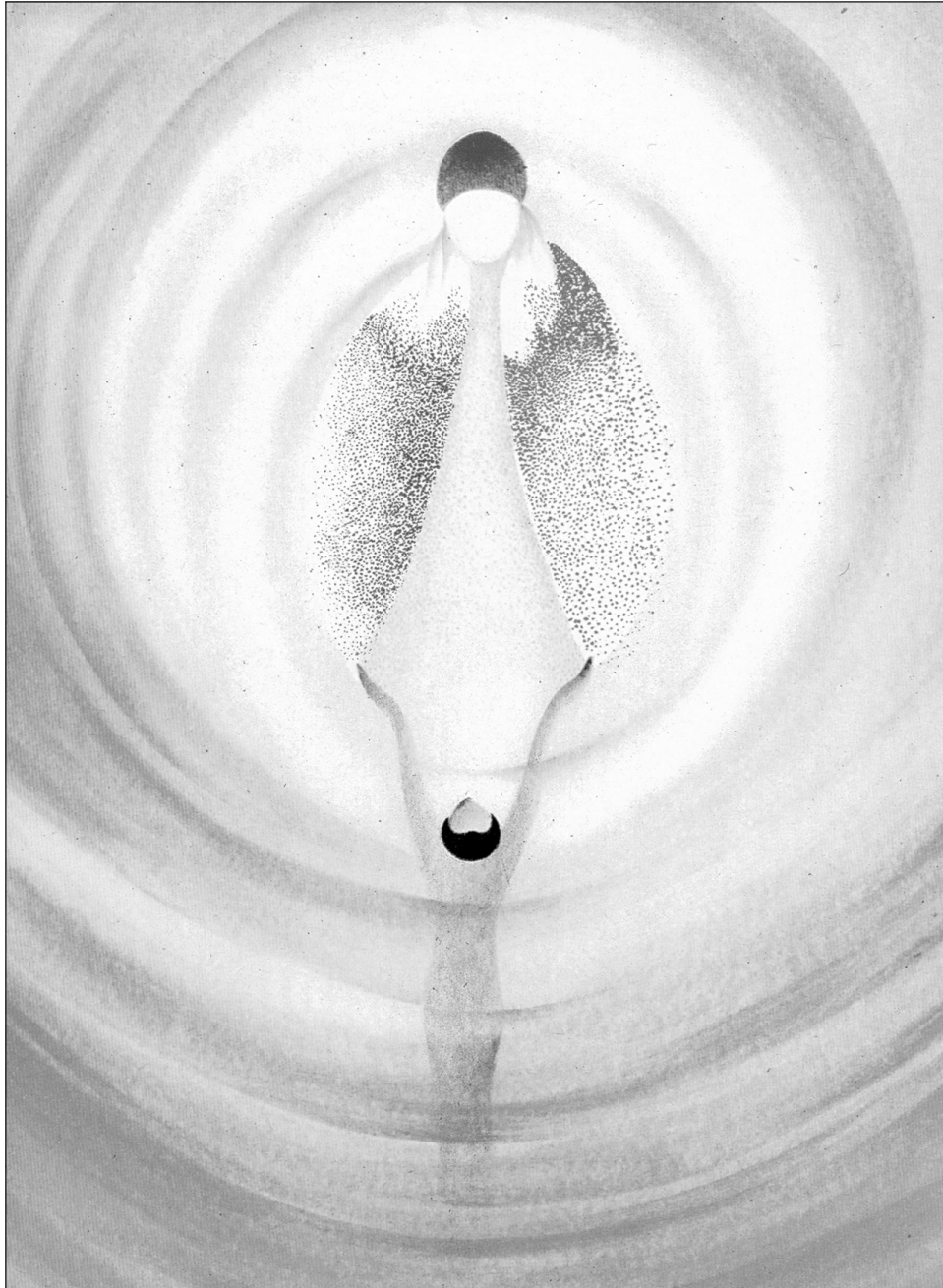


# Collaboration

Winter 2011

Journal of the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother

Vol. 36, No. 3



Mild mukti by August Timmermans • A manifestation sheathed in Light by Rick Lipschutz  
Current Affairs • AV Almanac • Source Material • Book Reviews • Poetry • Apropos



## About the cover

This grayscale copy of a watercolor painting by the late Usha R. Patel, an Ashram painter, is from her book *Love Treasures*, paintings based on Sri Aurobindo's book *The Mother*, published by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1985. The passage inspiring it is: "In Yoga also it is the Divine who is the Sadhaka and the Sadhana; it is his Shakti with her light, power, knowledge, consciousness, Ananda, acting upon the Adhara and, when it is opened to her, pouring into it with these divine forces that makes the Sadhana possible."

## The authors

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## From the office of Collaboration

In this issue we feature in our Chronicles section an essay by August Timmermans, a Dutch disciple who has been living in Thailand for the past 23 years. The article describes some of his psychic and spiritual experiences in the Integral Yoga, and their connection with the opening of the chakras, the centers of subtle energy in the body. As he notes, chakras are seldom discussed in this Yoga, though they are mentioned by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, and seem to be importantly related to spiritual experiences. His first experience of the Self occurred spontaneously while he was a young boy and knew nothing about yoga, and though passing, it stimulated a curiosity as to its meaning. He later discovered this when reading books by Ramana Maharishi and Satprem which led him to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Other experiences of the opening of heart chakra followed, leading to experiences of the psychic being. These kinds of experiences of the higher and inner being stood in contrast to the continuing difficulties in his outer being, but nevertheless they continued and their influences gradually grew stronger, diminishing the tensions of the surface consciousness, and extending their control over the nature. His experiences suggest the possibilities and natural course of the Integral Yoga, and inspire us all to persist in our spiritual aspirations.

In Essays, we feature an in-depth article by Rick Lipschutz, which is part of a book that he is working on pertaining to the supramental consciousness and transformation that Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have brought into the earth manifestation. The article is fascinating on a number of levels. Perhaps most importantly, it brings home to us the incredible audacity and far-reaching aims and accomplishments of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. We all understand this at some intellectual level, but this article helps us to feel it in our bones. Next, it helps us to understand better the crucial differences between the overmind and the supermind, and thus the need for the supramental realization. It also helps us to better appreciate the importance and nature of the intervening levels of consciousness between our normal mental consciousness and these higher ranges. Rick takes us through the process of Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's realization and integration of these supramental heights of consciousness with the earth nature leading to its eventual transformation. We also learn about the Tamil saint Swami Ramalingam (1823-1874), who lived not far from Pondicherry and who also independently had scaled the peaks of the supramental consciousness, and is believed to have transformed his body. His extensive poetical writings have parallels to Sri Aurobindo's writings on the Supermind. Rick also helps us to better understand the significance of the Mind of Light, which Sri Aurobindo wrote about in his last year, and according to the Mother, transferred to her when he left his body. Finally, we get a better appreciation of the continuing work of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on the transformation of the earth consciousness, and its effects in many fields.

Rounding out these main articles, we have in Source Material writings by Sri Aurobindo and talks by the Mother about the Supermind and the Mind of Light. In Current Affairs we have an article by Dakshina Vanzetti about the process of organizing the AUM 2011 conference, which is of general interest, but will also be helpful to future organizers of such conferences. We also have updates on a variety of different centers and study circles, including an interesting center in South America, and a new initiative for a living community in Washington State. In AV Almanac we have an interesting article on the various activities of the Auroville Village Action Group, which previously had been headed by the late Bhavana Dee, and is currently in need of funding. In Book Reviews we have reviews of three new edited books by Anurag Banerjee of the Overman Foundation. We conclude with a selection of spiritual poems in the Poetry Room, and inspiring quotations in Apropos.

### The poets

**Elizabeth Barrett Browning** (1806–1861) was one of the most prominent poets of the Victorian era, very popular both in England and America.

**William Cowper** (1731–1800) was one of the most popular poets of his time, in many ways a forerunner of the Romantic poets.

**Edmond Gore Alexander Holmes** (1850–1936) was an educationalist, writer and poet who was born at Moycashel, co. Westmeath, Ireland.

**Christina Rossetti** (1830–1894) was a leading 19th century English woman poet; she wrote a variety of romantic, devotional, and children's poems.

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**Submissions:** Collaboration welcomes writing, photos, and artwork relevant to the Integral Yoga and spirituality. Submit material by email to: editor@collaboration.org; or by post to Collaboration, 2715 W. Kettleman Lane, Suite 203-174, Lodi, CA 95242 USA. Collaboration cannot be held responsible for loss or damage of unsolicited material. Letters and articles may be edited for style and space considerations.

**About SAA:** The Sri Aurobindo Association distributes information about Sri Aurobindo, the Mother, and Auroville, and supports projects related to the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Auroville, and Integral Yoga activities in America. Current officers: Lynda Lester, president; John Robert Cornell, secretary; Kalpana Patel, treasurer. Collaboration work volunteers include Vishnu Eschner and Lucie Seidlitz.

**Contributions:** Donations for the work of the SAA, Auroville, and the Sri Aurobindo Ashram may be sent to SAA. Donations are tax exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.



## Current affairs

### AUM: from an organizer's perspective

by Dakshina Vanzetti

Well, to back-up a bit... It was 18 months earlier and the monthly retreats at Lodi Ashram had been going along for 12 years; the routine was smooth, a children's program was just being added, the format allowed for a variety of activities throughout the day. But there was a bit of a feeling of cruising along on auto-pilot and the social element was happily thriving (perhaps at the expense of the spiritual?), and so a question was posed at the 12 year anniversary: "Can we make a better use of this monthly opportunity for our individual and collective spiritual progress?" Out of that question, a new inspiration seemed to rise and a collective: "Yes! Let's try." And out of that assent, a proposal was made to take up the theme of "Gnostic Collectivity" as an ideal to explore and aspire for. So we embarked upon the journey and, soon discovering that a month or two of this focus was not going to be enough, extended the theme for a year.

At the end of the year, a group feeling emerged that it would be great to have a collective project of some kind, a practical way to try and experience something of what we had been studying from different angles all this while—perhaps a quilt that we would all work on from month to month? ...a garden project? ...renovating the children's play area? ...well, what about hosting the annual AUM conference? It was 18 months away; there would be ample opportunity for many forms of collective participation; it would be sufficiently challenging and would benefit not just our retreat group, but be of service to the wider community of Sri Aurobindo devotees in North America.

And so Sri Aurobindo Sadhana Peetham, along with the retreat group, took up the "honourous" (combining honorable with onerous) task of hosting and organizing AUM 2011 and formed a planning committee including anyone willing to collaborate for the long haul. We 10–12 people that showed up each month came into it with our aspirations high—after all, this would be the chance to put our Gnostic collectivity study into practice. We would all aspire sincerely for Divine's guidance in the matter at hand and, centered in the psychic consciousness, the vision of what should be done would, in that state of oneness, be perceived by all in a smooth flow of Divine Grace and Harmony... well, not quite. We all tried sincerely to perceive that higher Vision, and yet time after time emerged with a variety of visions, sometimes complementary, but often times quite in opposition to each other. (In fact the discussion on the conference theme alone took over 3 months and in the end we had to settle for a "working title" (A



Attendees at AUM 2011 in Lodi, CA (Photo courtesy Chetena Deorah)

New World is Born) so that we could move ahead as the name of the theme could not be agreed upon!)

Not to say that we didn't agree on anything. Actually, there were several aspects of the conference that we all shared hopes for: It should be about a change of consciousness; there should be more interactive and audience participatory formats; there should be activities for all the parts of the being, not just the mind; there should be continuity between the presentations and activities and coherence with the theme; the presenters should be well-steeped in the subject matter due to their ongoing work and interest (so that the presentations would be less theoretical, and more based on experience and deeply held interest. Despite our sometimes frustrating and cumbersome process, which many times looked like the furthest thing from a "Gnostic" collective consciousness, we persevered and struggled through the months and sometimes even experienced beautiful moments of collective breakthroughs.

In the weeks leading up to the conference, just as the tasks seemed to multiply and the enormity of the on-the-ground logistics during the days of the conference started to press upon us, more and more helping hands and offers from volunteers started to appear, though not lessening the need to stretch our limits to the almost breaking point. The feeling of the AUM as a collective enterprise began to gain momentum, snowballing full speed right up to the opening day, up to the opening moment... and then, the wonderful feeling of the AUM taking on a life of its own, out of that organizational structure we had so long labored upon, emerging into a beautiful collective reality all its own, made manifold by all those who attended and participated.

And so, it feels to me as though, despite our shortcomings and oh so human limitations, the Divine did take up our original aspirations, and Grace poured down and streamed through each day, bathing all of us—organizers, presenters, volunteers, and attendees alike, from the toddlers to the elders—in that Supramental Golden Light of the New World, planting in its wake many seeds of future realizations to come.



## Matagiri building plans

by Julian Lines

We now have the architectural plans and permission from the Town of Woodstock to build new infrastructure so we can:

- host Darshan observances in a large activity room and a communal dining area with guest rooms for speakers and visitors
- host workshops on Integral Psychology, Awareness Through the Body and other practices inspired by Sri Aurobindo and Mother's vision
- offer regular yoga classes and evening study groups
- teach raw, vegan, vegetarian and ayurvedic food preparation along with other healthy lifestyle classes
- provide space for individuals, couples and families to come on retreat and make use of the meditation room, library and the beautiful environment of the Catskills
- present talks and videos about Auroville, its mission and projects to better raise awareness and support for this remarkable experiment in human unity

We have identified an excellent innovative building system which will allow us to create a low carbon footprint construction where heating and cooling energy expenditures will be kept to a minimum. The building itself will be part of our educational outreach to the local community and beyond.

Hand in hand with this new structure will be a new meditation room and the repair and maintenance of the existing buildings on the property to preserve Matagiri's special atmosphere.

What is critical now is receiving donations of any amount in the form of cash, stocks, real property or legacies so we can start building. If you or someone you know is sympathetic to our goals, please let us know. Please lend us your helping hand and heart to help us move forward to turn our dreams into reality.

For further information, contact Matagiri, 1218 Wittenberg Road, Mount Tremper NY 12457; [www.matagiri.org](http://www.matagiri.org); email: [info@matagiri.org](mailto:info@matagiri.org).

## SkyRoot: A budding integral community

by Karen Litfin

*If we had to wait for the mass of humanity to reach a state of harmony, unity and aspiration strong enough to bring down the Light and change the material conditions and the movement of Nature, there would be little hope. But there is a possibility that an individual or a small group or limited number may achieve the descent. It is not quantity or extension that matters. One*



Site of SkyRoot, on Whidbey Island, WA. (Photo courtesy Karen Litfin)

*drop of the Divine Consciousness entering into the consciousness of the earth could change everything here.*

~The Mother, 5 May 1929

The time is ripe to germinate new seeds within the husk of the old. As prevailing structures collapse under their own weight, people the world over are crafting new ways of living with one another on our home planet. Some of these experiments are primarily ecological, some social, some spiritual. A few, most notably Auroville, encompass an integral vision of inner and outer transformation.

In 2007, I set out on a global journey to write a book about these harbingers of a new world—my first nonacademic book. My goal was to share my gleanings with ordinary people who want the information about how to transform their lives and the inspiration to actually do so. That book is now coming to fruition.

Along the way, I took a huge leap of faith in purchasing an exquisite 20-acre farm on Whidbey Island in order to help germinate one more seed for a viable human future. The land—mostly rolling pasture, with a view of the Olympics—abounds with wildlife yet is accessible to Seattle by mass transit.

We envision a multi-generational co-housing community dedicated to an integral spirituality, with an emphasis on deep solidarity, organic farming, simple living, and a spirit of adventure. We are seeking seven co-owners to build seven duplexes, with the accessory dwellings serving as low-income housing for young farmers who embrace our integral vision. SkyRoot, or whatever name our members eventually decide upon, will be a field of work in service to the evolutionary unfoldment of the Earth consciousness.

If the SkyRoot vision resonates with your own, please contact me at [litfin@whidbey.net](mailto:litfin@whidbey.net). You can learn more about me at <http://faculty.washington.edu/litfin>. And if you're curious about my forthcoming book, *Being the Change: Ecovillage Experiments Around the World*, you can watch this video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MtNjZaXDQqM>



## News from East-West Cultural Center—The Sri Aurobindo Center of Los Angeles

by Anie Nunnally

The center continues with its study programs and the observance of the four major darshans each year. We also hold special meditations on the Mahasamadhi days of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. In our satsang gatherings, each Saturday from 4-6 p.m., we are currently studying *Essays on the Gita* and after the beginning of the year we will begin, each Wednesday evening, the reading and study of *Savitri* followed by group meditation.

Our membership continues to increase and Darshan days are well attended with people coming from many other counties in the Los Angeles area. Sri Aurobindo's birthday darshan brought close to 40 people. On that day we also had very special music offered by Indian classical singer Meera Srinivasan.

This year brought many visitors and presentations:

- In February we hosted Lynda Lester who gave a power point presentation on the Integral Yoga
- In March we had visits from Angelo and Dakshina from Sri Aurobindo Sadhana Peetham (SASP) in Lodi, CA
- In May we had a book signing and presentation by well known author Philip Goldberg, featuring his new book "The American Veda"
- In June some of us attended the AUM Conference in Lodi, CA, beautifully hosted by the SASP
- In July, coming to us from that conference, we hosted some of those speakers who made presentations here. They were Aster Patel (accompanied by her neice Rohini Verma), Narad Eggenberger and Loretta Shartsis.
- On a daily basis there are visitors for meditation, book sales and just sometimes people want to come and be quiet in our magnificent garden. We continue our renovation and beautification of the gardens and the interior of the house.
- Other new programs initiated recently are an OM choir that meets each Saturday from 3:30-4:00 and a Cultural Series once a month for showing DVD films of classical movies, filmed stage productions, classical music performances, choral works, ballet and films on science.

Dr. Tyberg's (Jyotipriya's) Sanskrit books continue to sell and we have many calls for Sanskrit classes. We are honored to carry on the mission she had set out for the center for the work of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother in the USA.

For further information, contact the East West Cultural Center—The Sri Aurobindo Center of Los Angeles, 12329 Marshall Street, Culver City, CA 90230; ph. 310-390-9083; or visit ewcc@sriarobindocenter-la.org or www.sriarobindocenter-la.org.

## News from the Institute for Wholistic Education

by Santosh Krinsky

We continue the daily systematic review online of *The Life Divine* at <http://sriarobindostudies.wordpress.com>. We are deep into Book 2 and all the posts are available for anyone wishing to start from the beginning. We have been also working our way through *The Synthesis of Yoga* at [www.twitter.com/santoshkl](http://www.twitter.com/santoshkl) on a daily basis.

We continue our program of offering free donated books to any Sri Aurobindo Center who needs or can use them. Currently we have various volumes of Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's writings available for just the cost of postage. We also have a free copy of the Sri Aurobindo Selected Writings CD Rom available for centers who need one on a postage only basis.

We have developed the M.P. Pandit website [www.mppandit.com](http://www.mppandit.com) to include a number of audio lectures including a series on *Savitri* and a series on *The Synthesis of Yoga*, as well as a number of chants by M.P. Pandit and singing by Vasanti.

Most of Sri Aurobindo's major works are now available for Amazon Kindle readers. One need not own a Kindle to be able to access these books. Free Kindle reader software is available for PC, IPAD, Android, Blackberry and numerous other formats. Go to [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) to the Kindle Store to download the free e-readers and search for books.

For further information, contact the Institute for Wholistic Education, 3425 Patzke Lane, Racine, WI 53405; ph. 262-619-1798; or visit its websites: [www.wholisticinstitute.org](http://www.wholisticinstitute.org) and [institute@infobuddhism.com](mailto:institute@infobuddhism.com).

## The Auromira Center in Colombia

by Maria Alicia Angel

Auromira ([www.fundacionauromira.org](http://www.fundacionauromira.org)) is located three hours away from Bogota (Colombia, South America), at the foothills of the Flora and Fauna Sanctuary of Iguaque and on the outskirts of the small village of Villa de Leyva.

Auromira has a meditation hall (Sri Aurobindo's relics were enshrined in 2008 by Tara Jauhar), a multi-purpose asanas/library/conference room, a flower house for silent reading or meditation, a hammock room for reading and videos, an art house, a therapy room, kitchen/dining hall and rooms for 20 guests. It is immersed in gardens, greenery and nature and has an organic vegetable garden, a cat, some chickens and two cows. Guests are coming for few days or weeks and at present there are three sadhaks permanently living at Auromira.

There are four hours of daily practice open to the community:



- 6:00 a.m. Collective Meditation
- 6:45 a.m. Physical consciousness (Yoga asanas, pranayama, relaxation)
- 5:00 p.m. Reading, Mantras or Video
- 6:00 p.m. Collective Meditation.

Auromira has several activities for visitors to perform as voluntary Karma Yoga, and holds a 15 day retreat every year with Swami Brahmddev as well as other workshops on Integral Yoga. Auromira translates and publishes Spanish editions of the writings on the Integral Yoga of Mother and Sri Aurobindo, and of Swami Brahmddev (see our web page). Volunteers can apply for internship periods of up to 15 days. If accepted, they are expected to participate in the 4 hours of daily practice and take up 6 hours of karma yoga per day. Books from SABDA and Auroshikha incense and essential oils are sold. For further information, contact Maria at Auromira (fundacionauromira@hotmail.com).

## Briefs

**The Seattle study circle** has been meeting since the early 1980s. It was formally founded in July of 1996 for the purpose of studying the works of Sri Aurobindo and Mother, encouraging members in their sadhana, and meeting regularly for meditation. Study groups are held on Sunday evenings in Seattle or Lake Forest Park. In addition, there are occasional meetings for special studies, the observance of Darshan days, and retreats. Inquiries and drop in visitors are welcome. Please contact Bill Leon (billleon@geoeducation.org; 206-364-6665 or 206-914-6663) or Morgan Kellock (morgan.kellock@gmail.com; 206-367-6591) to confirm meeting location.

**The Lotus Center** in Enumclaw, WA is undergoing renovation to enable visits here as soon as we can be ready. Intimation will be sent out the moment we have a definite date for that. In the meantime, the library and bookstore are in active service. Loans and purchases of books by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother (including compilations) and M.P. Pandit are available by mail. Inquiries will be gladly answered. For further information, contact Ron Jorgensen at ronald@foxinternet.net; 360-825-3413.

**The Integral Life Center**, founded by Sri M. P. Pandit in 1976 provides weekly study, meditation and hatha yoga classes to the greater Columbia MO community. We are currently studying Sri Aurobindo's *Essays on the Gita*. Hatha yoga classes are offered in various locations in Columbia, including a health center, a university and Shanthi Mandir, a Hindu temple. Visitors are welcome and can contact integrallife1976@yahoo.com or call 573-657-9277.

**AUM 2012** will take place August 9th-12th at the Sirius Community in Amherst, MA. This meeting will focus on the Auroville experience and invites the extended family of those who have visited or are inspired by the vision of Auroville. The meeting is planned in collaboration with Living Routes which has sponsored many student programs in Auroville over the years.

## AV almanac

### Striving for social empowerment

by Carel Thieme

Reprinted from the August 2011 issue of Auroville Today.

For almost 30 years, Auroville Village Action has been working in the surrounding villages, focusing on empowering men and women and on promoting the social, economic, psychological and environmental transformation of the villages.

"Auroville's Village Action (AVAG) works through Self-Help Groups (SHGs)," says Anbu, who, together with Moris, is directing AVAG's activities. "They have become a vital and integral part its work. Our programmes are only effective because of their cooperation." The figures confirm her statement. Since 1995, when the first Women's Self-Help Group was formed, the number of SHGs has expanded steadily. Today, AVAG works with 3,726 women organised in 197 Women SHGs, and with 701 men in 42 Men SHGs. They cover 80 villages and dalit hamlets with a combined population of 90,000 people.

The SHGs are organized into two federations. In 2000, the Women's SHG Federation was formed, followed by a Men's SHG Federation in 2007. "The Federations share responsibility for collective decision-making and give us feedback and suggestions on the planning and implementation of our programmes. We have developed a symbiotic relationship with guidance and advice freely exchanged, even though we maintain a formal oversight over the federations," says Anbu. "Their formation marks a crucial step in handing over responsibility and decision-making to the local beneficiaries of AVAG's programs. The Federations have become another key factor in the successful performance of the programmes of AVAG."

What are these programmes? "We categorise them into four main groups," says Moris. "These are community development, economic development, capacity building and psychosocial services. All programmes correspond to the direct needs of our target population."

#### Community development

"We work on a number of community issues," says Anbu. "One of the most important projects is to bring together women and men and groups from different castes." The purpose is to try and rectify prejudices that are endemic to India, such as fear of Dalits (formerly 'Untouchables') and other 'Scheduled Castes', as well as India's particular forms of gender discrimination. Participants learn to see each other as unique human beings. "These programmes have led members from different groups to form



friendships. Some villages have developed inter-community relationships and groups got inspired by hearing of another group's projects and activities."

Another project is encouraging people to take collective responsibility for improving and maintaining their village infrastructure. AVAG organizes one-day work camps for doing small projects, such as removing trash on the roadside or fencing a children's play area. It also does micro-projects that may take a week to complete. "AVAG's Micro-Project and Work Camp programme has attracted the attention of neighbouring NGOs who want to copy the model," says Anbu.

A third activity is the health, eye, veterinary and awareness camps that are carried out in the villages. AVAG facilitates the contacts with hospitals, NGOs, and government departments who send people to the villages to treat people and conduct awareness camps on social issues.

Lastly, AVAG helps the villages to get access to government resources and schemes, such as the Life Insurance Corporation, scholarship programmes, and toilet and housing schemes.

## Economic development

The economic development programme comprises three components: the Micro-Finance Programme, the Livelihood Training programme and the Social Enterprise Creation. The Livelihood Trainings teach skills in tailoring and embroidery that can be performed in between household duties, providing women—especially those who live in extreme poverty and those who are dalits or widows—with some income.

The Social Enterprise Creation Programme is of a more recent date. Since late 2009, AVAG has been working on creating social enterprises to provide livelihood opportunities to women SHG members and to generate income to support the work of AVAG. Under the slogan 'Affordable Eco technologies for a better future' an EcoLife Store has started, where eco-friendly products can be bought that are suitable for rural communities. The products include CFL bulbs, activated EM, low-cost water filters, different kinds of solar torches and solar lights, crank lights and solar mobile phone chargers. The EcoLife Store is now ready for the next phase: training interested SHG members as retail entrepreneurs to become EcoLife sales representatives.

Eco Femme, another project, focus on menstrual hygiene management, a poorly-addressed area of public health that involves social, cultural, economic, environmental, health and gender issues. "Eco Femme is AVAG's attempt to produce a cloth menstrual pad which is washable, re-usable and thus eco-friendly," explains Kathy Walkling, an AVAG executive. "So far, three prototype pads have been designed which we found to be appealing to the women in our area. The women find the pads attractive and say they generate a feeling of dignity, unlike the old cloth they normally use or the disposable pads which are growing in popularity. They appreciate that there is no waste and understand that such a product can save a lot of money. The



*A section of Self-Help Group members in the Women's Seminar at the Auroville Village Action building, Irumbai.*

appeal and acceptability of this product will now be tested in partnership with NGOs working with rural and urban marginalised women. If the product is found to be acceptable it will have a huge potential impact. Women SHG members will be able to stitch these simple tailored products and in the process generate a sustainable livelihood."

In parallel, AVAG is preparing an educational training programme for NGO staff to expose rural women in India to the topic of menstrual hygiene management. Using stories and group-based activities, this educational package will deeply explore the myths and taboos that result in lifestyle restrictions and feelings of shame and impurity.

## Capacity building

AVAG's Capacity Building Programme aims at expanding the social perspectives and technical abilities of SHG members. "We organise what we call 'mixed-gender exposure trips' in the surrounding regions to foster solidarity and increase awareness of essential issues," says Kathy. "On each of these trips men and women from different villages get a chance to be together for one full day and this experience helps them to understand each other. We also conduct workshops covering subjects such as gender and caste analysis, domestic violence, environmental awareness; and train people to develop leadership skills so that the leadership of each SHG can rotate every two years."

In so-called 'cluster meetings', representatives from 10–15 SHGs meet twice a year to discuss common issues such as roads, transport, water and needs relating to other shared infrastructure. "Cluster meetings are also an opportunity for members to know women from different clubs and to advise and suggest strategies for solving problems that arise within the clubs. These meetings are another opportunity to foster solidarity among women beyond their own club," says Kathy.



## Psychosocial services

According to the report 'Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India – 2008,' the suicide rate in Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry is among the highest in the country. The number of suicides per one lakh population (a population of 100,000), was in 2008 46.9 in Puducherry and 21.7 in Tamil Nadu, against a national average of 10.8. The overall male : female ratio of suicide victims for the year 2008 was 64:36.

"We became aware that in our area, on average 6 to 8 SHG members a year had committed suicide and that around the same number of women had attempted it," says Anbu. "This motivated us to look for ways to offer psychosocial support to the SHG members. We are happy that, as a result of this and other interventions, in 2009 and 2010 there were no suicides among the SHG members."

One of these interventions was the Energy Healing activity. In 2010, two counsellors from the USA, trained in Somatic Experiencing, provided individual sessions and trained interested women. Traumatized women were also offered individual sessions. Also a group from Langara College in Canada offered trainings to staff, Federations and SHG members in Energy Healing. "We find that these trainings in self-healing and stress reduction are a great help in addressing emotional problems," says Anbu. "This, together with the counselling we are offering to individuals who have difficulty in coping with their life situation or who are victims of human rights abuses, has helped to reduce the high prevalence of suicide."

AVAG's counselling work is increasing in importance. "Knowing of the possibility to get counselling, SHG members come to AVAG on their own or are brought here by other members," says Anbu. "Family members and sometimes non-members of the SHGs also utilize our service." Depending upon the case, they are sometimes helped to contact other organizations.

Another intervention is AVAG mediation between disputing parties. "We are called upon to mediate disputes between SHG members, between husband and wife, employer and employee, etc.," says Moris. "In 2010, interestingly three men – two alcoholics – approached us to settle problems with their wives. It shows that AVAG is more and more seen as a neutral organization capable of giving support to people, irrespective of their gender."

Alcoholism is one of the biggest threats to the health of the families and community. It leads to violence, indebtedness, abuse of women and children, stress and trauma. Because of alcoholism, village communities also lose many potential contributors. And in quite a few cases the families lose the bread winners.

"We are discussing this issue extensively with both women and men SHG members as we have been requested to try and find some way to help," says Kathy. "We have made contacts with Alcoholic Anonymous (AA) members and different de-addiction centres. Last year AVAG organized three seminars for men and women SHG members with the support of the de-addiction centre 'Concern,' based in Chennai. The response from the members was overwhelming. Both Federations are now planning to make the reduction of alcohol- abuse a priority for the next year.

AVAG has meanwhile trained 15 members from different SHGs in counselling alcoholics and acting as contact persons between the de-addiction centre in Chennai, AVAG and the village."

## The funding

The most critical challenge AVAG is facing is funding. "We lack sufficient funds. In fact, we are eating into our capital," says Moris. "At the end of March 2009, the institutional funding for our activities ceased and in spite of our efforts we have not been able to find another donor. Funding is now a critical priority, not only to continue our work, but also to be able to expand. We are under pressure to add 30 Women and 20 Men SHG groups, which would mean 800 new beneficiaries. But we don't have the means." One way in which AVAG would be able to enhance its income, he says, is by enlarging its micro-finance corpus fund. Funding may also materialise from the Ministry of Rural Development for the project 'Sustainable Enterprises Development for the Auroville Bioregion.' This project, which aims at providing livelihood and enterprise possibility for the people in the bioregion, would also alleviate some of the financial pressure AVAG has been facing in the last few years. But the approval for this project is still pending.

"We are constrained, but we are confident that the funds will be raised for us to continue our work," says Anbu. "It is important for the villages and it is a necessary component of the work of Auroville. Therefore we trust that people will respond to our call for help."

## Auroville Village Action needs help

*From Auroville Today, August 2011*

The VFAVR, the sister organisation of Auroville International Germany, which has been set-up to help the development of Tamil villages around Auroville, wants a 1 crore [approx. \$195,000] expansion of the microfinance corpus fund used by the Auroville Village Action Group. Can you help?

Donations for the AVAG microfinance corpus expansion can be made either to the Auroville International Centre in your country or to:

Verein zur Förderung der Auroville Region (VFAVR)

Bank für Sozialwirtschaft

International transfers:

Account No IBAN: DE34100205000003289300

Bank ID BIC: BFSWDE33BER

Transfers within Germany:

Account No: 3289300

Bank ID: 10020500

Donations should not be sent to Auroville



# Chronicles

## Mild Mukti

*The effects of the opening of the chakras in the Integral Yoga: A personal journey*

by August Timmermans

[Mukti] Liberation is the first necessity, to live in the peace, silence, purity, freedom of the self. Along with that or afterwards, if one awakens to the cosmic consciousness, then one can be free, yet one with all things.<sup>1</sup> —Sri Aurobindo

One can speak of the chakras only in reference to yoga. In ordinary people the chakras are not open, it is only when they do sadhana that the chakras open. For the chakras are the centres of the inner consciousness and belong originally to the subtle body. So much as is active in ordinary people is very little — for in them it is the outer consciousness that is active.<sup>2</sup> —Sri Aurobindo

The centres of consciousness, the chakras. It is by their opening that the yogic or inner consciousness develops—otherwise you are bound to the ordinary outer consciousness.<sup>3</sup> —Sri Aurobindo

Chakras are rarely mentioned by sadhaks in the Integral Yoga and I assume from the responses from friends on this matter that not many know about chakras, or do not really experience them although they might be open. It is different for those who are involved in the art of subtle healing as they work with the energies of the chakras to stimulate the physical healing process. In my own case, due to the Yoga force or the Mother's force the chakras have been opening up gradually from the time that I began to practice the Integral Yoga, and I am becoming increasingly aware of the positive effects they have on my state of being. The most helpful literature for me in understanding the chakras in the context of the Integral Yoga



Photo courtesy August Timmermans

was Sri Aurobindo's *Letters on Yoga*, and *Conversations with Sri Aurobindo*, by the disciple Pavitra. The latter gives a direct and descriptive picture of Pavitra's efforts in developing his inner consciousness and Sri Aurobindo giving his comments and advice, indicating the importance of the opening of the lotuses.

It is maybe by luck that my experience of Atman, also known as Spirit or true Self, came at a very early age as it would set out my life line later on, and I believe that some of the chakras were partly open then. I was about four years or younger, while my father carried me on his arms at a busy fair I was captivated by a solid woman standing at the entrance of a circus. She sang with a forceful voice the song *Non, je ne regrette rien*, a song that would become famous through the French singer Edith Piaf. Her emotional and penetrating voice at one point cut through my emotional center and my consciousness was abruptly lifted into the Infinite. I experienced Silence, Peace and Wideness, the latter a limitless and peaceful space. I remember that I was fully at ease and naturally assumed, as a child does, that everyone around me was experiencing the exact same thing as all and everything was One. It is striking to me now that this spiritual experience did not happen in a quiet and remote place, but happened in clear daylight at a noisy and crowded town square. And that it was triggered by the voice of a woman singing a song that ends

in—*Non, je ne regrette rien, Car ma vie, car mes joies, Aujourd'hui, ça commence avec toi* (No, I don't regret anything, Because my life, my joys, Today, they begin with you), as I rediscovered it later in life.

Only when I found myself in the state of a struggling adolescent I began to come back to the memory of this early childhood experience. I know it had always remained with me in the background as I was wondering what the real meaning of life was. And it must have been this initial experience of the Infinite that intuitively led me to certain books. One of the first books that made me realize that it had been an Atman experience was one on Ramana Maharshi who describes his realization of Self in honest and simple language. My interest in Indian philosophy and yoga began to grow as these explained not only my experiences but also pointed to the real aim of life. One day, a friend suggested the book *Sri Aurobindo or the Adventure of Consciousness* by Satprem. The *Adventure* captivated me intensely, here one enters a wide and detailed description of our spiritual reality. However, the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo states that liberation is the first step in realizations and many more levels of consciousness need to be attained. This, to become able to change the mental-vital-physical reality with the supramental consciousness, leading to a new creation. To paraphrase it as simply as possible, he takes the yoga into another direction, the integration and change of the physical reality.

My brief assessment of myself would be a person more or less self-contained and with a natural tendency to be depressed. My first guide then became the booklet *Bases of Yoga*, a compilation of *Letters on Yoga* by Sri Aurobindo. One evening I made a conscious effort to find the psychic being during a meditation, and when I had gone deep within myself via the heart centre there was a sudden movement lifting me out of the depth, as if I had come out of a deep well, I told a friend afterwards. Almost the exact same image I found years later mentioned in the *Letters on Yoga*: It is evidently the psychic—it is often seen as a deep well or



abyss into which one plunges ...<sup>4</sup> This state made me inwardly and outwardly quiet and gave the experience of being eternal, as a matter of fact, really. It felt like this is It, like coming home, as if a heavy burden was lifted from me. It brought a renewed and more loving interest in life and people. I remember that I was able to understand individuals with only exchanging a few words because of the naturally deeper concentration and interest I had then. Although this state also became overpowered by human nature and the undeveloped external being, something remained in the background, sometimes vaguely, sometimes more prominent—the sense of something stable and eternal.

At a later age, I observed that in situations in which I communicated with people for longer periods, I often felt exhausted afterwards, sometimes even feeling sick for hours or longer. It took many years to understand that when the chakras open they open to everything that is in the direct environment. Crowded public places would make me feel exhausted because of their heavy-loaded atmospheres. Sometimes I experienced extreme nervousness, depression, or a feeling of insecurity when talking with someone in particular, to later find out, on reflection, that it was not me but the state of being of the other person, and myself ignorant and passive to the invasion of energies coming from outside. Of course, here comes yoga into the picture and I began to try to be more conscious in interchanging with people, like trying to apply “stepping back.” Often it was a vain attempt.

There was once an invasion of the heart chakra that resulted in the re-emergence of the psychic being. I was attending the cremation of the father of a senior colleague who had died. As I had never met the man, there was no emotional connection, but I felt sympathy for the family. During the Buddhist ceremony, I experienced an increasing sadness pressing on my heart which gradually felt like a heavy force of gravity trying to sink down into the heart center. This caused an uncomfortable feeling in me and the pressure to burst into tears. At the same time I was

observing what was happening and could contain myself. I clearly observed that the emotions came from outside and were not from myself. After the ceremony I had to take the bus, while this emotional force of gravity kept pressing deeper and deeper. The bus was crowded and I had to stand, and when at the point that I thought I was going to cry amidst the bus passengers, the psychic being was unexpectedly touched and I instantly thought there is no death, there is only eternity! A deep relief and joy dissolved the suffocating pressure that I had gone through for the past hour and instead of crying I ended up radiant and smiling. This is another experience that happened in most contrasting conditions and I can only guess what this gravitating force had been.

As there is such a result of open chakras being invaded by negative forces, the opposite is also true, the invasion of positive energies. Two telling examples for me relate to my first time arriving in India and in Pondicherry in 1977. I had come overland from the Netherlands and was on my way to Auroville. The journey was emotionally challenging but also a fascinating mind-opener, a confrontation of cultural differences from country to country, with the real contrasts starting in Afghanistan and Pakistan. When finally standing at the border of Pakistan with India, not more than a white line across the road, an inviting border officer said welcome to India, sir, and stepping over the line into India was like stepping into light, and into joy, and into timelessness. The atmosphere of India was incomparable to any other country I had gone through. In early December of the same year I arrived in Pondicherry, near the bus stop at the Botanical Gardens, and I was quickly aware of the subtle uplifting atmosphere of the town. The next day I discovered that this pristine atmosphere emanates from the Samadhi at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

As mentioned earlier, it is the Yoga force that works on the chakras and in the *Letters on Yoga* it is indicated that the force works to open and purify the different parts of the being. The more this advances

the better the inner state becomes. In the beginning years of meditating I experienced the descending force not more than as different degrees of pressures coming into the being, especially in the head, but over time this changed into experiencing light and peace, and peace changed into peaceful bliss. As Sri Aurobindo states, the chakras relate to the subtle body, and to me, the more they open and develop the better the inner being can let its presence be felt. However, in my case this has been a long term process, covering a period of about 30+ years with on and off intense experiences until something more stable manifested. For most of the time there was a frustrating division between the inner and outer being. The external being did not clearly benefit from the developments that happen within, and while the inner being was experienced during meditations, it was only felt in the background later on, or not at all.

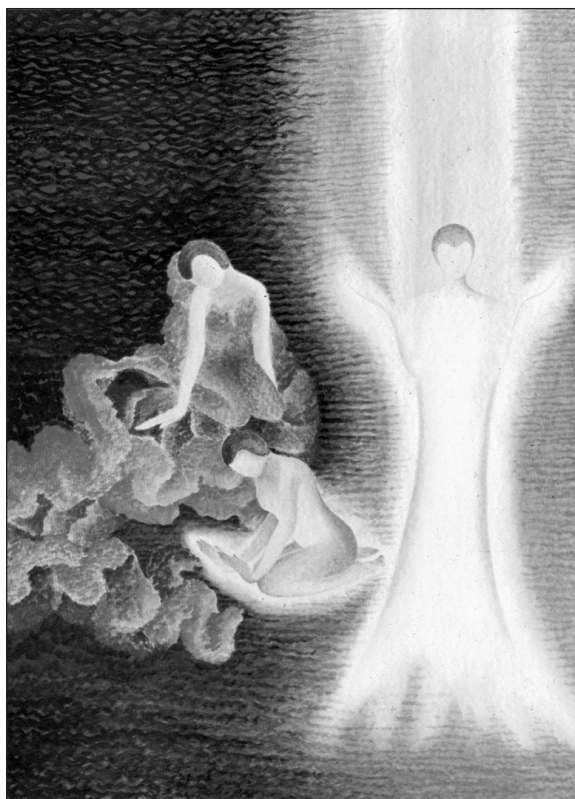
An experience of the cosmic consciousness came to me one night at the All USA Meeting 2001 (AUM), when I could not sleep and was inwardly told forget about yourself and you will become the divine being, and my head area opened and widened to such an extent that I did not experience my physical head anymore. There was infinite space and peace and subtle colored light, my consciousness expanded and the physical body seemed increasingly far away. I assume that due to the, to me, evident presence of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother's forces during such an uplifting event as AUM, the experience was deeply harmonious. In the *Letters on Yoga* I found this: “The cosmic consciousness is that in which the limits of ego, personal mind and body disappear and one becomes aware of a cosmic vastness...”<sup>5</sup> And then such an intense experience just fades away again.

When I was once inwardly told about changing my regular meditation timings, the result was that the following meditations gained in intensity. I found out later that the new timings were the same as those on the weekly Sri Aurobindo Ashram meditation schedule: 6 a.m. morning meditation and 7.30 p.m. evening medita-



tion, except that the evening meditations on Thursdays and Sundays start at 7.45 p.m., and no evening meditations on Saturdays. They last 20 to 30 minutes. Since then I have been meditating at those exact times, adjusted to the time difference with Thailand. These Ashram meditations have been uniquely helpful as there is the readily descending force at such times, often clearing me of the troubles of the day and uplifting the consciousness. And over time, particularly over the past few years, there have been breakthroughs that directly affect the external being. Looking at my vital where the most resistances are to change, an often overly sensitive and irritable state, strongly disliking certain situations and conditions—this has changed to a wider and a more detached vital that can keep itself quiet when it is called for, thanks to the increasing peace and widening of the being due to the chakras opening up.

I was fascinated when the Mother repeatedly advises Satprem (recorded in the *Mother's Agenda*) to concentrate above the head. Especially when pointing to the future being the Mother indicates that this is the major effort to do: "To take this step towards the new creation, one must learn to silence the mind and rise above into Consciousness."<sup>6</sup> To concentrate above the head during meditation is one thing but to remain there is another. However, once the Sahasradala lotus, the crown chakra, opens up it becomes evident to do. With the opening of the crown chakra I experience an extension of the consciousness above the head and not being locked up anymore. This state brings a freedom from the body, especially the head and the thinking mind that are now more contained, and the sense of wideness and the subtle experience of peaceful bliss. This new state has dissolved the tendency there was in my nature to become depressed. Invasions of unwanted energies still happen but there is now more consciousness to deal with this. There is also a practical remedy. Because of the relatively



Painting by Usha R. Patel. (From her book *Love Treasures*, published by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram)

open chakras, simply conscious breathing affects all the chakras and cleans the surface consciousness. Breathing seems to happen with the whole being. In this way I have come to understand from within how pranayama works. Prana has a direct effect on the chakras and its complex system of nadis that run from head to feet, giving the sense of lightness and wholeness when the condition is optimal. For most of the time now I perceive myself as being the observer and at times feeling inwardly completely free. I say Integral Yoga works!

Yet, this current state is not a full and unshakable liberation or Mukti, as described in the more traditional yogas where the kundalini force shoots through the crown and triggers the whole being awake. In contrast, I experience at times subtle waves of energy coming from the Muladhara, the physical center, moving to the crown chakra, like Sri Aurobindo mentions: "In our yoga it is not a specialised process but a spontaneous uprush of the whole lower consciousness sometimes in currents or waves, sometimes in a less

concrete motion..."<sup>7</sup> It is now relatively easy to concentrate on the chakras and experience how they palpably expand beyond the physical body, in front and back, each manifesting, albeit subtly, the peaceful bliss that is becoming part of the inner being and which is inherent to the Yoga force. However, it is all an ongoing development, there is no fixed end-result. The Mother mentions in the *Agenda* the fact that there are more chakras, above and below the body:

The tantrics recognize seven chakras, I believe. Theon said he knew of more, specifically two below the body and three above. That is my experience as well—I know of twelve chakras. And really, the contact with the divine consciousness is there (*Mother motions above the head*), not here (*at the top of the head*). One must surge up above.<sup>8</sup>

Sri Aurobindo often indicates in his *Letters* that certain openings are rather progressive than definite and what I see happening is that the chakras provide a progressive integration of the external being with the inner consciousness. There is a gradual development of their positive and enriching effects on the different parts of the being. At this stage and when conditions are optimal the chakras give the experience of mild mukti.

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## Essays

### A manifestation sheathed in Light

by Rick Lipschutz

*Author's note: This chapter deals specifically with some aspects of the difference between Overmind and Supermind, its crucial significance, and attempts to outline some steps in Sri Aurobindo's ongoing fourth great realization: "The higher planes of consciousness leading to the Supermind." (Note well: once the Supermind is reached, as he reached it and exercised it even while still in his body, the further stages of this realization and its embodiment continue, even now.)*

#### Foreword

But don't we always bolt backwards, like Arjuna? The Supramental Form of Krishna is too bold for human brainpans, much too bright for these eyes, beautiful beyond our pale aesthesis: it includes far too much and transcends it all too well. No! we shout with Arjuna; oh please, Krishna, present yourself to us the way we like you, in that wonderful unitarian universal form, massage our prejudices, make yourself acceptable to us. We, mental beings that we are, choose the national congress of the Overmind; we have too little soul in us, nothing all that much like Supermind which might, had we but just that little, enable us to respond to those flute-calls of our more-dynamic identity. Other-than-wise, we unfriend you. Give us back the old regime. Not ready! Not ready!

#### Sri Aurobindo's revolution

Who is Sri Aurobindo? What does he stand for? So many have tried to put him in a box, this package or that one, or press him tightly between the covers of a book. But he never could fit inside any of



Photo courtesy Rick Lipschutz

them. His body the British could jail but him they could not hold; his consciousness could not be incarcerated. Even when laid on a cot, having stopped breathing, he refused to play the role of a dead man. He stepped out of every thought this less than whole world thinks about death. Over a hundred hours, his skin got pinker, suffused more than ever with that gold red supramental flush, and the palpable force-field of energy that emanated from him grew stronger than any around him ever had felt.<sup>2</sup> What was he all about? What has branded him, core to crust, is what has called him to undergo an inner revolution so complete it would change the world. What is the nature of this revolution, how did he go through it? In what ways are we related to this revolution so that our own constitution can be completely rewritten in entirely different script?

"When Sri Aurobindo was 11 years old, he had a sort of premonition that great revolutions were going to take place in the future and that he had a part to play in some of them. Not a mental idea, but a kind of inner feeling was growing within that he had some great work to do, a mission to fulfill."<sup>3</sup> We may know that Sri Aurobindo pursued a revolutionary program to free India from British rule. We may not know that he was first among his countrymen to articulate, both through the pages of *Bande Mataram* and at the Nationalist party congress at Surat, the call

for India's complete independence.<sup>4</sup> It is also not well known or widely recognized that Sri Aurobindo never has stopped being a revolutionary. Through his own form of yoga he conducted a revolution to overthrow an existing government (that of our cosmos) by forceful means and replace it by a new form of government. He needed for this the instincts of a master politician, prepared every instant to confound his own categories. He would subtly subvert even the most sacred convention forward to unfold its hidden purpose, rolling back the boundaries of what could be with revolutionary grace. "You must know that this is not a simple affair at all. It is not a revolt against the British Government which anyone can easily do. It is, in fact, a revolt against the whole universal Nature and so one must think deeply before enrolling oneself with me."<sup>5</sup>

On March 28, 1908 Sri Aurobindo wrote in *Bande Mataram* journal: "The movement of which the first outbreak was political, will end in a spiritual consummation."<sup>6</sup> The revolution turns into one in which the overmental heights of this universe, all the overmental regions, would no longer overtop the abyss, but—each gap a passage, every break down a breakthrough—joins the golden bridge that connects the worlds. How can the opposition be so overruled that it is no longer the opposition?

And these regions of Overmind, so lustrous, intense and universal—so seemingly divine, and one would think, and many have thought, divinely transformative—why did and do they require such interminable effort, to transform them? Sri Aurobindo has been charged with both the task, and the offense, plotting to make heaven a better place to live, and of including Earth in its extended boundaries, so to make "in the formula of the Veda, 'Heaven and Earth equal and one.'"<sup>7</sup> He was jailed for sedition against the British Raj; now alas, he has grown even more seditious, having hatched a plot against the very spirit that has made us separate, that has subjected us to times and circumstance, and that left us like this, narrow of breath and brain.



Now, the effects of the dynamic spiritual-mind planes though profound are, in the old creation, only an influence. The supermind consciousness-force works powerfully for “unity, mutuality and harmony” (as Sri Aurobindo expressed, discussing what the divine life means near the end of *The Life Divine*).<sup>8</sup> His own “ascent towards Supermind”—ascent to and integration making dynamic the Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuition, and Overmind<sup>9</sup>—took place in Pondicherry (though he visited them in vision in Alipore Jail in 1908 or 1909) before 1915. He knew whereof he spoke quite early on in this journey. He was not at all content with this early ascent and preliminary integration, necessary for him to begin the Arya which contains the earliest versions of the bulk of his major writings barring *Savitri*: after all, what he was after was Supermind’s advent, its full function on earth and in ourselves as a natural faculty (natural the same way we flex our brains to think). With Supermind’s advent, Overmind, intuition, and illumined and higher mind would become more than influences: they’d become dynamos whose pure transmission of Supermind’s force helps stabilize its dynamic unity and light-bringing harmony, establishing it in our physical consciousness, bodies, and this physical world. These planes, formerly top-heavy with light that dwarfs their own inherent power, and liberated for their true action by being linked to the splendor of their supramental source, then begin to act according to Sri Aurobindo’s description of them as dynamic: live force of dynamic spiritual overhead consciousness. The steps of the World-Stair (discussed in the first canto of Book II, “The Book of the Traveller of the Worlds” in *Savitri*)<sup>10</sup> become well connected, and the energy of the entire manifestation begins to move freely and without abysmal gaps.

These dynamic spiritual mind-planes are not a goal in themselves where we are “finished,” but an adjunct of the Supramental, and its advent now acts to join them to its source: luminous links, burning grades of its joint, generative, dynamic activity. They become, in the words he used to describe his fourth principal

realization, “the higher planes of consciousness leading to the Supermind”<sup>11</sup> (*italics mine*). They had always been there; part of his job was back then and still is now to connect them, as bridges, or rungs, leading to the Supermind. That being done, they can then receive energies, formerly unmanifest, through the Supermind, and be more-perfect transmitters of those energies into the material world, and also harmonize more happily with each other. Necessary to his fourth realization was his early ascent towards Supermind before 1915; what would make this realization sufficient, enable and “functionalize” the Supermind to transform ourselves and earth nature, would consume the rest of his life in Pondicherry, and still consumes him now that he is based and operating for the most part in a supramentalized golden portion of the subtle-physical layer of the Earth.<sup>12</sup> All the spiritual-mind planes, though they make valiant forays, utterly fail to achieve the essential integration needed for us to become whole beings living divine earth-lives. It is not till one realizes and as it were climbs into the Supermind, then proceeds to live in its full sun-blaze and not in those remoter lusters, and function there as that only and fully, that one can possess that one power which completely integrates and fully controls the other powers.

To return to our narrative: The highest energies, which have not yet come to any full extent into this world, emanate from the Unmanifest, and the first step from the Unmanifest towards any manifestation, is That: the Supreme Reality, Parabrahman. Parabrahman is not the Absolute, but the first step from the Absolute towards manifestation.<sup>13</sup> Parabrahman in its full, extended sense is like a drawn bow and Supermind the arrow that sends any intention focused from the Supreme Reality straight to the mark. To quote M. Alan Kazlev from his “Kheper” website, Supermind “contains within itself the entire sequence from Unmanifest to Manifestation, or in other words the archetypal pattern of Reality as a whole.”<sup>14</sup> The pathway proceeds through the Overmind, and as the arrow passes through (in this old creation

where Overmind effectively is at the top) its power diminishes, the intention deviates and diverts. It loses focus, disperses and dissipates. So goes the story of the old creation.

So how can the straight path be restored, the arrow remain golden-true through all the worlds of its passage? To ascertain this we need to retrace in brief some steps of the path taken by Sri Aurobindo.

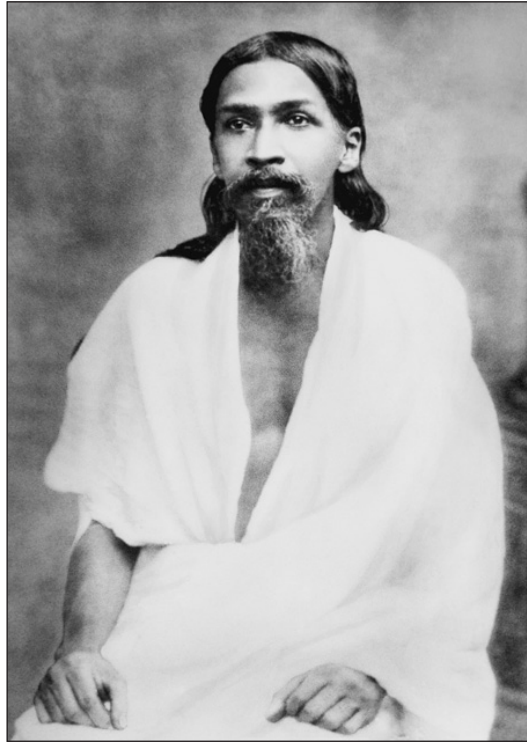
Sri Aurobindo trained his focus onto the realization of “the higher plane of consciousness leading to the Supermind” after the Parabrahman realization of 1912. But this is no sequenced listing of novae, no linear, mind-forged progression. In the incalculable way of the Shakti—and with his tireless experimental spirit—he was “on the way” to Supermind even in Alipore Jail in 1908. Vivekananda’s spirit, he tells us, came to him in his cell and spent “a fortnight” teaching him about the Intuitive Plane, everything Vivekananda wanted him to know, exhaustively, before he would consent to leave him be. Vivekananda also pointed out to him the other planes above the Intuitive; this includes the Supermind.<sup>15</sup> And the Mother has stated that Sri Aurobindo’s realization of the Cosmic Consciousness in Alipore Jail was “Supramental.”<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, even in his Silent Brahman realization (his first great realization, in Baroda in January 1908, four months before his yearlong imprisonment), Sri Aurobindo describes, in recorded conversation in 1940, that there had been an “indispensable positive element,” a sense of “mere being”—but yet, being—even in the Silent Brahman realization, that led him to the Supermind. Silent Brahman for him was more comprehensive, he said in this conversation, than the experience of the Self; for it was a “Laya” experience.<sup>17</sup> Now, “Laya,” which is sometimes interpreted as dissolution into Nonbeing can, in a deeper sense, signify fusion (into greater Being inclusive of, but not limited to, Being and Nonbeing).

In other words, this pioneer, following along his unique line of Brahman-Nirvana experience through Cosmic Consciousness (Vasudeva), abiding in that supreme



harmony unifying all dualities like steps in a dance, was led, inevitably, to full positive expression of Being in the bodily life, which in its integral plenary wholeness manifests as Supermind. So it seems, from the get-go, Sri Aurobindo was heading somewhere different from the aim of previous silent cosmic realizers in the realm of Supreme Reality.

Sri Aurobindo describes much of his early yoga, primarily from 1912 to 1920 (with some entries before and after), in his *Record of Yoga*, his personal yoga journal. This was published by the Ashram Press as two volumes in 2001. There we see that though he set up specific goals (or rather the Guru of the World, whom he experienced as Krishna, set for him specific goals and gave him concrete guidance which it was up to him to apply), he was, as it were, all over the map experimenting, guided by Krishna and the Divine Shakti, and through his own modification of the scientific method, along the “10 limbs of the yoga” and the *Sapta Chatustaya* (seven major elements each with four aspects) that was the preliminary stage of his own yoga of self-perfection. These higher spiritual-mind planes—the spiritual thought-knowledge he called Higher Mind; the bright visionary light of Illumined Mind; the direct touch of Truth itself he called Intuition; and the globally comprehensive, lustrous Overmind—were very exalted planes, all in the realm of Mauna, Silence, deepening, intensifying, even as there passed through his “applied silence” infused with Shakti all the experiences that poured down on him constantly in torrents, in the teen years of the twentieth century while he was in his forties. By “all over the map” I mean (speaking only from a limited, one-thought-at-a-time, linear human perspective, as there is nothing chaotic about the Divine Mother’s cosmic working order as she moves Sri Aurobindo through the paces), for instance, that the “Ananda Brahman,” an advanced aspect of one of the later major elements, he possessed fairly early, around 1915 or 1916, far in



Sri Aurobindo. (Photo courtesy Sri Aurobindo Ashram)

advance of his mastery of earlier elements in the *Sapta Chatustaya*. Thus, the progression had its own coherence of divine spirit, not the hubs and links of the human mind. Still he moved through it all pretty quickly, perhaps not on the express train of his earlier realizations, but nothing like the mud of the Inconscient through which he was to experience some near full-stops in the 1930s and early 1940s. Little of his progression through the 1920s, none through the 1930s and 1940s is detailed in the *Record of Yoga*. The Mother has stated that his full supramental yoga is contained in *Savitri*.<sup>18</sup> And we will trudge with him, through the mud of the Inconscient, later in this chapter.

### The Mother’s collaboration

The Mother is his equal, by his own statement, and since from the beginning she has followed the same path as Sri Aurobindo,<sup>19</sup> her words illuminate certain subtle or spiritual matters as no others can. The Mother herself says that, apparently around 1915 and perhaps until the

time of the complete Overmental Descent in 1926, Sri Aurobindo and herself were working primarily to bring the Supermind into the Mind to transform it.<sup>20</sup> (Yes, they were working on this together even though thousands of miles apart, during that period after she left Pondicherry in 1915 and did not return there until 1920.) They obviously had to have direct contact with the Supermind in order to attempt and succeed in this (she has also stated, as mentioned earlier, that his contact with Supermind began even back in the Alipore Jail, connected with his second great realization, that of the Cosmic Consciousness, the Divine experienced as Krishna in all things and as all humans and living beings). In a letter to his younger brother Barin, Sri Aurobindo<sup>21</sup> confirms that it was not until 1920 that he had climbed into the lowest status of Supermind (“climbed into” connotes a further stage from having “contact” and from other precedent, intermediate stages). Again, he had had direct contact before, and this is evident from his *Record of Yoga*, but he needed to stabilize this contact to possess this state, which could bring to bear the supramental radiances, though not yet in their most powerful or fully integrative forms (this would occur by “climbing into” the second and third levels of the Supermind in the 1930s and 1940s).

Shortly after the Mother returned to Pondicherry in 1920, to stay there the rest of her life, she states in recorded conversation<sup>22</sup> that she told Sri Aurobindo that in order to make further progress—they had not yet fully transformed the mind—and because of the interlocked nature of the planes and parts of being, they needed to descend into the vital, the region of our energy and life passions, and bring the Supermind into the vital to attempt its transformation. They met with some considerable success in this part of the individual journey, because it seems around this time that she began to look radiant, with the look of an 18-year-old; and as for him, two of his major disciples, T.V. Kapali Shastri<sup>23</sup> and A.B. Purani,<sup>24</sup> noted the change in the



color of his skin to a more golden-red hue. Sri Aurobindo told Purani, in answer to his wonderment, that they were bringing the Supermind into the vital (confirming what the Mother has said) and this was one of the effects. And Shastri, a Tantric, for his part was very impressed with these outward signs of a physical transformation.

However, never sitting on their realizations, the Mother and Sri Aurobindo then attempted to bring the Supermind into the physical to try to transform it. It may be that they mostly brought it into the physical consciousness (necessary but not sufficient to bring it fully into the physical proper) at that time, up to about 1926. This period, between 1910 or 1908, and 1926, could be referred to as the individual stage of their Supramental transformation. Both Sri Aurobindo and Mother became very universalized, and came into direct contact with the transcendent (as the Supermind is what manifests and even dynamizes the transcendent); but, for the most part, they did it as individuals, bringing the beginnings of new possibility into the cosmic formula. (It was only later on, in the 1930s and 1940s that their yoga advanced to the stage where they began to consciously change this cosmic formula, as part of their spiritual revolutionary program.) For they had accepted, starting from 1926 if not before, to surround themselves with an ashram of varied capacities, each a representative type, each an “impossibility to be solved.”<sup>25</sup> They had accepted to go through this transformation not merely as an individual achievement moving rapidly to full bodily transformation, but as an ordinary human, moving in evolutionary stages toward and through the three layers of the Supermind, painstakingly applying, integrating each gain as they went, as pioneers opening the way for those of different capacities. Theirs was a “sadhana for the Earth-consciousness.”<sup>26</sup>

In 1926, perhaps especially since the summer, a great intensification of energy, vital and otherwise, was felt in the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, as if some great descent was imminent. Sri Aurobindo had spoken in recorded conversations of the neces-

sity of becoming aware of the world of the gods—that it was about to make entry in some dramatic fashion. Often during these times in the Ashram (technically, it became the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, with Sri Aurobindo retiring to his rooms, having handed over all administration of affairs to Mirra Alfassa, whom he then named the Mother, after the events near the end of 1926) a powerful electric energy could be felt over one’s head. Finally on November 24th the inevitable happened. The Mother summoned all of the twenty-four ashramites of that time, and a meditation occurred where everyone could feel a palpable presence and a power descending in torrents. Some at the time believed the Supermind had actually descended or manifested, though this belief proved to be premature.<sup>27</sup>

### Supramentalizing the Overmind

November 24, 1926 began the more-universal stage of the fourth realization: “the higher planes of consciousness leading to the Supermind” (the key words here, once again, are, “leading to”). The Overmind Realization, descending into his whole body on that Day of Siddhi, literally brought home into Sri Aurobindo the full universality of the situation. It was an essential descent, another literally crowning descent, that was followed by his full-fledged movement into the universal aspect of his yoga. He was always most concerned with the “big picture,” and this day of “Silence, absolute living silence—not merely living but overflowing with divinity” (Purani<sup>28</sup>) all the twenty-four present felt this experience overwhelmingly heralded Sri Aurobindo’s ongoing global mission would bear fruit and be met with success. It was therefore called the Day of Siddhi, the day of Victory: the full power of all past achievement, not as a finale but as a signal that the Divine willed him to move beyond these past achievement and work on all fronts to manifest Supermind as a new Shakti, a new power available to all. For the power that produced this realization was not merely an Overmental Power, but the full divine power of the

force of Ananda, Bliss, Eternal Delight that is evolving the earth beyond mind and Overmind into a Supramental world that would begin to live a great and blissful life, somehow justifying all the millennia of oppression, darkness, and death, making meaningful our many struggles.

This was the full meaning of Krishna to Sri Aurobindo’s yoga: not merely the Overmental being, Overmental avatar, but behind and above this the Being or Lord of Ananda, with the ultimate mission to bring the full unbridled power of bliss to bear this world in its embrace, and to grace all beings and things with a great and blissful life, golden, sleepless, delightful, deathless, indestructible. This would certainly include supramentalization, sought for all by Sri Aurobindo, as a necessary stage and passage to the state and full action of Delight. But the immediate action, on November 24, 1926, was the descent of the Overmind intimately into the entire consciousness and body of Sri Aurobindo.<sup>29</sup>

Yet, he realized, even his body realized, there are light-years of difference between Overmind and Supermind. As he moved beyond the mental consciousness, and dredging and digging in the physical consciousness, he came to realize that Supermind is like a distant star far beyond the firmament of Overmind.<sup>30</sup> A passage in *Savitri* shows us: “The radiant world of the everlasting Truth/ Glimmered like a faint star bordering the night/ Above the golden Overmind’s shimmering ridge.”<sup>31</sup> For Overmind, though divine in terms of static consciousness (realizing but not manifesting), is merely the most universal plane of the mind. In static awareness it may be divine but it cannot divinely “dynamise the Transcendence”<sup>32</sup> nor can it even lead the mind beyond itself. It cannot bring Sachchidananda into the cells of the body; it cannot transform our Inconscient base, our material foundation. It cannot, as mentioned, lead the mind beyond itself; that is, it cannot be that rung of the ladder that truly joins mind, with no gap between them, to its “parent” Supermind. One might say there’s a big break in the ladder, a gap light-years wide, between



Overmind and Supermind. This is the difference that makes all the difference between the worlds.

We may begin, with this in mind, to get some sense or feeling of what Sri Aurobindo meant when he said, year after year after year, in the 1930s and 1940s, time after time, that what he was busy doing was “supramentalizing the Overmind” or “supramentalizing the descended Overmind” (we recall that it had fully descended in him in 1926).<sup>33</sup> Sometimes he would add that he was trying to lighten the resistance of the Inconscient. The Overmind was, and for the most part still is, the summit of the universal nature. Changing its formula was monumental work that no one had tried before. The universal powers needed to be respected if only so their resistance might be overcome. There were sensitive issues. There may have been more than a few little talks with Shiva, Kali and all the rest of them, perhaps, who knows, to keep them from walking off the job. And Supermind and its lower end, the Inconscient—they are twins! Counterparts who, though they complete each other, hadn’t been talking, for millennia. The Overmind with its business-as-usual religion has been blocking the way, diminishing everything the Supermind radiated, veiling it, and on lower levels, mastering evil spells of deformation, turning things into their own opposite; Self and soul into ego-ji, free divine graceful action into heaps of karma. The Supreme Shakti through Sri Aurobindo was attempting something impossible. He made it his business to transform the universe and since then, even the angels of utter failure fuel the ultimate fulfillment of his whole daredevil enterprise.

When Sri Aurobindo said that anyone could carry on a revolution against the British, but that what was called for was a revolt against the entire Universal nature, which is not so easy to do,<sup>34</sup> he spoke like the cosmic politician that in a way he was. Although this is only a metaphor, it may bear some living resonance to what Sri Aurobindo did.<sup>35</sup> It seems to me that his revolutionary principles (Swadeshi or producing our own goods; boycott against foreign goods and jurisdiction; national

education; and Swaraj, Self-rule) were translated into his spirituality: producing our own goods became owning and courageously exercising our deepest aspirations to divinity; boycott translated into rejection of all that blocks the realization of our aspirations; national education into developing the qualities of calm, strong peace and surrender so that knowledge can come to us fresh into a silent mind; and Swaraj to move beyond our egos into souls and higher Selves that can rule our natures with grace. But in a deeper sense, he was pursuing a revolution against the politics of the Ignorance. The inspiring goal of his revolution is to bring full-formed into the earth plane a world no longer edged or tinged in shadow, darkness, and obscurity. Even the highest Overmind creation, he says, is like a realm of sunlight, but surrounded, sheathed in a vast darkness, eventually to be swallowed up by the surrounding obscurity that seems to be the foundation of this ancient creation we still live in. His object is to found and form on earth a manifestation no longer sheathed in a protective coating of darkness, veiled by ego and karma and limitations, but rather a new creation: a manifestation sheathed in light.<sup>36</sup>

Tamil Nadu, the state which surrounds the enclave of Pondicherry where the Sri Aurobindo Ashram was founded in 1926, has been for more than a thousand years the cradle of Supermind. Within it was developed a yogic tradition whose most advanced practitioners have transformed even the bodily life, while many dozens of Mahans and Tamil Siddhas have realized their true individual selves and have described the subtle and spiritual planes, even the Overmind and Supermind (these are Sri Aurobindo’s terms but he was not the first to discover the realms to which the terms refer).<sup>37</sup> We find in this special branch of the Tantra, called Saiva Siddhanta beginning in the Middle Ages (but predating them), and which before that was practiced by Nayanmars (Vaishnavite Tantric devotee poets were called Alvars), mapped out in some detail the worlds of the Overmind as well as the Supermind.<sup>38</sup> They also describe what we may call the

physical-plant specifications, the cookbook, or using another metaphor, the spiritual DNA of the world of Ignorance (for only in the Supermind do true worlds of Knowledge begin). They describe in graphic detail what it was that Sri Aurobindo was conducting his revolution against; they differentiate Overmind from Supermind in great detail.

Sri Aurobindo has referred to Overmind as a “protective double” of the Supermind, “a screen of dissimilar similarity”<sup>39</sup>—suggesting, perhaps, that it is a vast region of worlds, in a way seemingly almost as vast as Supermind, but stepping divinity down to produce a secondary creation, far inferior to what Supermind could manifest—should it ever become overt and unveiled from this protective screen. The lower hemisphere of Overmind is a “selective”<sup>40</sup> Overmind where various universal powers pursue their own powerful creations that often in their lower developing levels clash and come up against one another. Higher up in the lower hemisphere is the global Overmind, a vast universal synthesizing consciousness still not yet integral in its actions. We could relate it perhaps to the realm of the All-Gods described in the Rig-Veda. The higher hemisphere of Overmind or Summit Overmind is composed of four or five planes or “ancient skies,” more in harmony with Supermind and even potentially a channel for its play and manifestation (Gnostic Overmind, Ananda Overmind, Chit-Tapo Overmind, Sat Overmind); but not equipped to bring It, not able to bring as only Supermind does, the Supreme Power with no impairment or impoverishment in its original intensity. At the top of Summit Overmind, seemingly one more step, and one would be in the worlds of wholeness, the structures of integrality; but few if any seemed to take that step.

The extensive “space” between Summit Overmind and the Supermind is a divine darkness across which certain powers of the Supreme Shakti are needed to navigate a prepared and purified soul—and only a soul fully harmonized with its Higher Self or Jivatman. Such a soul has merged all the divine elements extracted from life



experiences in many bodies, up from its long swoon and mud-caked involvement in Inconscience, and its passage through matter, life, and mind, and then the planes where mind is mixed and mingles with Overmind, and Overmind proper—merged these divine elements freed from ego and extracted from its living soul-experience, with the full realization that the Higher Self perpetually enjoys of the One, of the Spirit beyond manifestation. In other words, to pass through the “divine darkness” (Avyakta Paratpara) into the Supermind and Beyond, one must have become a fully integrated, intact soul-and-higher-Self complex. This, impossible solely by human effort, becomes inevitable with the Grace of the Supreme Shakti.<sup>41</sup>

This was the politics of Ignorance that Sri Aurobindo, the supreme revolutionary, came to overthrow and supplant: The very highest levels of our existing universal nature have been rigged (originally by design of the Supermind or Vast Grace Light itself!) to force us to inhabit a separatist, ego-driven, guna-ridden creation based in Inconscience, to become completely involved in order to evolve, slowly, almost step by step: from mire to mind and beyond, from egos into souls and selves, from slaves of karma and the gunas into adepts of a higher action possessing the fivefold universal powers,<sup>42</sup> from a veiled obscure creation into a paradise of supreme Grace Light. Grace in its thickest disguise! At a very high plane in the Overmind flows the fountain force of Tirodhana, “Veiling” whose function seems to be to dim, distort, limit, step down the great effulgence of grace at the lower levels into these grey and painful worlds, to allow very gradual spiritual evolution. This force of veiling casts its shadow even over regions of the Summit Overmind or Overmind Gnosis! High also in Overmind is the home of Kutilai, the force of Kundalini which, though full of power and force, presides over restricted worlds

of relative compulsion far from our divine freedom. It can take us very high but to a place that is still really very limited in its spirit’s vision and unable to fulfill the spirit’s sacred thirst. Lower still, but high above Mind, in Spiritual Mind and Overmind realms, are the foundations of ego and karma, which, at still-lower levels, through many coiling modes and creative modifications, develop into these worlds we are much too familiar with. Four high ruling overmental powers (Tirodhana, Kutilai or Kundalini, Karma, Ego) are thus tied, inextricably, as if by some strange inevitability, all the way down to that dragon tail of our trailing depths that lashes us severely whenever we strive to transform or even tame our foul inhuman parts of nature. But if we look back, above,

divisive and separatist movements initiated, begun and allowed to develop, by supramental intent and for an evolutionary purpose, by the Overmind. This was the revolution he came to lead.

### The supramental action on earth

We hardly know all the details, as he was reticent and secretive about exactly what he was doing. But it’s reasonable to surmise that Sri Aurobindo, who did not read Swami Ramalingam’s voluminous Tamil writings, came upon these same powers and principles and sought to transform them. No, they cannot be destroyed; it’s not that simple. The Kundalini allows for a great intensity of knowledge, or of experience in general, that is a necessary part

of a blissful divine life. We will always need in some form the Kundalini. But it must somehow be modified, or unmodified, as only a tactful politician can do, to allow

Swami Ramalingam in particular completed the fine details of this map of the Saiva Siddhanta tradition, even as he transcended that tradition and practiced a true supramental yoga.

near the peak of the Overmind, we see, according to Tirumoolar (an ancient supramental adept of Tamil Nadu) and to Swami Ramalingam, a great fissure or a “collapsible door”: the Para Apra Veli. It was described by Swami Ramalingam in 1872 in stanza 283 (sometimes listed as stanza 284) of his inspired poem, “Joti Agaval,”<sup>43</sup> where he remarks, prophetically, of that door, “it can be shattered into pieces.” Swami Ramalingam in particular completed the fine details of this map of the Saiva Siddhanta tradition, even as he transcended that tradition and practiced a true supramental yoga. In his vast poetry there are over a thousand pages where he puts in vision, rhythm, and song his direct supramental experiences.<sup>44</sup> Here we find finely etched the politics of Ignorance, the entire universal natural scheme it is Sri Aurobindo’s global mission to supplant. To free the universal movement from bondage, Sri Aurobindo had to change the government of the universe to be the integral and divine Supermind from the

it to continue to function as a source of great energetic intensity, in a new creation. The force of Veiling, Tirodhana, cannot be thrown away entirely, but again must be fine-tuned, to be used but in a different fashion, with a changed function, in supramental creations. The new creation will continue to include human beings, animals, plants, mountains as before, and must be introduced slowly—because, oh, that slowness is kind—to include as much and as many as possible. Some may be transformed, others purified to allow for a much happier life. Individual differences must always be respected! Again, the ego and karma cannot be thrown away, but refined, allowed a more harmonious action and more unified selfhood, much transformed so as to be suitable for beings on many levels of attainment to grow naturally into their higher correlates. Ego and karma, but turned back into the utter truth of themselves, become the lever of Sri Aurobindo’s revolutionary program of spiritual and material action; even as he



himself was said to be, “a decisive action direct from the Supreme.”<sup>45</sup>

Although Sri Aurobindo came here and still remains fully connected to Earth’s atmosphere to bring forth a supramental earth, in a new creation there will still be many humans—more humane we hope! There will still be animals, happier ones, plants and flowers, more green mountains, more blossoms. There will be those whose bliss will be to live primarily in the Higher Mind; this is a great advance from where we are now! Or the Illumined or Intuitive consciousness, or somewhere in those vast regions of the Overmind, in the process of being supramentalized, but still having an Overmental function, however changed. Haridas Chaudhuri once spoke of a “cosmic reconstruction,”<sup>46</sup> and this is what Sri Aurobindo’s ongoing global mission is about. We might venture that one aspect of “supramentalizing the Overmind” may involve transforming its traditional, age-old status—of holding the Oneness as a sleeping or silent partner,<sup>47</sup> and not the active agent—into a more-intimate overt presence of Oneness. It may foster a greater forbearance, more advanced patience, a deeper kindness and a stronger more powerful benevolence, even in the very universal powers themselves who will no longer be what some humans up to now have called “the gods.”

In Sri Aurobindo’s conceptualization of the triple status of Supermind in *The Life Divine*, the three enduring layers of the world-founding consciousness of the Supermind are imaged like this, keeping in our minds and hearts that all three poises of Supermind are variations on Oneness that is infinite and versatile beyond imagination. The primary poise, the highest or Comprehending Supermind, is an equal extension of Oneness where individual and universe are held latent in this all-powerful, blissful, all-pervading, all-containing, all-constituting One-in-the-One. All soul-individuality is rooted



Swami Ramalingam. (Photo courtesy <http://www.auro-ma-ramalingam.org>)

in this realm that is completely beyond the individual. The second status, or Apprehending Supermind, is an unequal extension, or Two-in-the-One in that it allows for a centration, a Jivatman or true individual Self within the Supreme Divine, one with it but also an expression of it. All flows out of the Divine and back into the Divine simultaneously in this poise; because of that safety action where all flows back into the Divine, the energetic outflow never sinks into ignorance where effective realization of the One is lost. In the third theater, a further development of Apprehending Supermind, a fundamental blissful Duality still held firm and fluid in the Oneness of relations takes place, where individual relations that are Supramental begin. More simply, we can characterize the three sessions as Unity, Harmony, Mutuality; or Oneness, Fusion/Intimacy, and Embrace. The essential transcendence is the fundamental experience of Supermind, then the cosmic possibilities, then

the individual expression of relations—just the opposite order of the way our mind proceeds, but obviously superior in every way and closer to the innate, intimate truth of things.

We find a corresponding terminology in Ramalingam’s writings.<sup>48</sup> “I saw the Divine face to face.” This is the way Swami Ramalingam expresses his direct experience of the Divine in the third status of Supermind. It is what some of the greatest realizers have sought in terms of direct relations, the mutual embrace of the human and divine. Here we find what Sri Aurobindo calls “the body of the King.” “I saw the Divine with my own eyes.” Then in the second, or golden station of the Supermind, “I moved towards the Divine. I became fused, matured and ripened in Him.” This is the harmony and intimate fusion of the true individual self (i.e. the soul or psychic being become one with the Jivatman, making for an abler, a more powerful and complete Central

Being) with the Supreme Divine. In the primary poise, or the first and highest status of Supermind, “I became blissfully united with the Divine.” One in the One. Or to use a closer translation of Swami Ramalingam’s words: “I saw Him face to face. I became fused and ripened in Him. I became blissfully united in identity with Him.” Eventually these three are to become simultaneous, in experience, in function. This is simply and surely the direct relationship we may enjoy when we move beyond a politics of Ignorance and fulfill our birthright to the natural unity of souls that are one with their bodies (the bodies having become equal in conscious awareness and in Shakti with the soul). Oneness unveiled, unrestricted, true living unity in consciousness as force, complete transformation of ego and karma.

The imagery of Supermind is again depicted in the Temple at Chidambaram.



Swami Ramalingam (Vallalar) always signed his name, “Chidambaram Ramalingam.” Chidambaram means the One Sky (as Overmind includes many ancient skies that are not integrally united) over three sessions of Supermind. Supermind is inherently collective consciousness: so we say it has three sessions, halls, assemblies, meeting places. Three integrally united sessions under One Sky, depicted in Chidambaram Temple as “the space of Grace.” Nataraja, the form of Shiva dancing in the Temple of Chidambaram, is not the god Shiva of the Overmind realms but the Supramental Sivam, dancer whose dance is the world-founding consciousness of Supermind. This is most closely associated with the second session, Pon Ambalam, the golden Supermind. The rhythm of the dance, the biune Golden Feet of Play of the Divine, determines the gradations of the higher, inmost, and inner planes, the outer and the outermost, it is present in the coursing of our blood and movement of our hearts and lungs, and it expresses itself in the expansion and contraction of the cells of the body becoming divinized, as expressed by Tirumoolar possibly as much as 2500 years ago and by Swami Ramalingam more than a century and a half in the past.<sup>49</sup> Suppose we bypass the Supermind, go direct to Sachchidananda and do not realize and possess and form in our nature the Supermind: then, we do not participate in this universal rhythm of the dance through all the worlds, our heart and into our trillions of cells, and we lose the blissful opportunity to live the embodied Life Divine in this good red physical world. Chidambaram Temple also includes around it the Por Tillai, the golden field of the deodar trees which is the extension of the Supermind into Summit Overmind (which like the Supermind has white and golden colors and other levels, so one can be confused with the other). Summit Overmind, being more than the mere barrier I spoke of

earlier, is also the extension of Supermind into the cosmos and the Earth symbolized by the field of deodar trees outside the Temple of Chidambaram. Tamil Nadu is the cradle of Supermind and Chidambaram is the ancient direct symbol of Supermind on the earth in all its sessions under one golden sky of divinity. Summit Overmind, or the golden field, is also the means by which we, having united or I should say harmonized, though not merged, our souls and psychic beings with our spiritual selves, becoming an eternal portion of the Supreme Divine as the Gita calls it, can through a modification of the power of the Supreme Shakti climb through the golden field into the supramental vastness and if we have the grace of the Shakti, begin to enter into and evolve through the supramental sessions. We may in Overmind feel the swaying of the shoulders of the dancing, supramental Shiva.

Nataraja, the form of Shiva dancing in the Temple of Chidambaram, is not the god Shiva of the Overmind realms but the Supramental Sivam, dancer whose dance is the world-founding consciousness of Supermind.

### The work of physical transformation

Now let us return to Sri Aurobindo going yet further in the universal and transcendent stage of his Supramental realization (his fourth great realization is still in process, even now in 2011, of being fully realized, which to him means completely embodied, one might say transcending the transcendence itself). In the late 1930s and especially the 1940s Sri Aurobindo entered more into the transcendent phase of his supramental work, or his universal global mission extended more deeply into the transcendent. The golden light, as he wrote in a poem, entered not only his brain, but descended into the heart, his limbs and feet and “the earth is now thy playfield and thy seat.”<sup>50</sup> In other words, the Supermind descended into his physi-

cal consciousness and his body and this exerts terrestrial effects. The universal work continued and extended itself, and he held at times the supramental force even in his body cells, though he could not permanently fix it there fully at that time.<sup>51</sup> He wrote some of the most sublime moving mystical passages of *Savitri* during this period: writing and revising this epic, in inspiration largely Overmental, formed another step in supramentalizing the Overmind. He appeared destined for a full, even outward transformation but he chose, or it was chosen that he could achieve more in his global mission if he left his body and extended his action more fully from the subtle-physical plane so close to the Earth. He left the further work in the body, and the body-cells, to the Mother as this was one of her specialties. Remember: his revolutionary goal was not to achieve for himself, but to be consid-

erate at all times and in all ways of the world situation and human needs, so supramentalization could be as benign and benevolent

and widespread as possible, for such a complete revolutionary change. I would agree with R.Y. Deshpande that during the 1940s his aspiration before the Supreme Shakti called down the New Creation,<sup>52</sup> the “manifestation sheathed in light” that is the title of this book. But it needed to be manifested on the Earth, and this again was the specialty of the Mother, Mirra Alfassa, in whom the Supreme Shakti incarnated here in individual bodily form. Furthermore, the universal descent or Supramental Manifestation he had worked his life for, had not occurred, though he felt it come awfully close in 1938 (it would take place on February 29, “leap day” of 1956, again, by the direct hand of the Mother). The golden door still stood between Overmind and Supermind and it had not yet been shattered to pieces, as real and living symbol verified by Tamil saints and siddhars. The supramental light



was still veiled by higher powers of the Overmind. There were also urgent necessities in world politics at the time.

These necessities were tied to a constant fundamental of his work, which he once wrote, in a letter during the 1930s, was occupied not so much in higher planes than with the nether edge of things. “No, it is not with the Empyrean that I am busy: I wish it were. It is rather with the opposite end of things; it is in the Abyss that I have to plunge to build a bridge between the two.”<sup>53</sup> This is precisely where his Integral Yoga beginning around 1910 or before has always run into a rock, the Inconscient. This bedrock of dark trance is intertwined with the Overmind, connected through the full workings of Veiling, of Maya and Karma and Ego, the principles of this old creation, through many beings, gods/angels, Shaktis, Asuras, through a many-stranded network to the utterly self-involved Inconscient, ruled by Death, over which the highest powers of Overmind lack practical control. Here, the divine potentialities of the Earth-Spirit are locked up—and by a force far worse than the British who in 1908 had given Sri Aurobindo, like a present, the lockup he needed to withdraw from politics and meet Krishna face to face. It was this Infinite Inconscient Rock that always stopped his express train of realizations, that slowed it way, way down; calling forth all the perseverance and every last drop of patience that verily even his very even Brahman-consciousness could muster.

The Inconscient is “the last” obstacle—“I have told you many times that it is the last”<sup>54</sup>—he said in conversations recorded by Nirodbaran, after he sustained a severe life-threatening right thigh bone fracture in November 1938. Starting then he required more physical help, and resumed holding the conversations that had stopped after his Overmind Descent of 1926 (that descent came down the same day that he broke his thigh bone, exactly 12 years later). The Inconscient is still our base, the basis of our instincts, yet at the same time our main goad to transformation. And it was into the immensity of the Inconscient that Sri Aurobindo plunged

and penetrated, dug and dredged through the 1930s and ‘40s, instinct and intimate with his supramentalizing of the Overmind. “The Inconscience is an inverse reproduction of the supreme superconscience: it has the same absoluteness of being and automatic action, but in a vast involved trance; it is being lost in itself, plunged into its own abyss of infinity.”<sup>55</sup> He dug into the dragon base on which our material foundation seems to rest. The Overmind, even at its highest pitch (for it is still only mind though apotheosized) is incapable to transform this heavy hardpan that hits us from below and sends us reeling backwards if it doesn’t kill us.

If this cannot be changed, life cannot be transformed.

Sri Aurobindo knew, and by identity, that it is the Transcendent—or more truly what descends from it—that gives concreteness to all that is in the world. Nothing, not even the Supreme Transcendent, is abstract to Sri Aurobindo. Only something that matters more than matter, so that Matter can begin to be the Spirit it truly is—only the highest supramentality, then, could bring the direct power of Spirit into matter. Only something, and even more to the point, someone, objectifying those “pulsations” of “Supreme Love,”<sup>56</sup> the force of Ananda, emanating directly from the Supreme and imposing itself imperatively, working patiently, vastly and precisely, could cleanse the Augean stables.

As Agni—not only the universal power of the Veda but the supramental force of Divine Will—Sri Aurobindo could descend into the Inconscience, with the full force of the essence of supreme all-powerful love, that radiance within all that burns; wisdom with the power to change the world. And that power and that joy came from the most essential surrender to the Supreme Shakti. That of which the gods were only instruments, that which the Asuras actively fought or badly imitated. That he became by identity; and bored and drilled and dredged and burned—into the pit, the darkness within darkness where the gods, all but Agni, refused to plunge. For beneath all that darkness

pitted in darkness was the one the Vedic Rishis call Martanda—the eighth of the Aditis—which means the Supramental that the Inconscient, so effectively, has masked. “The truth above shall wake a nether truth”<sup>57</sup>—that is, the Supramental from its native home must wake the Supermind buried beneath our dark brute base. Then all the worlds in the world-stair could be connected, rung leading to rung. The Overmind “above” could not be conquered and superseded except by transformation of the Inconscient “below.” The serpent must bite its tail. The deepest secret of the Integral Yoga is locked within this struggle to change the Inconscient at its deep dark heart. Only the power of the Ananda Brahman, scarcely conceivable to us, the blissful force emanating from the center of knowledge by identity—the full free play of the most active identity between psychic being and the Purushotama—can force this outcome.

In that 1941 conversation, where Dr. Manilal asks: “Will it take a long time, Sir, to finish the Inconscient?” Nirodbaran adds: “Sri Aurobindo with such a smile and tone said: ‘Yes!’ that we all roared with laughter.”<sup>58</sup> And we might permit ourselves to imagine, it was with a smile and such a tone that he went to meet Death, in full superconscious equilibrium, to face that face, to revolutionize Change himself, having written, just a few weeks before his passing, in *Savitri*, “His knowledge immortal triumphs by his death.”<sup>59</sup>

## The Mind of Light

When Sri Aurobindo left his body on December 5, 1950, he left Mother and all of us a “parting gift,”<sup>60</sup> a legacy we could do more with if only we knew. This was his longest darshan, as he lay for almost five days in Mahasamadhi. As scores of thousands passed in this “universal sunset,” his body stubbornly refused to deteriorate—as attested in so many words and by certified physicians. The Force emanating from him was palpable, a dense warm radiating plenitude. An all-powerful peace so pervasive it was almost frightening. A flood of physical Oneness. Unendurable



bliss, blissfully enduring. This was felt by most and even seen by some of the scores of thousands from all over India and the world who walked past his body during this time.<sup>61</sup> One disciple, who when she was quite young, a young teenager, kept the clocks wound so that they all told the same time for Sri Aurobindo as he walked through his rooms, told me that his presence during those Mahasamadhi days was much more powerful than she had felt at any Darshan that she had attended while he was yet breathing.<sup>62</sup> And it was during these days that, the Mother stated: “He passed to me all the Supramental force he had accumulated in his body; I could feel the friction of the passage.” She wrote a few years later to K.D. Sethna: “The Supramental Light and Force being received by the physical mind—this is the Mind of Light.”<sup>63</sup> What is this mysterious Mind of Light, Sri Aurobindo’s parting gift to us?

Mind of Light was the preliminary fixation of the Supramental Force on the earth, and a prelude to the Supramental Manifestation a little more than five years later (February 29, 1956). The chief bar to all realization, yet also the most profoundly stabilizing force to fix the Light in matter, is the physical mind (or at a much, much deeper level, the mind of the cells). The physical mind keeps us from perceiving, beyond our senses and our reason, the more direct spiritual perceptions. It is like a dog “barking in the kennel of objective certitude” (as rhythmized in *Savitri*).<sup>64</sup> Everywhere its defeatism masquerades as wisdom. Mortal thinking is our mortal enemy: it deadens human life under a pretense of protecting it. Yet at the same time it does preserve our slowly hard-won gains, establishing them securely in consciousness and solidly in our bodies. Amal Kiran expands a narrow interpretation of physical mind so as to encompass most of our embodied human mental action, or the portion of it that has evolved upwards from the Inconscience. The crude percep-

tions of the physical mind, along with those of the vital-physical, are the bulk and bane of our existence. Transformed though, it is a vital step to realization.

Now, according to Amal Kiran (as he interprets Sri Aurobindo’s *The Supramental Manifestation on Earth*,<sup>65</sup> Sri Aurobindo’s last extensive prose writing) there are three levels of the Mind of Light. In the ordinary human, it forms the necessary missing step out of Ignorance, so that the human mental being can begin to experience the higher spiritual mind, intuition, illumined mind. The Mind of Light, created directly out of the Supermind itself, fixes the break in the ladder that keeps most of us chained to our lower minds, so that we can step beyond and begin with confidence to climb not only towards but through the spiritual transformation (the second step of the triple

Mind of Light was the preliminary fixation of the Supramental Force on the earth, and a prelude to the Supramental Manifestation a little more than five years later (February 29, 1956).

transformation described in detail in *The Life Divine*).<sup>66</sup> For those with a closer connection to the intuitive worlds, it makes that transformative journey swifter and more complete, lifting one to the feet of the Supermind. Those who have gone further, like the Mother, who received it from Sri Aurobindo first as she stated, it moves into the supramental experience and facilitates its expression by the mind, which needs to express singly and stepwise the simultaneous multidimensional perceptions of Supermind. Again, for most of us, the Supermind making its permanent entry in our physical mind and physical consciousness, as the Mind of Light, fixing that gaping hole in the ladder of the worlds (where so many get stuck so as not to fall between the rungs, so to speak) is even not so much a parting gift, but the gift that opens us.

Let’s keep in our consciousness that Mind of Light is not of the spiritual-mind

worlds, or even of the Overmind; it is of the Supermind itself, though it may hide itself as it works in us, sublime and practical at the same time, unrecognizable. As lustrous and radiant and intense as the Overmind may be, Mind of Light is greater, for it is supramental even in the way it hides its greatness!

In this paragraph and the next, we take some time to ask ourselves, what is the Mother’s Force? I believe a good answer, from the standpoint of flooding supramental experience, is found in *Mother’s Agenda*, May 24, 1960.<sup>67</sup> She speaks here of Sachchidananda not only in consciousness but in physical sensation: “the divine Sachchidananda spreading in a constant flood throughout the universe.” “It was a continuous and all-powerful flood, continuous and extraordinarily varied, of the Lord manifesting himself.” “The three

Supreme Principles were very clearly there” in “an active, realizing Consciousness.” “There was all the Joy—this perpetual downpour in a limitless splendor.”

This is a direct unmediated expression of “Mother’s Force.” More technically, it is the force of the divine consciousness (the force of the higher nature, not that of the lower prakriti). Individuality serves to put those who seek help and support in contact with the Force, which is truly Sachchidananda in the cells of the body, the divine power perpetually pouring down and spreading out in splendor without limit a constant flood everywhere. Sachchidananda in the cells of the body puts everyone who reaches out for help and support in contact with this flood, like a point of special concentration of this cascade of divine Force. This Force is characterized by a variety that is extraordinary. It is after all the Supreme manifesting through the Eternal Mother. This force can flow through you towards any person on any shifting piece of the planet. What differentiates Integral Yoga from other integralisms or the integral movement is its emphasis on the soul and



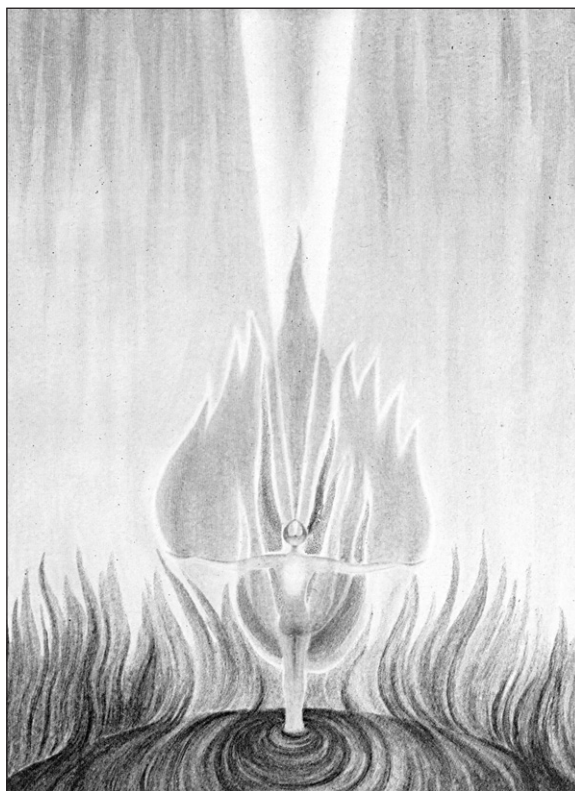
psychic being; on the Supreme Shakti and the Mother; and on the Supermind.<sup>68</sup> Mediating all these emphases most centrally is the Mother's Force.

Thirty minutes after the Supramental Manifestation that took place, significantly on the Ashram Playground, on February 29, 1956, the new creation, called down but only into the higher regions by Sri Aurobindo perhaps in the 1940s, manifested on the Earth, close to, even mingling within the old. It is the Mother's own statement that the new creation manifested on Earth a half-hour after the Supramental Manifestation.<sup>69</sup> The manifestation sheathed in light, the earthly supramental world, is pressing on and mingling with and precipitating slowly into the Earth. It can be fully and openly the Light beyond the Light within the Light. It does not need that sheath of darkness. This is working its way into the world. Still yet to manifest are the Supramental Ananda, the Supramental Truth, and the Supramental Existence; but the beginnings of the Supramental Consciousness-as-Force with the self-luminous Supramental Light, have been introduced, an irreversible action.

### The presently unfolding future

Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have brought something new into this creation and worked tirelessly to establish it here: he has in fact brought a new creation, and she worked then and works now, for its manifestation, tends the growth of this new child on and as the Earth. Supermind is now a Shakti, engaged with all the other Shaktis that exert power and overtly act with the forces that have taken hold on the Earth in their combined energetic workings. It begins its work to integrate all these other Shaktis with itself, silent with the patient intensity of joy that knows how to abide with time, so that they too can concord and harmonize with the smiling substance of immortality.

After Sri Aurobindo left his body,



*Painting by Usha R. Patel (From her book Love Treasures, published by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram)*

promising to the Mother, according to her own account, to always keep the Earth in his active awareness and eventually return here "in the first supramental body built in the supramental way,"<sup>70</sup> there were meditators in different parts of the world who reported they saw him swallowing a monstrous dose of poison, like the blue-throated Shiva.<sup>71</sup> He continues his work unstained and his global mission is ongoing. He is continuing to supramentalize the Overmind and to work to overcome resistance from our Inconscient material foundations, eventually to transform even the Inconscient into an entirely new kind of supramental material foundation. A major landmark in this mission, again, was his work behind the scenes after his Mahasamadhi, collaborating with the Mother when she smashed the golden door (called by Swami Ramalingam the Para Aparā Veli) high in the Overmind, and in her vivid description "then the Supramental Light and Force and Consciousness rushed down upon earth in an uninter-

rupted flow."<sup>72</sup> This was certainly a major victory in the Supramentalization of the Overmind and the rest of the universal nature. Although most of this Light may have been swallowed by the Inconscient, as the Mother mentioned many years later, still it is percolating up from within that Inconscient and making direct permanent change, but very slowly. Oh, this slowness is kind, as stated before, because gradual change allows the transformation that is occurring to be more inclusive.

And what will be the transformation of the principles of Sri Aurobindo's revolutionary program as it is coming into being with its forceful overthrow of old Overmind creation? No difference in standpoint between your true self and the supreme self of truth—that is Swaraj. Not one effectual ray of difference between the productions of the supreme power of truth and what is self-produced by your own true power—this is Swadeshi. No difference between the supreme knowledge educed from the supreme soul, and the knowledge that

your own Self-power brings forth from the wisdom within you become one with the wisdom chained below your base—such is supranational education; Self-knowledge, world knowledge, knowledge universal and supreme. And boycott means this, that if that is what you want, that is what you will have and be. If you seek no other thing, what else can you become but that supramental being you already have started to turn into, in that small part of you made of the same stuff as itself. While yet in bodied being you will live in the heaven that the gods do not know. No, they don't, because you being human have what they do not (unless they take human birth): the Supreme's presence, what the Mother and Sri Aurobindo call a psychic being, an individual soul-form that grows as you evolve. Your true being slowly is taking form as a transformed body: in it Swaraj, Swadeshi, universal Self-education are fulfilled in every cell.

Since Nature is collaborating with the



new creation and its consciousness, as Nature promised Mother it would do in 1958, and Mother said then that the splendor of that collaboration would be great,<sup>73</sup> we in turn can collaborate with Nature, work with this nascent new creation. And we are doing so, whenever our activities range, in new thinking and dynamic novelties, in growing and significant ways. It is beyond the scope of this chapter, but we see it happening in so many ways today in this world. Among the innovations, in science and technology, in economics and other sectors, are growing collectivities where people are gathering into communities aspiring to live a Gnostic consciousness, though the words may differ. As we get a grip on a new life, and grasp in our members as well as our mind the straightforward principles of this dynamic unifying awareness, we see, evident even to the fallible intellect of our physical mind, outlines of a new world growing up in our midst.

"A new world is born, born, born," Mother intoned.<sup>74</sup> But this new creation, or cosmos reconstructed, seems rather nebulous. Does it exist anywhere now? There is nowhere on earth that it is not. In the sunrise of the pages of *The Synthesis of Yoga*, flashes one of those mantric sentences of Sri Aurobindo: "To be perpetually reborn is the condition of a material immortality."<sup>75</sup> Supermind, the border breached so it begins to enter here, lavishes in all its touches constant renewal from an inextinguishable source. We have here a tell-tale sign that the new creation is no pipedream but that it is palpably surfacing. It is the sign of those wiggling hands, the sign of agreement with our most hopeful future: we are switching inevitably and irreversibly to renewable energies. In the presently unfolding future, we now are in the midst of this revolutionary switch. This turn to sustainable technologies, supramental in origin, is being planted firmly in physical nature. Along these lines Mother stated, in her Agenda, that scientists in the 1970s were unearthing secrets to link us to supramental energies through modest material means. She went on to say that scientists even then knew how to draw energy "from above" and no longer "from below":

to her view, fossil-fuel energies by their nature through continued use would turn earth into a dead, lunar world, whereas the sun and other energies, of the wind and the waters above and around us, would make for a living "solar" world.<sup>76</sup> We live at the time that the old fossil age is giving way to the energy of the dawn.

Following the money, we see new venture capital flowing rapidly into research and development of renewables, making our good turn towards better, safer energies inevitable. By decade's end this trend, now subtle, will be unmistakable. To complement the information-sharing Internet, energy-sharing "intergrids" are springing up: knowledge and power are becoming one now in the body of earth, even as wisdom and will have always flown the friendly skies united in the infinite Supermind. The lateral, horizontal, distributed nature of nascent energies and decentralized new economies reflects, clumsily at first, the networked nature of the Gnosis; hierarchies everywhere tumble and turn into webs and nets. This is the way the World Wide Web works: the way mushroom mycelia, the galactic clusters, hurricanes, the nervous system and lung mesh are constructed for greatest momentum with least effort, maximum robustness, redundancy the better to advance life's strategic diversities.

Nature takes another step toward new creation, with mushrooms. Yes, mycelia, those fuzzy-white cobwebby networks common under any forest log, have been shown by Paul Stamets and other mycologists to repair impaired, devitalized soils, treat a network of diseases related only by a degree or two of separation, and to transform oil spills and toxic wastes into luxuriant oases, even as these same mycelia have transformed vast debris fields, during planet-wide extinction events in the past, to clear new ground for fresh resurrection. Mycelia can prevent viral storm and bioattacks, mycofiltrate polluted waters, even save a home from carpenter ants.<sup>77</sup> We are finding ways to partner with mycelia, far more sensitive than we are to the threats to an ecosystem. And in other dark places, where decay has seemed irreversible,

loom unforeseen sources of regrowth, for instance through stem cells: "dead matter" comes to life, brain tissue regenerates in an exuberance of neuroplasticity. Life will go on. Hope though abandoned, returns, through the backdoors of fractured dimensions, to the physically paralyzed, and reenters the lives of those doomed to suffer severe emotional distress. A new form of network family therapy, Finnish Open Dialogue, has all but removed the scourge of schizophrenia from Finnish Western Lapland. Eighty percent not only enjoy lasting symptom relief but return to work and loving relationships. Psychotic breaks, treated immediately, no longer progress to full-blown schizophrenia. Both planning and treatment take place in the same circle for all. Dialogue concerning the patient and family not only is transparent but open to all. Expertise lies not in diagnostic judgments but in generating dialogue in all. The treating team trade observations with each other right in front of the family, in their "reflective process" that stimulates robust and healthy responses. Transformed into practice, postmodernism is saving lives, at the same time cutting down mushrooming costs to societies from what was once and still is for many, but will soon be no more, the living death of schizophrenia. There's something new under the Arctic sun.<sup>78</sup>

And one of nature's best-kept secrets is being told through the Mandelbrot Set. Fractals, blown up multicolor on computer screens, depict how chaos comes clambering out of order, how each explains the other. We can see it for ourselves, as Benoit Mandelbrot first saw. Here is mathematics where we can almost see life itself: developing from this or that simple formula, yet producing profuse variations. In fragments of coastline and florets of cauliflower, in the newfound dynamic fluctuations of a healthy heartbeat, in any fractal, self-similar shapes repeat on all scales. Spiritual applications there have been and more need to be made, though Mandelbrot himself stuck to the science and the economics. In computer simulations, in fractal antennas, in ecosystem dynamics and galactic cluster models, with new



toys, through satellites that protect our planet from global terrorism, everywhere we turn, someone is finding fresh creative relevancies for the lowly fractal. A sadhak of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, Pravir Malik, inspired by Mandelbrot but more fundamentally by Sri Aurobindo's World-Stair climbing in *Savitri*, has developed a fractal-of-progress business growth model: he has transformed cutting-edge math and science into a body of practices increasingly employed to solve problems by leading global businesses. The Mother had seen that one of the most recalcitrant areas for the new consciousness to enter was business: so it may be that the Supramental is pushing further and deeper into our business-as-usual than we'd dare think. Now established as a shakti among the other shaktis operating in this world, moving slowly, infiltrating invisibly, even getting down to business, the Supermind already is changing the world in its characteristic ways. These are only a few stealthy ways it is slipping unnoticed into our ordinary human life. Could these be early gleamings of the Mind of Light? On the World Wide Web you can watch the narrative of the fractal unfold, from its mathematical discovery through its multiplying developments, featuring discussion with scientists, technologists and the unclassifiable Mandelbrot himself, in British scientist/2001 co-author Arthur C. Clarke's presentation, "Fractals: The Colours of Infinity" on YouTube.<sup>79</sup> Oh, and coincidentally, the film concludes with a quotation from Sri Aurobindo.

The heart of the matter beats in a passage where Sri Aurobindo tells us why he has focused and still gives all his energy to bring Supermind home. Even as it has a home above, it will grow native on the Earth in all that lives here. In a selection to follow, covering three themes, he speaks from his heart. 1) Why he spared no effort to bring the supramental Light and Force and Consciousness to earth. His purpose has been to bring us the discovery of life and the experience of being in bodies, not as it has been, processed by our grey matter, but in its truth that will become self-evident now that the over-

mental door that has shut it away from us has been shattered to pieces. 2) The effects, again in the ordinary day-to-day, of the supramental Ananda: though not yet widely manifested, it is yet on its irresistible way, if not here and now, then here and there, to render that Delight, the ether in which we live and breathe, less ethereal. 3) A strong expression of the supramental Love: what that will bring, slowly then all at once, as it surfaces.

Here are some of Sri Aurobindo's words from a letter he seems to have addressed to us, and not just to the one who first opened it up.

The Supramental is not something grand, aloof, austere; it is not something inconsistent with a full vital and physical manifestation; on the contrary, it carries in it the only possibility of the full fullness of the vital force and the physical life on earth. It is because it is so, because it was so revealed to me, and for no other reason that I have followed after it and persevered till I came into contact with it and was able to draw down some power of it and its influence. I am concerned with the earth, not with worlds beyond for their own sake; it is a terrestrial realisation that I seek and not a flight to distant summits.

The utmost Ananda that body and life are now capable of is a brief excitement to the vital mind or the nerves or the cells which is limited, imperfect, and soon passes; with the supramental change all the cells, nerves, vital forces, embodied mental forces can become filled with a thousandfold Ananda, capable of an intensity of bliss that passes description and need not fade away.

The supramental love means an intense unity of soul with soul, mind with mind, life with life, and an entire flooding of the body consciousness with the physical experience of oneness, the presence of the Beloved in every part, in every cell of the body.<sup>80</sup>

Supermind in our lives, in our minds, in our cells.

Slowly, on a path carrying along as many as possible, like a slow-motion tsunami of hope, we are moving irresistibly towards a species based no more on death, division, and the darkness of ignorance.

The Mystic Fire meeting the Mother's Force makes for a marvelous fulfillment.

A more flexible material foundation may free the manifest form of the mounting Flame.

Manifestation is for ever moving forward.

The manifestation is sheathed in light.

## Afterword

Sri Aurobindo was the first to call for complete independence from the British. This grew beyond bounds of politics, transfigured to the call for complete independence from the empire of the Overmind (with its own form of the National Congress, with the same kinds of moderate demands expressed through "prayer, petition, and protest" that could never truly change our state at root). Complete independence, of the integral spirit embracing, even coming to embody, material affairs, can be achieved through growing attunement with Sri Aurobindo's four great realizations, expressed in highest quality of life embodied in full direct action of spirit as matter ("Mother's force"). The beginning rungs are in our reach if we but show some early foot; once we're on the ladder, Grace may come to lift, or to keep each small step ringing.

The first and second realizations, the third and fourth as well, run as an eternal portion of the course of one continuous river of realization. Our own true being fully connected to its source enjoys this great fourfold realization; and our own purpose here, perceived most completely and concretely, is to embody it. Complete independence can be achieved only through the medium of a concrete interdependence. The summit stage of supramental consciousness alone is the necessary and sufficient condition, the whole key to the integral embrace, expression, and embodiment of this fourfold realization; only the true individual in us is fit to re-



ceive and instrumental to radiate, densely, warmly, and fully the fourfold realization. The true individual alone can stand intact to the abysmal pull—something like the gravitational attraction of a supermassive black hole—of the Parabrahman, the Supreme Reality beyond the bifurcations, of which the silent and the active Brahman are the two aspects. Only by becoming our true individuality, soul-and-Self-complex, through the Mother's Grace—for Selfhood is Her project—can we attune more truly with the Brahman as Sri Aurobindo realized it in his supreme realization. This is the subjective crown of the sadhana that once one is oneself intact with the pull to withstand, gives the one-who-has-become-one the pull to attract all necessary aid and sufficient conditions to achieve the practical Shakti in life and even rid oneself of the outermost ego of the physical self.

What we can be, each in our own fashion, are “travelling samadhis,”<sup>81</sup> ever living relics of Sri Aurobindo, carrying the full force of the fourfold realization. The Supreme kneads us to become perfect in matter. Every revolution requires appropriate force to achieve its intended objectives. The extreme change that churns us through ignorance to knowledge requires the same force that was powerful and knowledgeable enough to become ignorance; it is a force more powerful than the battlefields of the material world have seen. The force needed for the revolution to overthrow the present government of the cosmos is that of the original consciousness-as-force that became this divided world by its power of exclusive concentration, and this alone can be the missing link. Or we could say, the forceful means needed to overthrow the present overmental rule of the cosmos, the force that Sri Aurobindo has opened the way for, and that Mother Mirra Alfassa embodies and which she specializes and materializes, is the Mother's Force. This force alone can bring us the fourfold realization (as it brought Sri Aurobindo), moving us stage to stage and across the perilous bridges unseen; only by harboring this force can and will we eventually conquer death.

The first realization came to Sri Aurobindo, as he himself said in conversation, through the grace of the Eternal Brahman; the three subsequent realizations and their hundreds of tributaries, through the grace of Mahakali and Krishna.<sup>82</sup> Grace is always the natural manifestation of the Divine, and the supreme Grace is the grace that is the natural expression of the Supreme Reality itself: it is the Supreme Shakti and it is that which becomes the Supreme Shakti and is the practical expression of the Shakti throughout. Everywhere we go we carry the peace of complete silence of the consciousness overthrowing the noises of the world, the equal tranquil state that is the true material foundation; we carry the power of decisive action direct from the Supreme; we carry the pull and attraction of the Absolute itself to the same absolute in every person, place, and thing, and the Ananda of the Supreme Shakti that alone can pierce the Unknowable and flow out of it as Person, World and Soul; and we carry the integrating summit Grace-Shakti that can illuminate every abyss with the superlight underlying everything, acting on the smallest scale with the appearance of a bounded soul to do all that works to the world's delight.

All forms in the world and their function have their foundation in Supermind, where omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence of Sachchidananda are undiminished (there is no impairment or impoverishment in the original intensity, sings the verse of Vallalar). This therefore is delightful conscious existence replacing with its radiance, turning into itself the grave sorrowful stupidity of the world: the world can go on, but now with the fully stable and concrete Sachchidananda in the cells of every body. We put Sri Aurobindo back on trial for “waging war against the king” when we fail to align ourselves to the full with the full extent of the change he has come for. A simple aspiration coupled with straightforward attunement, rejecting all that stands in the way, culminating in the crown of our subjective sadhana, the complete surrender of each moment of life and every movement of our consciousness and body cell: nothing more is asked of us.<sup>83</sup>

## Notes and References

1. Krishna appears in true form in the eleventh chapter of the Bhagavad Gita.
2. K.D. Sethna, “The Passing of Sri Aurobindo: Its Inner Significance and Consequence” in *The Indian Spirit and the World's Future*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1953, pp. 186-210.
3. Rishabhchand, *Sri Aurobindo: His Life Unique*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1981, p. 5.
4. Sri Aurobindo, *Bande Mataram*, *Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library (SABCL)*, Vol. 1, Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, 1972.
5. A.B. Purani, *Evening Talks with Sri Aurobindo*, Third Edition (complete in one volume), Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1982, p. 37.
6. Sri Aurobindo, *Bande Mataram*, p. 801.
7. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, *On the Mother*, Third (Revised) Edition, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1994, p. 140. From a letter written by Sri Aurobindo to the Mother, May 20, 1915. See also Sri Aurobindo, *On Himself*, SABCL, Vol. 26, 1972, p. 425.
8. Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, SABCL, Vols. 18-19, 1970, p. 1033.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 919-963.
10. Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, SABCL, Vols. 28-29, 1970, pp. 95-102.
11. Sri Aurobindo, *On Himself*, SABCL, Vol. 26, 1972, p. 64. In a dictated clarification, written c. 1945, he briefly describes the nature of the permanently stabilized concrete experiences, which speaking in the third person, he terms “the four great realisations on which his Yoga and spiritual philosophy are founded.”
12. The Mother, *Words of the Mother*, *Collected Works of the Mother (CWM)*, Vol. 13, Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, 1980, p. 13. See also Wayne Bloomquist, *God Shall Grow Up: Body, Soul, and Earth Evolving Together*, Pondy Publishing, 2001, where the supramentalized portion of the subtle-physical is presented as direct experience in several places.
13. Sri Aurobindo, *The Upanishads*, SABCL, Vol. 12, 1972, p. 16. (See also his



treatment of Parabrahman in essays contained in *The Hour of God*, SABCL, Vol. 17, 1972.)

14. M. Alan Kazlev, [www.kheper.net/integral/noetic\\_absolute.html](http://www.kheper.net/integral/noetic_absolute.html)

15. Purani, op. cit., *Evening Talks*, see December 18, 1938, pp. 343-344.

16. The Mother, *Mother's Agenda*, Vol. 3, Institut de Recherches Evolutives, Paris, 1982, see 26 September 1962, p. 355.

17. Nirodbaran, *Talks with Sri Aurobindo*, Vol. 1, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, see 29 December 1938, p. 75.

18. See "A Talk by the Mother on Savitri," written from memory by Mona Sarkar, November 5, 1967. Although not official it yet has credibility and is often quoted. The author feels that though inexact, the words express faithfully the views of the Mother.

19. Sri Aurobindo, *On Himself*, SABCL, Vol. 26, p. 455-60.

20. The Mother, *Mother's Agenda*, Vol. 2, 1981, see 7 November 1961, pp. 377-384.

21. The Mother, *Mother's Agenda*, Vol. 3, see 21 July 1962, letter from Sri Aurobindo to his younger brother Barin written in April 1920 (the date though given in the Agenda as April 7th is unfixable) and translated from the Bengali, pp. 268-277.

22. The account in *Mother's Agenda*, Vol. 2, from 7 November 1961 listed above in note 20, is the primary account of the "process" of Sri Aurobindo's path, their dual path, through the Supermind in the 1910s and 1920s. The author accepts the authenticity of the Mother's narrative in these subtle matters.

23. Iyengar, op. cit., p. 212.

24. Purani, op. cit., p. 20.

25. The Mother, *Mother's Agenda*, Vol. 1, 1979, see 21 December 1955, p. 415.

26. Sri Aurobindo, *On Himself*, pp. 143-172.

27. Purani, *The Life of Sri Aurobindo*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, pp. 211-217.

28. Ibid., p. 216.

29. R.Y. Deshpande, "The Integral Yoga of the Future," <http://www.auromusic.org/online%20books/articles/R.Y.Deshpande/IntegralYogaofFuture.html>, basis for key-

note address 2003 AUM. This has inspired much of the approach taken here to Sri Aurobindo's path through Supermind (though other sources that are Tamil have helped me through the discrimination between Supermind and Overmind). Note how Deshpande illumines the true nature of Krishna, as fundamentally the full power of Bliss. No misunderstandings or mistakes on my part can be ascribed to any source but me.

30. Amal Kiran and Nirodbaran, *Talk Six by Amal Kiran in Light and Laughter: Some Talks at Pondicherry*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, Second Revised Edition 1974, pp. 78-79.

31. Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, p. 41.

32. Rishabhchand, *The Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, Second Edition 1959 (Reprinted 2000), p. 434.

33. Peter Heehs, *The Lives of Sri Aurobindo*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2008, p. 351 and others.

34. Purani, op. cit., *Evening Talks*, p. 37.

35. Inspiration for the insight how Sri Aurobindo's revolutionary political program translated into the "overthrow of Overmind" dawned during my reading a passage of Nirodbaran, recounting very simply Sri Aurobindo's revolutionary political principles. Nirodbaran did not refer there to any correlation with a spiritual program. An intuitive flash came to me (which seemed to have been occasioned by this reading) that contained the remainder of this chapter, but in an instant. The rest of this chapter is my attempt to elucidate that intuition.

36. Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, p. 323.

"...For worlds were many, but the Self was one.

This knowledge was now made a cosmos' seed:

This seed was cased in the safety of the Light,

It needed not a sheath of Ignorance."

37. T.R. Thulasiram, *Arut Perum Jothi and Deathless Body: A Comparative Study of Swami Ramalingam with Sri Aurobindo and the Mother and Thirumoolar*, Vol. 1, University of Madras, 1980, pp. 573-649.

38. Thulasiram, op. cit., pp. 585-586 and following. Nayanmars and Alwars were respectively the Saivite and Vishnavite poet-saints of South India. See Thulasiram's chapter 13, for detailed examples of the realizations they reached, in relation to distinguishing regions up to and including Overmind, from the poises (sessions) of the Supermind.

39. Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, p. 278.

40. Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, p. 950.

41. See Thulasiram, op. cit., Chapter 13 as referenced above. This chapter (not to mention extensive passages in both volumes of the book) elucidates the Avyakta Paratpara (Positive Void, as Sri Aurobindo calls it) and the harmonizing and making intact the soul-and-Higher-Self complex, with direct references to both Sri Aurobindo's *The Life Divine* and their precise correlation with Swami Ramalingam's sixth volume of *Thiru Arutpa* (his "holy book of songs"). Both arrived at these insights independently (Ramalingam's disappearance in 1874 having taken place a year and a half after Sri Aurobindo's birth, and Sri Aurobindo having never read Ramalingam's *Thiru Arutpa*). Also see Nolini Kanta Gupta, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, "Lines of the Descent of Consciousness," pp. 50-51 for a most lucid account of the process leading towards coalescence of soul (psychic being) and Self (Jivatman) in the Supermind. See also *Savitri*, Book VII, Canto 5, pp. 526-527 and following.

42. The fivefold universal powers are to create, to preserve, to renew through destruction, to veil or conceal (involve), and to unfold through grace or reveal (evolve). These are found throughout Saiva Siddhanta and other Hindu tradition.

43. See Thulasiram, op. cit. for instance p. 59 and p. 671 in Vol. 1, and for exact and direct reference to the "door" in stanza 283 see Vol. 2, p. 209, in first of two extensive sections on "Joti Agaval" poem, which contains 798 stanzas, or 1596 verses.

44. Swami Ramalingam's sixth volume of *Thiru Arutpa*, which is very extensive, is purely supramental in character. Earlier poems in *Thiru Arutpa* also relate



supramental experiences. In addition his Upadesha (sayings taken down by disciples) and Upakhyana (commentaries, notably the “Karanateeta Lokas”) contain extensive references to supramental experience. Other sources also exist. Thus, it has been said, perhaps justifiably, that his works contain over a thousand pages of his direct supramental experiences.

45. The Mother, *Words of the Mother*, CWM, Vol. 13, 1980, see 14 February 1961, written in English in the Mother’s handwriting.

46. Quoted by the excellent poet Joseph Kent, a close student of Dr. Haridas Chaudhuri, who recalled hearing Dr. Chaudhuri use this phrase.

47. Nolini Kanta Gupta, *Collected Works*, The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo, Vol. 3, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1970, see “Lines of the Descent of Consciousness,” p. 35.

48. Here again I’d like to share more highlights from my investigations in Tamil spirituality, especially *Arut Perum Jothi and Deathless Body*, Vols. 1 and 2 by Sri T.R. Thulasiram, an inmate and in fact the auditor and chief accountant of Sri Aurobindo Ashram from 1969 to his passing in 2007. The deeper sense of the full differences between Overmind and Supermind can be found in these extensive volumes, published in 1980. References to Swami Ramalingam’s supramental yoga and that of other Tamil siddhas taken from these volumes. A work of the future, perhaps a way to assist Sri Aurobindo’s ongoing project to supramentalize the Overmind and all planes leading to it, will be to find the harmony between, and the same principle underlying the Integral Yoga community founded by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, and the Suddha Sanmarga community founded by Swami Ramalingam, both centered in Tamil Nadu, South India, but neither at present recognizing the other.

49. Thulasiram, op. cit., Vol. 1, pp. 828-829. Also see chapter 11 on Tirumoolar, and Chapter 18 on transformation in Tirumoolar, Swami Ramalingam, and the Mother.

50. Sri Aurobindo, *Collected Poems*, SABCL, Vol. 5, 1972, “The Golden Light”,

p. 134.

51. Amal Kiran, *Our Light and Delight: Recollections of Life with the Mother*, Amal Kiran, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1980, p. 224.

52. Deshpande, op. cit. “The Integral Yoga of the Future.”

53. Sri Aurobindo, *On Himself*, p. 153.

54. Nirodbaran, *Talks with Sri Aurobindo*, Vol. 2, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 2001, p. 1008.

55. Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, p. 550.

56. The Mother, *Mother’s Agenda*, Vol. 3, see 13 April 1962, p. 131.

57. Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, p. 709. For the eleventh book of *Savitri* Sri Aurobindo holds a special fondness.

58. Nirodbaran, op. cit., *Talks with Sri Aurobindo*, Vol 2, p. 1008.

59. Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, p. 445. This line in “The Way of Fate and the Problem of Pain” is one of the final three passages Sri Aurobindo added to *Savitri* in his final month.

60. “Parting gift” is a phrase used by R.Y. Deshpande in “The Integral Yoga of the Future,” op. cit.

61. K.D. Sethna, op. cit. , see Note 2 above.

62. Bhavi Saklecha’s mother told me this story on the cliffs above San Francisco a few years back.

63. Amal Kiran (K.D. Sethna), *The Vision and Work of Sri Aurobindo*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, Second Revised and Enlarged Edition 1992, see “The Supermind’s Descent and the ‘Mind of Light,’ Some Facts and Interpretations,” pp. 104-134. The Mother’s words preceding the above presentation of Amal Kiran’s view of the Mind of Light can be found there.

64. Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, p. 247.

65. Sri Aurobindo, see chapters on the Mind of Light in “The Supramental Manifestation on Earth” in *The Supramental Manifestation and Other Writings*, SABCL, Vol. 16, 1971.

66. Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, see “The Triple Transformation,” pp. 889-918.

67. The Mother, *Mother’s Agenda*, Vol. 1, 1979, see 24 May 1960, pp. 371-374.

68. M. Alan Kazlev, “Sri Aurobindo, the Mother, and the Integral Movement,” *Collaboration journal*, Spring 2011.

69. The Mother, *Words of the Mother*, CWM, Vol. 15, 1980, p. 108.

70. Iyengar, op. cit., p. 495.

71. Debashish Banerji, “Living Laboratories of the Divine” (text of a talk delivered for the AUM Conference, Los Angeles, May 2003), Posthuman Destinies website, published November 23, 2008.

72. The Mother, *Mother’s Agenda*, Vol. 1, see 29 February 1956, p. 69.

73. The Mother, *Questions and Answers 1957-1958*, CWM, Vol. 9, 1977, see 1 January 1958, p. 245.

74. Ibid., see 1 July 1957, p. 145.

75. Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, SABCL, Vols. 20-21, 1971, p. 1.

76. The Mother, *Mother’s Agenda*, Vol. 1, see October 4, 1958 (at end of discussion), p. 205.

77. Paul Stamets, *Mycelium Running: How Mushrooms Can Help Save the World*, Ten Speed Press, Berkeley, 2005.

78. Jaakko Seikkula et al, “Five-Year Experience of First-Episode Non-Affective Psychosis in Open-Dialogue Approach: Treatment Principles, Follow-up Outcomes, and Two Case Studies,” *Psychotherapy Research*, March 2006, pp. 214-228.

79. Arthur C. Clarke presents “Fractals: The Colours of Infinity,” 1995, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lk6QU94xAb8> with concluding quotation from Sri Aurobindo.

80. These quotations, placed here into three paragraphs, are found in Sri Aurobindo, *On Himself*, pp. 124-125.

81. A phrase taken from the fire of life and spoken by Wayne Bloomquist.

82. Sri Aurobindo, *On Himself*, p. 77.

83. Sri Aurobindo, *The Mother*, SABCL, Vol. 25, 1972, pp. 6-8. See his own statement on the contribution we can humanly make to the Yoga that all life is: aspiration, rejection, surrender.





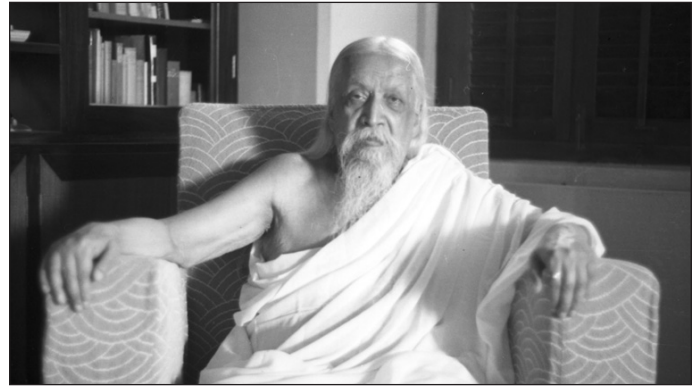
## Source Material

### Supermind and the Mind of Light

by Sri Aurobindo

**T**he essential character of Supermind is a Truth-consciousness which knows by its own inherent right of nature, by its own light: it has not to arrive at knowledge but possesses it. It may indeed, especially in its evolutionary action, keep knowledge behind its apparent consciousness and bring it forward as if from behind the veil; but even then this veil is only an appearance and does not really exist: the knowledge was always there, the consciousness its possessor and present revealer. This too is only in the evolutionary play and on the supramental plane itself the consciousness lives always in an immediacy of knowledge and acts by a direct immediacy of knowledge. In Mind as we see it here the action is very different; it starts from an apparent absence of knowledge, a seeming ignorance or nescience, even, in material Nature, from an inconscience in which any kind of knowing does not seem at all to exist. It reaches knowledge or the action of knowledge by steps which are not at all immediate but rather knowledge at first seems utterly impossible and foreign to the very substance of this Matter. Yet, in the blindness of Matter itself there are signs of a concealed consciousness which in its hidden fundamental being sees and has the power to act according to its vision and even by an infallible immediacy which is inherent in its nature. This is the same Truth that is apparent in Supermind but is here involved and seems not to be. The Mind of Light is a subordinate action of Supermind, dependent upon it even when not apparently springing direct from it, in which the secret of this connection becomes evident and palpable.

The Truth-consciousness is not only a power of knowledge; it is a being of consciousness and knowledge, a luminous many-sided dynamis and play of the omniscient Spirit; in it there can be a spiritual feeling, a spiritual sensation, a spiritual essentiality of substance that knows and reveals, that acts and manifests in an omniscience which is one with omnipotence. In Mind this Truth-consciousness and these workings of the Truth-consciousness can be there and even though it limits itself in Mind and has a subordinate or an indirect working, its action can be essentially the same. There can even be a hidden immediacy which hints at the presence of something absolute and is evidence of the same omnipotence and omniscience. In the Mind of Light when it becomes full-orbed this character of the Truth reveals itself, though in a garb that is transparent even when it seems to cover: for this too is a truth-consciousness and a self-power of knowledge. This too proceeds from the Supermind and depends upon it even though it is limited and subordinate. What we have called specifi-



Sri Aurobindo in 1950 (Photo courtesy Sri Aurobindo Ashram)

cally the Mind of Light is indeed the last of a series of descending planes of consciousness in which the Supermind veils itself by a self-chosen limitation or modification of its self-manifesting activities, but its essential character remains the same: there is in it an action of light, of truth, of knowledge in which inconscience, ignorance and error claim no place. It proceeds from knowledge to knowledge; we have not yet crossed over the borders of the truth-conscious into ignorance. The methods also are those of a self-luminous knowing and seeing and feeling and a self-fulfilling action within its own borders; there is no need to seek for something missing, no fumbling, no hesitation: all is still a gnostic action of a gnostic power and principle. There has been a descent from full Supermind into Mind, but this Mind though a self-limited is not yet an agnostic consciousness unsure of itself or unsure of its workings; there is still a comprehending or an apprehending consciousness which goes straight to its object and does not miss its mark or have to hunt for it in the dark or in insufficient light: it sees, knows, puts its hand immediately on things of self and things of Nature. We have passed into Mind but Mind has still not broken its inherent connection with the supramental principle.

Still there is an increasing self-limitation which begins even with Overmind: Overmind is separated by only a luminous border from the full light and power of the supramental Truth and it still commands direct access to all that Supermind can give it. There is a further limitation or change of characteristic action at each step downwards from Overmind to Intuition, from Intuition to Illumined Mind, from Illumined Mind to what I have called the Higher Mind: the Mind of Light is a transitional passage by which we can pass from supermind and superhumanity to an illumined humanity. For the new humanity will be capable of at least a partly divinised way of seeing and living because it will live in the light and in knowledge and not in the obscurity of the Ignorance.

Still, again there will be a difference between the superhuman and the human, a difference in nature and power but a difference especially in the access and way of admission to the Truth-consciousness and its activities: there may indeed be two orders of its truth, direct and half-direct, immediate and near



*The Mother in 1969. (Courtesy Sri Aurobindo Ashram)*

or even only a reception at a distance. But this we must consider afterwards; at present it is sufficient to mark certain differences in the descending order of gnostic mind which culminates here. We may say that there is a higher hemisphere of our being in which Mind, luminous and aware of its workings, still lives in the Light and can be seen as a subordinate power of the Supermind; it is still an agent of the Truth-consciousness, a gnostic power that has not descended into the mental ignorance; it is capable of a mental gnosis that preserves its connection with the superior light and acts by its power. This is the character of Overmind in its own plane and of all the powers that are dependent on the Overmind: the Supermind works there but at one remove as if in something that it has put forth from itself but which is no longer entirely itself but is still a delegate of the Truth and invested with its authority. We are moving towards a transitional border beyond which lies the possibility of the Ignorance, but the Ignorance is not yet here. In the order of the evolutionary descent we stand in the Mind of Light on that border and a step downward can carry us beyond it into the beginnings of an ignorance which still bears on its face something of the luminosity that it is leaving behind it. On the other hand, in the ascending order of the evolution we reach a transition in which we see the light, are turned towards it, reflect it in our consciousness and one further step carries us into the domain of the Light. The Truth becomes visible and audible to us and we are in immediate communication with its messages and illuminations and can grow into it and be made one with its substance. Thus there is a succession of ranges of consciousness which we can speak of as Mind but which belongs practically to the higher hemisphere, although in their ontological station they are within the domain of the lower hemisphere. For the whole of being is a connected totality and there is in it no abrupt passage from the principle of Truth and Light into their opposite. The creative truth of things works and can work infallibly even in the Inconscient: the Spirit is there in Matter and it has made a series of steps by which it can travel from it to its own heights in an uninterrupted line of gradations; the depths are linked to the heights and the Law of the one Truth creates and works everywhere.

## The supramental consciousness

*by the Mother*

Yes. But this was really a Glory in which I lived for hours together this morning.

And then all, all, all notions, all of them, even the most intellectual, all became as... as though childishness. It was so obvious that one had the feeling: there is no need to speak of it!

All human reactions, even the highest, the purest, the noblest, appeared so childish!... There is a sentence written by Sri Aurobindo somewhere that was coming all the while to me. One day, I do not remember where, he had written something, a rather long sentence in which there was this: "And when I feel jealous, I know that the old man is still there." It is now perhaps more than thirty years since I read it—yes, almost thirty years—and I remember, when I read "jealous", I said to myself: How can Sri Aurobindo be jealous? And so after thirty years I have understood what he meant by being "jealous"—it is not at all what men call "jealous"; it was altogether another state of consciousness. I saw it clearly. And this morning it came back to me: "And when I feel jealous, I know that the old man is still there." To be "jealous" for him did not mean what we call "jealous"... It is this infinitesimal particle that we call the individual, this particle of infinitesimal consciousness which places itself at the centre, which is the centre of the perception, and which consequently perceives things coming like that (gesture towards oneself) or going like that (gesture outward) and all that does not come to it gives it a kind of perception that Sri Aurobindo called "jealous": the perception that things are going towards diffusion, instead of coming in towards centralisation; it was that which he called "jealous". So he said: When I feel jealous (this was what he meant to say), I know that the old man is still there; that is to say, this infinitesimal particle of consciousness can still be at the centre of itself; it is the centre of action, the centre of perception, the centre of sensation....

*(Silence)*

Yes, I could notice—it is the time when I do all my physical work—I could notice that the whole work—could be done without any alteration in the consciousness. It was not that which altered my consciousness; what veiled my consciousness was seeing people: it is when I began to be here and to do what I have been doing every day: projecting the divine Consciousness upon people. But it came back... (how can one say it?) on the borders; that is to say, instead of being within, I began to perceive it, when you asked me. But that feeling is no longer there—there was nothing but that any more! That alone was there, and everything, everything has changed—appearance, meaning, etc.

That must be the supramental consciousness: I believe that this is the supramental consciousness.



*But one could conceive very well that for a consciousness wide and quick enough, if I may say so, capable of seeing not merely a bit of the path, but the whole path at the same time...*

Yes, yes.

*The whole would be a moving perfection.*

Yes.

*Evil is simply holding one's vision on one small angle; then one says, "It is evil", but if one sees the entire path... In a total consciousness, obviously there is no evil.*

There are no contraries. No contraries—not even contradictions; I say: no contraries. It is that Unity, it is living in that Unity. And that cannot be translated by thoughts or words. I am telling you, it is... a vastness without limits and a light... a light without movement, and at the same time an ease... an ease not recognised as such. Now I am convinced that it is that, the supramental consciousness.

And necessarily, necessarily that must change the appearances gradually.

*(Long silence)*

There are no words that can explain the magnificence of the Grace, how the whole is combined so that all may go as quickly as possible. And individuals are miserable to the extent to which they are not conscious of it and take a false position in regard to what is happening to them.

*But what is difficult to think is that at each moment it must be... it is the perfection.*

Yes, that is it.

*At each instant, it is the perfection.*

At each instant. There is no other thing... When I was there, there was no other thing. And yet, as I have told you, it was the time when I was physically extremely busy—all the work was being done, without disturbing anything; on the contrary, I believe I was doing things much better than usual... I do not know how to explain. It was not, as it were, a thing "added": it was quite natural.

Life as it is can be lived in that consciousness—but it is then lived quite well!... Nothing needs to be changed, what is to be changed changes itself quite naturally.

I am going to give you an example. For a few days, I had some difficulty with... I will not name him; pressure had to be put on him to correct some of his movements. Today he was conscious of it in quite a different way from the usual, and in the end he said that he was on the way to change (that is true), and all that not only without a word, but without any movement of the con-

sconsciousness for putting pressure. There you are. That is a proof... All is done automatically, as an imposition of the Truth without any necessity of intervention: simply to remain in the true consciousness, that is all, that is sufficient.

But then, in spite of everything, the body kept just a little consciousness of its needs all the while (although it was not busy with itself; I was always saying: It is not busy with itself, it is not interested). But that is what Sri Aurobindo used to say: I feel I am still the old man. I understood that this morning, for it was no longer there. Well, this sort of a very quiet perception of what is still not all right—a pain here, a difficulty there—very calm, very indifferent, but it is perceived (without its taking any importance), and even that gone, wholly swept away!... I hope it won't come back. It is really... this, I understand, it is a transformation. One is conscious in a golden vastness—my child, it is wonderful—luminous, golden, peaceful, eternal, all-powerful.

And how it is coming.... No word is there to express it indeed, this wonder regarding the Grace.... The Grace, the Grace is a thing that surpasses all comprehension, with its clear-seeing kindness.... Naturally the body had the experience. Something had happened that I will not tell you and it had the true reaction; it had not the old reaction, it had the true reaction—it smiled, with the Smile of the supreme Lord—it smiled. That was there for a whole day and a half. And it was this difficulty which enabled the body to make the last progress, enabled it to live in this Consciousness: if all had been harmonious, things could have lasted still for years—it is wonderful, wonderful !

And how stupid men are! When the Grace has come to them, they push it away, saying, "Oh! What horror!"... That I have known for a long time, but my experience is... dazzling.

*Yes, each thing is perfectly, wonderfully what it ought to be at every moment.*

Quite so.

*But it is our vision that is not attuned.*

Yes, it is our separated consciousness.

The whole has been brought with lightning rapidity towards the consciousness that will be the Consciousness of the point and of the all, at the same time.[...]

I have already had the experience, partially, that when one is in this state of inner harmony and no part of the attention is turned towards the body, the body works perfectly well. It is this... self-concentration" which upsets everything. And this I have observed many times, many times.... In reality one does *make oneself ill*. It is the narrowness of consciousness, the division. If you let it work, there is... everywhere there is a Consciousness and a Grace that do everything so that all may go well, and it is because of this imbecility that all goes wrong—it is strange! The egocentric imbecility, it is that which Sri Aurobindo calls "the old man." (CWM, Vol. 11, pp. 202-207)



## Book Reviews

### Three publications edited by Anurag Banerjee of the Overman Foundation

Reviewed by Larry Seidlitz

Books available through: <http://overmanfoundation.wordpress.com>

#### Sri Aurobindo: His political life and activities

In this 445 page book, Banerjee reveals many interesting details of Sri Aurobindo's political life through a variety of government documents, press reports, letters and essays, some of which are being published for the first time. It includes some material published in the *Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* that help provide an overall completeness and perspective, but it also includes less known material that has been published in various books and journals by disciples, and still rarer material from newspapers and documents of the period investigated. It is well-organized and presented, though like the other two publications being reviewed here, with a simple paper cover in standard A4 size.

With few exceptions, this book focuses on the period between 1905 when Sri Aurobindo took up the post of principal at the National College in Calcutta, and 1910 when he withdrew from active political work to focus on his spiritual work in Pondicherry. This was a pivotal period in which the populace of the country was transformed from being passively accepting of British rule to seeking full political independence. Though it did not achieve its aim until 37 years later, the character and methods of the movement were largely established during this period. The book is organized into 14 sections, among them including: "Bengal National College, the Barisal Conference and the *Bande Mataram*;" "The Surat Congress: December 1907;" "Sri Aurobindo in the Deccan;" "The Alipore Bomb Trial;" "The Poet of Patriotism;" and "Sri Aurobindo and the British Government."

The book takes the reader back in time to this momentous period. We can read Sri Aurobindo's speech to the students at the newly formed Bengal National College which he was selected to head, and we find reminiscences of Sri Aurobindo by his fellow lecturers. The Barisal Provincial Conference in April 1906 was convened by some of the Nationalist leaders shortly after the partition of Bengal, at the end it was broken up by the police. We can read the fiery speeches of some of the members. We learn about the government prosecution of the *Bande Mataram* paper in 1907. We can read Sri Aurobindo's written statement to the court and the judge's eight page ruling on the case, summarizing all the evidence and concluding that Sri Aurobindo was not proved to be the editor of the seditious article in question.

We also learn about the Indian National Congress in Surat, in which the National Congress, consisting of Moderates and Nationalists, was finally split along ideological lines, dramatically enacted when a brawl broke out on the speaker's platform. Days earlier, the Nationalists had just formed their own party and had had their first conference with Sri Aurobindo presiding. There Sri Aurobindo laid out in a speech the programme of the Nationalists, and its position vis á vis the Moderates. From then on the Nationalists became an independent and powerful voice in the nation's politics, and the *Bande Mataram* became its primary voice, awakening India to the ideals of political independence. After the Surat conference, Sri Aurobindo traveled in the Deccan giving speeches on the Nationalist ideals and program to hundreds and sometimes to thousands of people. We can read some of these speeches, and accounts of some of those who attended.

In the early morning of 2 May 1908, Sri Aurobindo was arrested in his home in Calcutta for his alleged conspiracy in a bombing in which two ladies were mistakenly killed in an attempt on the life of Mr. Kingsford, a judge who had formerly imprisoned various revolutionaries. This was the beginning of what would become known as the Alipore Bomb Trial, in which Sri Aurobindo would spend a year as an undertrial prisoner, only to be finally acquitted. This section, which takes up a quarter of the book, gives many details of the case and its background from various perspectives.

After his acquittal in the Alipore Bomb Trial, Sri Aurobindo continued the Nationalist movement almost single-handedly giving speeches and publishing two political weekly papers, the *Karmayogin* and the *Dharma*, the first in English and the second in Bengali. In the section "The Poet of Patriotism," we can read a number of these fiery speeches, as well as some important articles published in the *Karmayogin*. We also get other perspectives of this period from the accounts of others.

In "Sri Aurobindo and the British Government," we can read documents and letters of British government officials showing the danger that Sri Aurobindo represented to them. Some of these pertain to the case of sedition brought against him for the article which appeared in the *Karmayogin* on the 25th December 1909, titled "To my countrymen," a kind of last will and testament in which he championed the cause of the Nationalist party, severely criticized the government, and announced its intentions to deport him. Before the warrant against him was issued, he had already left for Chandernagore and Pondicherry. Some of these letters show disagreement within the government concerning the merits of the case and the possibility of conviction. Subsequently the publisher of the paper was convicted, and then after an appeal, was acquitted. We can read the verdicts in both cases which review the evidence, as well as other's views. The case against Sri Aurobindo was subsequently dropped.

There are other interesting topics covered in this informative and well-researched work. Banerjee has done a good job to bring together a collection of new and interesting material which sheds light on Sri Aurobindo's life during this important period.



## The Alipore Bomb Trial Judgment

This book presents the full verdict in the Alipore Bomb case that was delivered on 6 May 1909 by C.P. Beachcroft. It runs 137 pages in length, but this was no ordinary trial. It was exceedingly complex, and it was the first State trial of such a magnitude in British India involving a conspiracy to wage war against the British Crown. Verdicts were delivered for 36 persons in this document. During the course of the proceedings which started 19 October 1908, 206 witnesses were called, about 4000 documents were filed, and about 5000 exhibits were produced. According to Banerjee in his preface, Barindra Kumar Ghose (Sri Aurobindo's brother) and Ullaskar Dutt were sentenced to be hanged, ten others were sentenced to prison for 10 years, three of the accused were sentenced to prison for seven years, and one boy of 16 was sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for one year due to his age. The other accused, including Sri Aurobindo, were acquitted. Beachcroft's verdict is interesting in that it weighs all the evidence concerning all the various accused. As such, the reader learns quite a bit about the actual details of the activities of these revolutionaries who were led by Sri Aurobindo's brother Barindra. I was struck by what appeared to be a reasonable and dispassionate assessment of the evidence. In Sri Aurobindo's case, the judge ruled that there was only weak and insufficient evidence linking him to the conspiracy, including some brief notes which may have planted by government spies. The judge also notes that Sri Aurobindo's writings did not advocate violence, sometimes repudiated violent revolution, and typically advocated nonviolent means. He indicated that if Sri Aurobindo were involved in the conspiracy, it would be a contradiction of his own writings on political action. The book presents a document of significant historical interest.

## Sri Aurobindo on Ethics

This book of 53 pages is a fine compilation of Sri Aurobindo's writings on ethics. Although the book is simply stapled together, the contents are rich and nicely organized into 3 sections and 18 subsections. The first section examines Sri Aurobindo's philosophical perspectives on ethics. The second section deals with ethics in different societies and cultures. The third section considers ethics in relation to reason, morality, dharma, and the gnostic life. In this book we find a deep and well-balanced explanation of Sri Aurobindo's views of ethics, its importance and place in human life, and its deeper meaning and transformation in the spiritual life. The issue and place of ethics in the spiritual life are complex issues, particularly as the individual is in transition from a mental control over the life to a higher spiritual and psychic control. It is common to throw away the former before the latter is well-developed or operational, leading to complications. It is also common to hold too tightly to the former, thereby blocking the opening to a more flexible psychic and spiritual impetus to action. This book helps to untangle these complex issues and to guide us towards a smoother transition to the life divine.

## *The poetry room*

### Jivanmukta

There is a silence greater than any known  
To earth's dumb spirit, motionless in the soul  
That has become eternity's foothold,  
Touched by the infinitudes for ever.

A Splendour is here, refused to the earthward sight,  
That floods some deep flame-covered all-seeing eye;  
Revealed it wakens when God's stillness  
Heavens the ocean of moveless Nature.

A Power descends no Fate can perturb or vanquish,  
Calmer than mountains, wider than marching waters,  
A single might of luminous quiet  
Tirelessly bearing the worlds and ages.

A Bliss surrounds with ecstasy everlasting,  
An absolute high-seated immortal rapture  
Possesses, sealing love to oneness  
In the grasp of the All-beautiful, All-beloved.

He who from time's dull motion escapes and thrills  
Rapt thoughtless, wordless into the Eternal's breast,  
Unrolls the form and sign of being,  
Seated above in the omniscient Silence.

Although consenting here to a mortal body,  
He is the Undying; limit and bond he knows not;  
For him the aeons are a playground,  
Life and its deeds are his splendid shadow.

Only to bring God's forces to waiting Nature,  
To help with wide-winged Peace her tormented labour  
And heal with joy her ancient sorrow,  
Casting down light on the inconscient darkness,

He acts and lives. Vain things are mind's smaller motives  
To one whose soul enjoys for its high possession  
Infinity and the sempiternal  
All is his guide and beloved and refuge.

—Sri Aurobindo





## Nirvana

Could my heart but see Creation as God sees it, —from within;  
See His grace behind its beauty, see His will behind its force;  
See the flame of life shoot upward when the April days begin;  
See the wave of life rush outward from its pure eternal source;

Could I see the summer sunrise glow with God's transcendent hope;  
See His peace upon the waters in the moonlit summer night;  
See Him nearer still when, blinded, in the depths of gloom I grope,—  
See the darkness flash and quiver with the gladness of His light;

Could I see the red-hot passion of His love resistless burn  
Through the dumb despair of winter, through the frozen lifeless  
clod;—  
Could I see what lies around me as God sees it, I should learn  
That its outward life is nothing, that its inward life is God.

Vain the dream! To spirit only is the spirit-life revealed:  
God alone can see God's glory; God alone can feel God's love.  
By myself the soul of Nature from myself is still concealed;  
And the earth is still around me, and the skies are still above.

Vain the dream! I cannot mingle with the all-sustaining soul:  
I am prisoned in my senses; I am pinioned by my pride;  
I am severed by my selfhood from the world-life of the Whole;  
And my world is near and narrow; and God's world is waste and wide.

Vain the dream! Yet in the morning, when the eastern skies are red,  
When the dew is on the meadows, when the lark soars up and sings,—  
Leaps a sudden flame within me from its ashes pale and dead,  
And I see God's beauty burning through the veil of outward things.

Brighter grows the veil and clearer, till, beyond all fear and doubt,  
I am ravished by God's splendour into oneness with His rest;  
And I draw the world within me, and I send my soul without;  
And God's pulse is in my bosom, and I lie upon God's breast.

Dies the beatific vision in the moment of its birth;  
Dies, but in its death transfigures all the sequence of my days;  
Dies, but dying crowns with triumph all the travail of the earth,  
Till its harsh discordant murmurs swell into a psalm of praise.

Then a yearning comes upon me to be drawn at last by death,  
Drawn into the mystic circle in which all things live and move,  
Drawn into the mystic circle of the love which is God's breath,—  
Love creative, love receptive, love of loving, love of love.

God! The One, the All of Being! Let me lose my life in Thine:  
Let me be what Thou hast made me, be a quiver of Thy flame.  
Purge my self from self's pollution; burn it into life divine;  
Burn it till it dies triumphant in the firespring whence it came.

—Edmond Gore Alexander Holmes

## From Aurora Leigh

Truth, so far, in my book;—the truth which draws  
Through all things upwards,—that a twofold world  
Must go to a perfect cosmos. Natural things  
And spiritual,—who separates those two  
In art, in morals, or the social drift  
Tears up the bond of nature and brings death,  
Paints futile pictures, writes unreal verse,  
Leads vulgar days, deals ignorantly with men,  
Is wrong, in short, at all points. We divide  
This apple of life, and cut it through the pips,—  
The perfect round which fitted Venus' hand  
Has perished as utterly as if we ate  
Both halves. Without the spiritual, observe,  
The natural's impossible,—no form,  
No motion: without sensuous, spiritual  
Is inappreciable,—no beauty or power:  
And in this twofold sphere the twofold man  
(For still the artist is intensely a man)  
Holds firmly by the natural, to reach  
The spiritual beyond it,—fixes still  
The type with mortal vision, to pierce through,  
With eyes immortal, to the antetype  
Some call the ideal,—better call the real,  
And certain to be called so presently  
When things shall have their names. Look long enough  
On any peasant's face here, coarse and lined,  
You'll catch Antinous somewhere in that clay,  
As perfect featured as he yearns at Rome  
From marble pale with beauty; then persist,  
And, if your apprehension's competent,  
You'll find some fairer angel at his back,  
As much exceeding him as he the boor,  
And pushing him with empyreal disdain  
For ever out of sight. Aye, Carrington  
Is glad of such a creed: an artist must  
Who paints a tree, a leaf, a common stone  
With just his hand, and finds it suddenly  
A-piece with and conterminous to his soul.  
Why else do these things move him, leaf, or stone?  
The bird's not moved, that pecks at a spring-shoot;  
Nor yet the horse, before a quarry, a-graze:  
But man, the twofold creature, apprehends  
The twofold manner, in and outwardly,  
And nothing in the world comes single to him,  
A mere itself,—cup, column, or candlestick,  
All patterns of what shall be in the Mount;  
The whole temporal show related royally,  
And built up to eterne significance  
Through the open arms of God. 'There's nothing great  
Nor small', has said a poet of our day,  
Whose voice will ring beyond the curfew of eve  
And not be thrown out by the matin's bell:



And truly, I reiterate, nothing's small!  
No lily-muffled hum of a summer-bee,  
But finds some coupling with the spinning stars;  
No pebble at your foot, but proves a sphere;  
No chaffinch, but implies the cherubim;  
And (glancing on my own thin, veined wrist),  
In such a little tremor of the blood  
The whole strong clamour of a vehement soul  
Doth utter itself distinct. Earth's crammed with heaven,  
And every common bush afire with God;  
But only he who sees, takes off his shoes,  
The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries,  
And daub their natural faces unaware  
More and more from the first similitude.

—Elizabeth Barrett Browning

### St Peter

St Peter once: 'Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?' —  
Much more I say: Lord, dost Thou stand and knock  
At my closed heart more rugged than a rock,  
Bolted and barred, for Thy soft touch unmeet,  
Nor garnished nor in any wise made sweet?  
Owls roost within and dancing satyrs mock.  
Lord, I have heard the crowing of the cock  
And have not wept: ah, Lord, thou knowest it.  
Yet still I hear Thee knocking, still I hear:  
'Open to Me, look on Me eye to eye,  
That I may wring thy heart and make it whole;  
And teach thee love because I hold thee dear  
And sup with thee in gladness soul with soul,  
And sup with thee in glory by and by.'

—Christina Rossetti

### La Vie Profonde

Hemmed in by petty thoughts and petty things,  
Intent on toys and trifles all my years,  
Pleased by life's gauds, pained by its pricks and stings,  
Swayed by ignoble hopes, ignoble fears;  
Threading life's tangled maze without life's clue,  
Busy with means, yet heedless of their ends,  
Lost to all sense of what is real and true,  
Blind to the goal to which all Nature tends;—  
Such is my surface self: but deep beneath,  
A mighty actor on a world-wide stage,  
Crowned with all knowledge, lord of life and death,  
Sure of my aim, sure of my heritage,—  
I—the true self—live on, in self's despite,  
That 'life profound' whose darkness is God's light.

—Edmond Gore Alexander Holmes

### From The Winter Morning Walk

Acquaint thyself with God, if thou wouldst taste  
His works. Admitted once to his embrace,  
Thou shalt perceive that thou wast blind before:  
Thine eye shall be instructed: and thine heart  
Made pure shall relish, with divine delight,  
Till then unfelt, what hands divine have wrought.  
Brutes graze the mountain-top, with faces prone,  
And eyes intent upon the scanty herb  
It yields them; or, recumbent on its brow,  
Ruminate heedless of the scene outspread  
Beneath, beyond, and stretching far away  
From inland regions to the distant main.  
Man views it, and admires; but rests content  
With what he views. The landscape has his praise,  
But not its Author. Unconcerned who formed  
The paradise he sees, he finds it such,  
And, such well pleased to find it, asks no more.  
Not so the mind that has been touched from Heaven,  
And in the school of sacred wisdom taught  
To read his wonders, in whose thought the world,  
Fair as it is, existed ere it was.  
Not for its own sake merely, but for His  
Much more who fashioned it, he gives it praise,  
Praise that, from earth resulting, as it ought,  
To earth's acknowledged Sovereign, finds at once  
Its only just proprietor in Him.  
The soul that sees him or receives sublimed  
New faculties, or learns at least to employ  
More worthily the powers she owned before;  
Discerns in all things what, with stupid gaze  
Of ignorance, till then she overlooked,  
A ray of heavenly light, gilding all forms  
Terrestrial in the vast and the minute—  
The unambiguous footsteps of the God  
Who gives its luster to an insect's wing,  
And wheels his throne upon the rolling worlds.

—William Cowper

### From The Task

The Lord of all, himself through all diffus'd,  
Sustains, and is the life of all that lives.  
Nature is but a name for an effect,  
Whose cause is God. He feeds the secret fire  
By which the mighty process is maintain'd.  
Who sleeps not, is not weary; in whose sight  
Slow circling ages are as transient days;  
Whose work is without labour; whose designs  
No flaw deforms, no difficulty thwarts;  
And whose beneficence no charge exhausts.

—William Cowper



## Apropos

Truth is an infinitely complex reality and he has the best chance of arriving nearest to it who most recognises but is not daunted by its infinite complexity. —Sri Aurobindo

We want a race that has no ego, that has in place of the ego the Divine Consciousness. It is that which we want: the Divine Consciousness which will allow the race to develop itself and the supramental being to take birth. —The Mother

The spiritual life does not remove us from the world but leads us deeper into it. —Henri J. M. Nouwen

Patient and regular practice is the whole secret of spiritual realization. Do not be in a hurry in spiritual life. Do your utmost, and leave the rest to God. —Swami Shivananda

Every man takes the limits of his own field of vision for the limits of the world. —Arthur Schopenhauer

The shortest and surest way to live with honor in the world is to be in reality what we would appear to be. —Socrates

Relationships are assignments. They are part of a vast plan for our enlightenment, the Holy Spirit's blueprint by which each individual soul is led to greater awareness and expanded love. Relationships are the Holy Spirit's laboratories in which He brings together people who have the maximal opportunity for mutual growth. —A Course in Miracles

People become sensitive to the elusive threads of their inner lives when they have a definite way of working with them. —Ira Progoff

In order to discover new lands, one must be willing to lose sight of the shore for a very long time. —Andre Gide

All work, the genuine work which we must achieve, is that which is most difficult and painful: the work on ourselves. If we do not freely take upon ourselves this pre-acceptance of the pain and torment, they will be visited upon us in an otherwise necessary individual and universal collapse. Anyone disassociated from his origin and his spiritually sensed task acts against origin. Anyone who acts against it has neither a today nor a tomorrow. —Jean Gebser

Every creative act reveals God and expands His being. I know that may be hard to comprehend. All creatures are doing their best to help God in His birth of Himself. —Meister Eckhart

Every natural fact is a symbol of some spiritual fact. —Ralph Waldo Emerson

The world we see merely reflects our own internal frame of reference—the dominant ideas, wishes and emotions in our minds. We look inside first, decide the kind of world we want to see and then project that world outside, making it the truth as we see it. We make it true by our interpretations of what it is we are seeing. —A Course in Miracles

Every person's map of the world is as unique as their thumbprint. There are no two people alike. No two people who understand the same sentence the same way.... So in dealing with people, you try not to fit them to your concept of what they should be. —Milton Erickson

No thought can encapsulate the vastness of the totality. Reality is a unified whole, but thought cuts it up into fragments. Every thought implies a perspective, and every perspective, by its very nature, implies limitation, which ultimately means that it is not true, at least not absolutely. Only the whole is true, but the whole cannot be spoken or thought. —Eckhart Tolle

Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of. —Benjamin Franklin

The work an unknown good man has done is like a vein of water flowing hidden underground, secretly making the ground green. —Thomas Carlyle

Ordinary riches can be stolen, real riches cannot. In your soul are infinitely precious things that cannot be taken from you. —Oscar Wilde

The wound is the place where the Light enters you. —Rumi

Money is not required to buy one necessity of the soul. —Henry David Thoreau

Those who die, go no further from us than God...And God is very near. —Unknown

Life and death are one, even as the river and the sea are one. In the depths of your hopes and desires lies your silent knowledge of the beyond; and like seeds dreaming beneath the snow, your heart dreams of spring. Trust the dreams, for in them is hidden the gate to eternity. —Kahlil Gibran

One life—a little gleam of time between two eternities. —Thomas Carlyle

What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others. —Pericles

By having a reverence for life, we enter into a spiritual relation with the world. By practicing reverence for life we become good, deep, and alive. Albert Schweitzer

Spirit is an invisible force made visible in all life. —Maya Angelou

The heart has its reasons, which reason does not know. We feel it in a thousand things. It is the heart which experiences God, and not the reason. This, then, is faith: God felt by the heart, not by the reason. —Blaise Pascal

Govern thy life and thoughts as if the whole world were to see the one, and read the other. —Thomas Fuller