prior to the Collaboration deadline, to allow time for editing and correspondence. If the replies on a topic are insufficient to warrant sending in to Collaboration, they will be held—but not forgotten!—and perhaps used later. If you have any ideas for future topics, they will also be greatly appreciated.

Topics:

1. What aspect of Sri Aurobindo or the Mother's path/vision/philosophy has struck you as different from other paths you know of or have tried? What is unique to the Integral Yoga, in terms of purpose, experience, working, expressing? Has anything struck you as the "essence" of this path which separates it from others?

2. How is a collective yoga done? What does it mean to collaborate in a spiritual effort? Are there processes your group has discovered which naturally arise, or are useful, or you have borrowed from elsewhere? Does a collective spiritual process differ from mundane groups or organizations? What is the relation between a formed collectivity and the individual member? What responsibilities/functions/relationships exist?

3. How easy or difficult has it been to integrate your practice of yoga into your daily cultural life? Are there cultural hindrances or aids you have encountered in our modern Western world? Has your relationship/interaction with our cultural life changed since you began this path? (Culture includes literature, cinema, theater, television, music journals, graphic arts, etc.) If you work in a creative or expressive field, has there been any

difference in your expression—or your inspiration—since you began this path.

Send replies to:

David Hutchinson
3255 E. Patricia
Tucson, AZ 85716tli

East West Cultural Center Los Angeles, CA

On January 12, the East West Cultural Center hosted the Second International Conference of Thinkers. The speakers presented their ideas on: *The Next Millenium: The Blending of Visions, East and West*. V. Madhusudan Reddy, Robert Gerard, and Brother John shared their thoughts on how a blending of eastern and western spiritual traditions contributes to the creation of a new consciousness. All of the lecturers recognize the need for an evolutionary step in consciousness and feel that it is essential to the survival of the human race.

The conference was opened by Dr. Lloyd Fellows, president of the Institute of Integral Psychology, which co-sponsored the program. Dr. Reddy spoke on "The Mind Crisis in Evolution." As a devotee of Sri Aurobindo he presented the idea that "Only a discovery of man's inner and psychic potentialities can save the race and the planet from total annihilation." He feels that our crisis is not only one of values, but a "crisis resulting out of the drying up of the streams of mental resourcefulness." Dr. Reddy offered Sri Aurobindo's yoga of transformation of consciousness and life as the way out of our world problems.

Robert Gerard's topic was "Project 2000: Towards an Integral Psychology for the 21st Century. Blending Eastern Esoteric Tradition with Western Scientific Psychology." He concentrated on the means of working on the individual in organized ways, through the use of mantras, opening the chakras, understanding energies and their workings. He spoke about the need for giving and receiving love, and the pursuit of higher consciousness.

Brother John's informal talk was "The Marriage of East and West, The Pilgrim Seeker Across Various Religious Traditions." As a truth seeker and world traveller he has spent his life seeking the essence of religious thought and practice in the traditions of Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Hinduism. He now lives in Ojai, California, and practices the rituals of the Native American Peoples.

Dr. Reddy concluded the conference with a summary of the ideas which had been presented and left us with these inspirational words: "The arch enemy of our golden destiny is within us. The adversary feeds itself on man's unwillingness to tune in with the will of the Divine. It is time that we replace ego with the will of the Supreme. We need to discover a new passage to the heavens within. We need to go the way of the divinization of both man and society. We need to blend the visions of the East and the West to make the planet a habitation for the Lord."

A question and answer period followed the presentations. Many of those present had ideas on the blending of East-West visions and the development of a new consciousness. Through this discussion a feeling of our inner-relationship to each other developed and we lingered on and on, absorbing the sweet light of the spirit.

Fredric Ross

Sri Aurobindo's Action Center (Association for Auroville)

The Sri Aurobindo's Action Center is dedicated to the evolutionary vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Guided by the teacher within, members of the center attempt to manifest in all aspects of life the teachings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. The center is involved with people on many paths—people oriented spiritually, ecologically, globally—in Colorado and throughout the world. The center has been working with the Prison-Ashram Project for many years and provides free books to prisoners upon request.

Since its inception in 1976, the center has maintained a strong relationship with Auroville. This has involved providing consistent financial support to Auroville as well as serving as a link between Auroville and those interested in learning more about the broad spectrum of life in Auroville. Up-to-date information on Auroville is available for those planning to visit or settle there. A slide presentation on Auroville is available to interested groups, as well as a recent video film, "Auroville Passage."

On Wednesday evenings, at 7:30 p.m., there is a reading from the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, followed by tapes and meditation. A comprehensive library is available and a quiet room for reading and meditation. Books by and about Sri Aurobindo and the Mother are available for purchase.

Sri Aurobindo's Action Center
P.O. Box 1977
Boulder, CO 80306
Telephone: 303-499-3313

Sri Aurobindo Center High Falls, NY

The board met on January 25th and 26th to work on the 1986 A.U.M., funding of Collaboration, and to review our book distribution and incense sales.

On Sunday, February 23rd at 3 p.m. the Sri Aurobindo study group met. The focus was "self-perfection" and special messages were read in honor of Mother's birthday.

The center celebrated Auroville's birthday on February 28th with a screening of a videotape from Auroville.

Sri Aurobindo Center High Falls, NY

The board met on January 25th and 26th to work on the 1986 A.U.M. funding of Collaboration, and to review our book distribution and incense sales.

On Sunday, February 23rd at 3 p.m. the Sri Aurobindo study group met. The focus was "self-perfection" and special messages were read in honor of Mother's birthday.

The center celebrated Auroville's birthday on February 28th with a screening of a videotape from Auroville.

Auroville International USA

AVI-USA continues to refine the consolidation of its administrative phase. We have made further efforts to centralize. By

relocating roles and functions we have facilitated a more effective group action. The secretary, Theresa Boschert, has exchanged work with the treasurer, Don Cox. Navaja Llope has moved to Sacramento and is the new coordinator as Mary Alexander has other work.

Mahasaraswati has been invoked to preside over our growing organization as we increase the stable base from which to enter a focussed and creative fund-raising effort. A dynamic, in-depth exploration to fulfill our own self-development as well as realize America's leading role in redirecting the planet. Contacts with West Coast foundations are being made to link up with specific needs in the US and Auroville.

The travel network creates a solid one-to-one contact for communication and harmonization, not only between the Ashram and Auroville, but also between America and India. Theresa, Dian and June have all returned recently from such forging trips. This is something we are also developing within the U.S. with the working groups. These provide people direct and personal involvement in the nuts and bolts of development to express themselves in something concrete in their own areas of interest and expertise. People on both coasts are developing links for the teacher exchange project (a two year program in AV whereby experienced qualified teachers from America would assess and implement a high school plan), ARC and the video taping service so appreciated by Joster of Auro Video. The AVI office coordinates these and other growing activities.

AVI USA
P.O. Box 162489
Sacramento, CA 95816
(916) 452-4013

Sri Aurobindo Center Boston

A new Sri Aurobindo center has opened in Boston. It is run by Eugene "Micky" Finn, Mary "Angel" Hall, and John Schlorholtz. We have a library of works by and about Sri Aurobindo and The Mother. We also carry a good selection of books for sale and a growing inventory of incense (Mother's Fragrance and Ashram incense), handmade, marbled stationery and marbled silks. Please contact us about study/meditation meetings and about times that you can drop in. We do hope people will use this space to meet each other and to read. You can contact us at:

The Sri Aurobindo Center of Boston
c/o John Schlorholtz
72 1/2 Inman Street
Cambridge, Mass. 02139
Phone: (617) 354-4237; (617) 262-6390

M.P. Pandit sent us the following blessing from The Mother: *Forget your difficulties. Think only of being a more and more perfect instrument of the Divine to do His work and the Divine will conquer all your difficulties and transform you.*

Willow Gold-Global View

Willow Gold, Global View, and the new Global Views, emerge from their usual Winter withdrawals which nurture well

the energetic thrusts into Spring and Summer. With the planting and growth of the huge organic garden will come also the flowering of the new ethnic festivals at Willow Gold Farm throughout the height of the tourist season. Wisconsin's Department of tourism will help in promoting the series of celebrations as co-sponsored by Global Views and various international studies programs at the University of Wisconsin. May 24-26 "Indonesian Excellence" Festival will begin the season with dance, music, puppetry, slide shows, crafts, textiles and snacks from Indonesia.

The "Festival of India," July 19-20, will include Bharat Natyam dancing and Karnatic music and singing. Gordon Korstange will play the flute and read poetry, and Jeanne will tell Indian tales well known for centuries. Many audio-visuals, exhibits, art and craft displays, snacks and travel information will fill out this educational fest for the tourists in the area. There will be a special display on Auroville and the Ashram, with books and crafts for sale. In addition to the barn, a hoped-for tent from India will add outdoor space, away from sun and rain. University of Wisconsin's South Asian Studies is co-sponsoring the event and will assist in entertainment, exhibits and food, but more help is needed from interested people in the area. All are welcome. (If anyone can help, please call 608-583-5311, or write Global Views, Rt. 3, Spring Green, Wisc. 53588.)

Global planned festivals includes "A celebration of Thailand," August 9-10, "Our Global Family Festival," August 30-31 and September 1, and "Himalayan Holiday" Festival, October 11-12, all similar in format to the earlier ones. These are planned as educational, non-profit, public events; only minimal donations will be needed to cover expenses.

Experience has shown that those who find their way to Willow Gold are usually very interested in learning about other peoples and cultures. The shop, Global View, also looks forward to its sixth year of being, and its second year of some profitability.

Another new venture is the taking of tour groups to Asia. Marion and Duane Nelson have just finished a successful educational and travel experience with 15 people from around the U.S., journeying to visit artisans and small craft producers in the Eastern Himalayas and Nepal. (No first class hotels and luxury transport, but walking in villages and visiting in crafts-peoples' homes, seeing cultural shows and eating ethnic food!) The next Himalayan craft trip is planned for November of '86 and will offer an additional study of Buddhist culture. (Brochure available.) Future tours are being planned to Thailand, Indonesia and of course South India.

A last bit of news is that the Human Relations Dept. of Madison's School System has taken an interest in Global Views' wide range of live slide presentations which can be organized for school students. They have just printed a brochure about them and sent it out to all their schools with a cover letter recommending Global Views. This can be a good chance to introduce Auroville to students via the audio-visuals on India.

All in all, Willow Gold looks forward to a summer of splendor—a green and growing wild Wisconsin, full of tourists and gardens, flowers and vegetables, horses racing across the hills, children laughing and playing outside at last, picnics, parties, meditations and celebrations of new energies and projects.

All USA Meeting

The All USA Meeting is a two day experience which brings together people in the Yoga from all over the U.S. These people may have lived and worked in the Ashram or Auroville for any number of years or months. They may be an integral part of one of the Centers in California, Florida, Wisconsin, or New York. They are individuals who form study groups, host lecturers from the Pondicherry Ashram, or support the Ashram, Auroville, and the Matrimandir. In all cases there is one central experience which brings people together for an A.U.M., Sri Aurobindo and Mother's Yoga.

Last year at Merriam Hill Center all of those present had the experience of a closing circle which took us from being a reunion of old friends and a meeting of new acquaintances, into a larger being. As we stood together in Mother's grace, with the spirit of Sri Aurobindo's consciousness filling our hearts, we realised that as one body we are a conscious force in the U.S. We know that by gathering together we can create an instrument for the work. As Mother so clearly states for all of us in her *Prayer of the Cells in the Body*:

Now that, by the effect of the Grace, we are slowly emerging out of inconscience and waking to a conscious life, an ardent prayer rises in us for more light, more consciousness.

"O Supreme Lord of the universe, we implore Thee, give us the strength and the beauty needed to be Thy divine instruments upon earth."

This is not to say that we are a gathered body of consciousness but rather a number of individuals who are aspiring to be a conscious force in the U.S. We have our personal relationships to each other and we have the Yoga as a work to be done. Being together renews old bonds, forms new ones, and creates a network of people who can work with each other in the Yoga.

This year we have the chance to celebrate Sri Aurobindo's birthday together. In the spirit of that, we ask everyone who wishes to attend to make plans to arrive by 6 p.m. on August 15. We'll have time to settle in and at 8:30 p.m. we'll open the gathering with chanting and meditation. It is our hope that from that point onward we will unfold through reflection, discussion, and personal sharing the new body of a group in the U.S. which aspires to be an instrument for the Yoga. Thus A.U.M. is an experience of who we are, what each of us is doing, how we are connected to each other, and a search for how we can work together towards the realisation of the "new creation."

This year we hope that each center, study group, and organization will provide a written report of their activities so that we can get an overview of the work now being done throughout the country. We plan to spend most of our "working time" in interest groups on such topics as communication, education, inner networking, fundraising, etc. Some of these groups have been functioning since the last A.U.M. This meeting will allow them to touch base and continue the work. It will also provide a forum for new topics and new groups. Please help this process begin by filling out the registration form in this issue so that we can come to the meeting ready to work. There is much to do in a short time.

The closing circle will take place around noon on Sunday. We ask that everyone who attends A.U.M. be there for this final moment. It is a time when we speak of our commitment to each other, to the Yoga, and to the soul of the group. We hope to feel your energy joined in that circle.

A.U.M. August 15-17, 1986

Travel: The meeting begins at 6 p.m. on Friday and ends at 6 p.m. on Sunday. Please make your travel arrangements to coincide with these times. Trains run from Logan airport to North Station in Boston where you can get another train to Fitchburg MA. Friday timings for trains to Fitchburg are as follows:

Leave North Station	8:50 a.m.	Arrive Fitchburg	10:14
	11:20		12:49
	1:20 p.m.		2:52
	4:50		6:24
	5:20		6:45
	6:15		7:48
	8:45		10:14

Buses from Logan to Fitchburg Monday through Sunday

	Leaves Logan	Arrives Fitchburg	Fitchburg	Logan
	11:00 a.m.	12:50	8:30	9:55
	3:30	5:35	1:10	2:50
	6:20	8:30	4:50	6:25
Sunday trains from	Fitchburg	to	North Station	
	7:50			9:20
	11:30			12:55
	2:15			3:45
	5:25			6:55

We would appreciate your cooperation in using public transportation to Fitchburg. If your schedule is such that you require special arrangements, let us know as soon as possible. We'll do all that we can to facilitate your attendance at the meeting. As the sponsoring group, we request that you understand our wish to be fully participating in the opening and closing sessions.

Trains run every 10 minutes from 5:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. from Logan Airport into Boston. Take the Blue Line to State St. and change to Orange Line for North Station. Travel time is about 30 minutes maximum to North Station.

Costs: Merriam Hill and Another Place are being used as they were last year. All meals will be eaten at Another Place and meetings will be held in Merriam Hill Center. Costs have gone up for both of these places. Room and board for two days will be \$50 per person with children under 12 as guests. In order to reserve the centers we need to make a deposit and thus request that you enclose \$25 for each person registering. Camping at Another Place is available but the cost is the same for each adult.

Agenda: Last year we organized into small groups which took up the practical work. Below is a list of those groups and a brief description of the issues they raised. We can build on this. Please check the group or groups you would like to participate in. List issues or ideas which you want the group to discuss. If you have any new ideas for the agenda, please write them in.

Education Exchange: Four areas of work to improve education in Auroville: teacher/expert exchange, student exchange, contributing materials and organizing scholarship fund.

Inner Networking: "Let us all enter the inner Matrimandir and center on the crystal as a focus for the Light of the Truth Consciousness. Let us join on Sundays at noon, Central Time, U. S."

Group Process: People who want to make a commitment to learn group processing and facilitating.

Financial Group: Spiritual Credit Union and Investment.

Distribution of Books and Items from Ashram and Auroville: Advertising and marketing were discussed.

Health: A center for natural health care.

Matrimandir: Encourage the monthly pledge and facilitate fundraising.

The Agenda: Publication and promotion of *On The Way to Supermanhood*.

Communication: Creating a network of mailing lists and up to date information on what is happening in the US.

Somebody asked me. -

In the work of Transformation,
who is the slowest to do his part,
man or God?"

I replied, -

man finds that God is too slow
to answer his prayers.

God finds that man is too slow
to receive His influence.

But for the Truth-Consciousness
all is going on as it ought to go.

Somebody asked me, —

"In the work of Transformation, who is the slowest to do
his part, man or God?"

I replied, —

Man finds that God is too slow to answer his prayers.

God finds that man is too slow to receive His influence.

But for the Truth-Consciousness all is going on as it ought
to go.