



# Collaboration

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We are happy to announce that the federal government granted tax exemption on 24 February 1978 to the Matagiri Sri Aurobindo Center, Inc., a nonprofit organization created 14 September 1977 for the purpose of helping to carry on the work of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. It will immediately undertake the publication of *Collaboration* and the distribution of the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother and help in any way possible both the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Auroville, and related centers. We urge everyone who wishes to participate materially in this work to make whatever contribution they can. It will be especially helpful at once for *Collaboration* the cost of which has increased (particularly with the growth of our mailing list, now over 5,000). The response to *Collaboration* has been very positive all over the world. It goes not only to individuals and centers here and abroad, but to libraries, universities and organizations. It has also been used in course work and study groups. We very much appreciate all the spontaneous contributions which have been sent to us, but we are now asking all who feel the importance of bringing Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's message to this country (which Mother once said she felt would be the center of the transformation) and of helping both the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Auroville, to assist by sending contributions payable to Matagiri Sri Aurobindo Center, Inc.

In this issue we feature Sri Aurobindo's epic poem *Savitri*. It is especially appropriate for us to do so during this year of the Mother's birth centenary, since the identification of the Mother with the heroine of the poem can be seen from Sri Aurobindo's own remarks on who both Savitri and the Mother are and from the

Mother's remarks on Savitri's experiences paralleling her own, in the article "To Read Savitri" below.

We begin with two brief notes by Sri Aurobindo, outlining the plot of *Savitri* as drawn from a short episode in the Mahabharata which he has transformed in a way few writers have ever transformed such material, and on his purpose in writing the poem, and rewriting it, since he reworked it throughout his life. In fact it contains the definitive and extraordinarily powerful statement of his own experience and vision, not only of the past but of the future. It even contains a full description of two ways of sadhana, that of King Aswapathy, Savitri's father, and that of Savitri herself, mapping all the planes of consciousness. There is nothing vague or groping in the expression; all is vibrant with life and dressed in a beauty of expression that not only enhances most vividly the picture Sri Aurobindo paints but infuses it with a power of sound which makes of *Savitri*, when read aloud, a means of experience for the reader. It is in fact one long mantra.

The central theme is the conquest of death by the Divine Mother in order to create a divine and perfected life on earth. (It may also give a clue to the Mother's decision to leave her body; see Charles Maloney's article "The Mother, Death and Evolution" in the February 1978 issue of *Mother India*.) Since it is not possible for us to print the whole of the some 26,000 lines of the poem, we have chosen a passage that touches upon some of the principal issues in the struggle of Savitri with Death, a kind of introductory argument just preceding "The Debate of Love and Death." At the point where we begin, Death is trying to convince Savitri to return to earth, that her attempt to save her husband, Satyavan, is futile.

## SAVITRI *Sri Aurobindo*

I used *Savitri* as a means of ascension. I began with it on a certain mental level, each time I could reach a higher level I rewrote from that level. Moreover I was particular—if part seemed to me to come from any lower levels I was not satisfied to leave it because it was good poetry. All had to be as far as possible of the same mint. In fact *Savitri* has not been regarded by me as a poem to be written and finished, but as a field of experimentation to see how far poetry could be written from one's own yogic consciousness and how that could be made creative.

The tale of Satyavan and Savitri is recited in the Mahabharata as a story of conjugal love conquering death. But this legend is, as shown by many features of the human tale, one of the many symbolic myths of the Vedic cycle. Satyavan is the soul carrying the divine truth of being within itself but descended into the grip of

death and ignorance; Savitri is the Divine Word, daughter of the Sun, goddess of the supreme Truth who comes down and is born to save; Aswapati, the Lord of the Horse, her human father, is the Lord of Tapasya, the concentrated energy of spiritual endeavour that helps us to rise from the mortal to the immortal planes; Dharmatsena, Lord of the Shining Hosts, father of Satyavan, is the Divine Mind here fallen blind, losing its celestial kingdom of vision, and through that loss its kingdom of glory. Still this is not a mere allegory, the characters are not personified qualities, but incarnations or emanations of living and conscious Forces with whom we can enter into concrete touch and they take human bodies in order to help man and show him the way from his mortal state to a divine consciousness and immortal life. [From Sri Aurobindo's letters on *Savitri*, in *Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1972), pp. 727-9 & 817.]

"If Satyavan had lived, love would have died;  
 But Satyavan is dead and love shall live  
 A little while in thy sad breast, until  
 His face and body fade on memory's wall  
 Where other bodies, other faces come.  
 When love breaks suddenly into life  
 At first man steps into a world of sun;  
 In his passion he feels his heavenly element:  
 But only a fine sunlit patch of earth  
 The marvellous aspect took of heaven's outburst.  
 The snake is there and the worm in the heart of the rose.  
 A word, a moment's act can slay the god;  
 Precarious is his immortality,  
 He has a thousand ways to suffer and die;  
 Love cannot live by heavenly food alone,  
 Only on sap of earth can it survive.  
 For thy passion was a sensual want refined;  
 A hunger of the body and the heart;  
 Thy want can tire and cease or turn elsewhere  
 Or love may meet a dire and pitiless end  
 By bitter treason, or wrath with cruel wounds  
 Separate, or thy unsatisfied will to others  
 Depart when first love's joy lies stripped and slain:  
 A dull indifference replaces fire  
 Or an endearing habit imitates love:  
 An outward and uneasy union lasts  
 Or the routine of a life's compromise.  
 Where once the seed of oneness had been cast  
 Into a semblance of spiritual ground  
 By a divine adventure of heavenly powers  
 Two strive, constant associates without joy,  
 Two egos straining in a single leash,  
 Two minds divided by their jarring thoughts,  
 Two spirits disjoined, for ever separate.  
 Thus is the ideal falsified in man's world;  
 Trivial or sombre, disillusion comes,  
 Life's harsh reality stares at the soul:  
 Heaven's hour adjourned flees into bodiless Time.  
 Death saves thee from this and saves Satyavan:  
 He now is safe, delivered from himself;  
 He travels to silence and felicity.  
 Call him not back to the treacheries of earth  
 And the poor petty life of animal Man.  
 In my vast tranquil spaces let him sleep  
 In harmony with the mighty hush of death  
 Where love lies slumbering on the breast of peace.  
 And thou, go back alone to thy frail world:  
 Chastise thy heart with knowledge, unhood and see,  
 Thy nature raised into clear living heights,  
 The heaven-bird's view from unimagined peaks.  
 For when thou givest thy spirit to a dream  
 Soon hard necessity will smite thee awake:  
 Purest delight began and it must end.  
 Thou too shalt know, thy heart no anchor swinging,  
 Thy cradled soul moored in eternal seas.  
 Vain are the cycles of thy brilliant mind.  
 Renounce, forgetting joy and hope and tears,  
 Thy passionate nature in the bosom profound  
 Of a happy Nothingness and wordless Calm,  
 Delivered into my mysterious rest.  
 One with my fathomless Nihil all forget.  
 Forget thy fruitless spirit's waste of force,  
 Forget the weary cycle of thy birth,  
 Forget the joy and the struggle and the pain,  
 The vague spiritual quest which first began

When worlds broke forth like clusters of fire-flowers,  
 And great burning thoughts voyaged through the sky of mind  
 And Time and its aeons crawled across the vasts  
 And souls emerged into mortality."  
 But Savitri replied to the dark Power:  
 "A dangerous music now thou findest, O Death,  
 Melting thy speech into harmonious pain,  
 And flut'st alluringly to tired hopes  
 Thy falsehoods mingled with sad strains of truth.  
 But I forbid thy voice to slay my soul.  
 My love is not a hunger of the heart,  
 My love is not a craving of the flesh;  
 It came to me from God, to God returns.  
 Even in all that life and man have marred,  
 A whisper of divinity still is heard,  
 A breath is felt from the eternal spheres.  
 Allowed by Heaven and wonderful to man  
 A sweet fire-rhythm of passion chants to love.  
 There is a hope in its wild infinite cry;  
 It rings with callings from forgotten heights,  
 And when its strains are hushed to high-winged souls  
 In their empyrean, its burning breath  
 Survives beyond, the rapturous core of suns  
 That flame for ever pure in skies unseen,  
 A voice of the eternal Ecstasy.  
 One day I shall behold my great sweet world  
 Put off the dire disguises of the gods,  
 Unveil from terror and disrobe from sin.  
 Appeased we shall draw near our Mother's face,  
 We shall cast our candid souls upon her lap:  
 Then shall we clasp the ecstasy we chase,  
 Then shall we shudder with the long-sought god,  
 Then shall we find Heaven's unexpected strain.  
 Not only is there hope for godheads pure;  
 The violent and darkened deities  
 Leaped down from the one breast in rage to find  
 What the white gods had missed: they too are safe;

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Please inform us of your new address if you move.

A Mother's eyes are on them and her arms  
 Stretched out in love desire her rebel sons.  
 One who came, love and lover and beloved  
 Eternal, built himself a wondrous field  
 And wove the measures of a marvellous dance.  
 There in its circles and its magic turns  
 Attracted he arrives, repelled he flees.  
 In the wild devious promptings of his mind  
 He tastes the honey of tears and puts off joy  
 Repenting, and has laughter and has wrath,  
 And both are a broken music of the soul  
 Which seeks out, reconciled, its heavenly rhyme.  
 Ever he comes to us across the years  
 Bearing a sweet new face that is the old.  
 His bliss laughs to us or it calls concealed  
 Like a far-heard unseen entrancing flute  
 From moonlit branches in the throbbing woods,  
 Tempting our angry search and passionate pain.  
 Disguised the Lover seeks and draws our souls.  
 He named himself for me, grew Satyavan.  
 For we are man and woman from the first,  
 The twin souls born from one undying fire.  
 Did he not dawn on me in other stars?  
 How has he through the thickets of the world  
 Pursued me like a lion in the night

And come upon me suddenly in the ways  
 And seized me with his glorious golden leap!  
 Unsatisfied he yearned for me through time,  
 Desiring me since first the world began.  
 He rose like a wild wave out of the floods  
 And dragged me helpless into seas of bliss.  
 Out of my curtained past his arms arrived;  
 They have touched me like the soft persuading wind,  
 They have plucked me like a glad and trembling flower,  
 And clasped me happily burned in ruthless flame.  
 I too have found him charmed in lovely forms  
 And run delighted to his distant voice  
 And pressed to him past many dreadful bars.  
 If there is a yet happier greater god,  
 Let him first wear the face of Satyavan  
 And let his soul be one with him I love;  
 So let him seek me that I may desire.  
 For only one heart beats within my breast  
 And one god sits there throned. Advance, O Death,  
 Beyond the phantom beauty of this world;  
 For of its citizens I am not one.  
 I cherish God the Fire, not God the Dream."  
 [Book X, Canto II, "The Gospel of Death and Vanity of the  
 Ideal."]

### TO READ SAVITRI IS TO PRACTICE YOGA *The Mother*

It does not matter if you do not understand it—*Savitri*, read it always. You will see that every time you read it, there will be something new revealed to you. Each time you will get a new glimpse, each time a new experience; things which were not there, things you did not understand arise and suddenly become clear. Always an unexpected vision comes up through the words and lines. Every time you try to read and understand, you will see that something is added, something which was hidden behind is revealed clearly and and vividly. I tell you the very verses you have read once before, will appear to you in a different light each time you reread them. This is what happens invariably. Always your experience is enriched, it is a revelation at each step.

But you must not read it as you read other books or newspapers. You must read with an empty head, a blank and vacant mind, without there being any other thought; you must concentrate much, remain empty, calm and open; then the words, rhythms, vibrations will penetrate directly to this white page, will put their stamp upon the brain, will explain themselves without your making any effort.

*Savitri* alone is sufficient to make you climb to the highest peaks. If truly one knows how to meditate upon *Savitri*, one will receive all the help one needs. For him who wishes to follow this path, it is a concrete help as though the Lord himself were taking you by the hand and leading you to the destined goal. And then, every question, however personal it may be, has its answer here, every difficulty finds its solution herein; indeed there is everything that is necessary for doing the Yoga.

"He has crammed the whole universe in a single book." It is a marvellous work, magnificent and of an incomparable perfection.

You know, before writing *Savitri*, Sri Aurobindo said to me, "I am impelled to launch on a new adventure; I was hesitant in the beginning, but now I am decided. Still I do not know how far I shall succeed. I pray for help." And you know what it was? It was—before beginning, I warn you in advance—it was his way of speaking, so full of humility and divine modesty. He never...asserted himself. And the day he actually began it, he told me: "I have launched myself in a rudderless boat upon the vastness of the Infinite." And



The Mother: Photo courtesy Sri Aurobindo Asbram.



once having started, he wrote page after page without intermission, as though it were a thing already complete up there and he had only to transcribe it in ink down here on these pages.

In truth, the entire form of *Savitri* has descended en masse from the highest region and Sri Aurobindo with his genius only arranged the lines—in a superb and magnificent style. Sometimes entire lines were revealed and he has left them intact; he worked hard, untiringly, so that the inspiration could come from the highest possible summit. And what a work he has created! Yes, it is a true creation in itself. It is an unequalled work. Everything is there, and it is put in such a simple, such a clear form; verses perfectly harmonious, limpid and eternally true. My child, I have read so many things, but I have never come across anything which could be compared with *Savitri*. I have studied the best works in Greek, Latin, English and of course in French literature, also in German and all the great creation of the West and the East, including the great epics; but I repeat it, I have not found anywhere anything comparable with *Savitri*. All these literary works seem to me empty, flat, hollow, without any deep reality—apart from a few rare exceptions, and these too represent a small fraction of what *Savitri* is. What grandeur, what amplitude, what reality: it is something immortal and eternal he has created. I tell you once again there is nothing like it in the whole world. Even if one puts aside the vision of the reality, that is, the essential substance which is the heart of the inspiration, and considers only the verses in themselves, one will find them unique, of the highest classical kind. What he has created is something man cannot imagine. For, everything is there, everything.

It may then be said that *Savitri* is a revelation, it is a meditation, it is a quest of the Infinite, the Eternal. If it is read with this aspiration for Immortality, the reading itself will serve as a guide to Immortality. To read *Savitri* is indeed to practise Yoga, spiritual concentration; one can find there all that is needed to realise the Divine. Each step of Yoga is noted here, including the secret of all other Yogas. Surely, if one sincerely follows what is revealed here in each verse one will reach finally the transformation of the supramental Yoga. It is truly the infallible guide who never abandons you; his support is always there for him who wants to follow the path. Each verse of *Savitri* is like a revealed Mantra which surpasses all that man possessed by way of knowledge, and I repeat this, the words are expressed and arranged in such a way that the sonority of the rhythm leads you to the origin of sound, which is OM.

My child, yes, everything is there: mysticism, occultism, philosophy, the history of evolution, the history of man, of the gods, of creation, of Nature. How the universe was created, why, for what purpose, what destiny—all is there. You can find all the answers to all your questions therein. Everything is explained, even the future of man and of the evolution, all that nobody yet knows. He has described it all in beautiful and clear words so that spiritual “adventurers” who wish to solve the mysteries of the world may understand it more easily. But this mystery is well hidden behind the words and lines and one must climb to the required level of true consciousness to discover it. All prophecies, all that is going to come is presented with a precise and wonderful clarity. Sri Aurobindo gives you here the key to find the truth, to discover the consciousness, solve the problem of what the universe is. He has also indicated how to open the door of the Inconscience so that the light may penetrate there and transform it. He has shown the path, the way to liberate oneself from the ignorance and climb right up to the superconscience; each stage, each plane of consciousness, how they can be scaled, how one can cross even the barrier of death and reach immortality. You will find the whole journey in detail, and as you go forward you can discover things altogether unknown to men. That is *Savitri* and much more yet. It is a real experience—reading *Savitri*. All the secrets that man possessed, he has revealed—as well as all that awaits him in the future; all this is found in the depth of *Savitri*. But one must have the knowledge to discover it

all, the experience of the planes of consciousness, the experience of the Supermind, even the experience of the conquest of Death. He has noted all the stages, marked each step in order to advance integrally in the integral Yoga.

All this is his own experience, and what is most surprising is that it is my own experience also. It is my sadhana which he has worked out. Each object, each event, each realisation, all the descriptions, even the colours are exactly what I saw and the words, phrases are also exactly what I heard. And all this before having read the book. I read *Savitri* many times afterwards, but earlier, when he was writing, he used to read it to me. Every morning I used to hear him read *Savitri*. During the night he would write and in the morning read it to me. And I observed something curious, that day after day the experiences he read out to me in the morning were those I had had the previous night, word by word. Yes, all the descriptions, the colours, the pictures I had seen, the words I had heard, all, all, I heard it all, put by him into poetry, into miraculous poetry. Yes, they were exactly my experiences of the previous night which he read out to me the following morning. And it was not just one day by chance, but for days and days together. And every time I used to compare what he said with my previous experiences and they were always the same. I repeat, it was not that I had told him my experiences and that he had noted them down afterwards, no, he knew already what I had seen. It is my experiences he has presented at length and they were his experiences also. It is, moreover, the picture of our joint adventure into the unknown or rather into the Supermind.

These are experiences lived by him, realities, supracosmic truths. He experienced all these as one experiences joy or sorrow, physically. He walked in the darkness of inconscience, even in the neighbourhood of death, endured the sufferings of perdition, and emerged from the mud, the world-misery to breathe the sovereign plenitude and enter the supreme Ananda. He crossed all these realms, went through the consequences, suffered and endured physically what one cannot imagine. Nobody till today has suffered like him. He accepted suffering to transform suffering into the joy of union with the Supreme. It is something unique and incomparable in the history of the world. It is something that has never happened, he is the first to have traced the path in the Unknown, so that we may be able to walk with certitude towards the Supermind. He has made the work easy for us. *Savitri* is his whole Yoga of transformation, and this Yoga appears now for the first time in the earth-consciousness.

And I think that man is not yet ready to receive it. It is too high and too vast for him. He cannot understand it, grasp it, for it is not by the mind that one can understand *Savitri*. One needs spiritual experiences in order to understand and assimilate it. The more one advances on the path of Yoga, the more one assimilates and the better. No, it is something which will be appreciated only in the future, it is the poetry of tomorrow of which he has spoken in *The Future Poetry*. It is too subtle, too refined—it is not in the mind or through the mind, it is in meditation that *Savitri* is revealed.

And men have the audacity to compare it with the work of Virgil or Homer and to find it inferior. They do not understand. What do they know? Nothing at all. And it is useless to try to make them understand. Men will know what it is, but in a distant future. It is only the new race with a new consciousness which will be able to understand. I assure you there is nothing under the blue sky to compare with *Savitri*. It is the mystery of mysteries. It is a super-epic, it is super-literature, super-poetry, super-vision, it is a super-work even if one considers the number of lines he has written. No, these human words are not adequate to describe *Savitri*. Yes, one needs superlatives, hyperboles to describe it. It is a hyper-epic. No, words express nothing of what *Savitri* is, at least I do not find them. It is of immense value—spiritual value and all other values; it is eternal in its subject, and infinite in its appeal, miraculous in its mode

and power of execution; it is a unique thing, the more you come in contact with this, the higher will you be uplifted. Ah, truly it is something! It is the most beautiful thing he has left for man, the highest possible. What is it? When will man know it? When is he going to lead a life of truth? When is he going to accept this in his life? This yet remains to be known.

My child, everyday you are going to read *Savitri*; read properly, with the right attitude, concentrating a little before opening the pages and trying to keep the mind as empty as possible, absolutely without a thought. The direct road is by "the heart." I tell you, if you try to concentrate really with this aspiration you can light a flame, the psychic flame, the flame of purification in a very short time, perhaps in a few days. What you cannot do normally, you can do with the help of *Savitri*. Try and you will see how very different it is, how new, if you read with this attitude, with this something at the back of your consciousness; as though it were an offering to Sri Aurobindo. You know it is charged, fully charged with consciousness; as though *Savitri* were a being, a real guide. I tell you, whoever, wishing to practise Yoga, tries sincerely and feels the necessity for it, will be able to climb with the help of *Savitri* to the highest step of the ladder of Yoga, will be able to find the secret that *Savitri*

represents. And this without the help of a Guru. And he will be able to practise it anywhere. For him *Savitri* alone will be the guide, for all that he needs he will find in *Savitri*. If he remains very quiet when before a difficulty, or when he does not know where to turn to go forward and how to overcome obstacles, for all these hesitations and these incertitudes which overwhelm us at every moment, he will have the necessary indications, and the necessary concrete help. If he remains very calm, open, if he aspires sincerely, always he will be as if led by the hand. If he has faith, the will to give himself and essential sincerity, he will reach the final goal.

Indeed, *Savitri* is something concrete, living, it is all replete, packed with consciousness, it is the supreme knowledge above all human philosophies and religions. It is the spiritual path, it is Yoga, tapasya, sadhana, everything, in its single body. *Savitri* has an extraordinary power, it gives out vibrations for him who can receive them, the true vibrations of each stage of consciousness. It is incomparable, it is truth in its plenitude, the truth Sri Aurobindo brought down on the earth. My child, one must try to find the secret that *Savitri* represents, the prophetic message Sri Aurobindo reveals there for us. This is the work before you, it is hard but it is worth the trouble. [From *Sweet Mother: Harmonies of Light*, Words Recollected by Mona Sarkar, © 1978 Sri Aurobindo Ashram.]

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## INTEGRAL PSYCHOLOGY (5)

### *Sri Aurobindo*

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#### *The Inner Being and Consciousness (2)*

• There is behind all the vital nature in man his true vital being concealed and immobile which is quite different from the surface vital nature. The surface vital is narrow, ignorant, limited, full of obscure desires, passions, cravings, revolts, pleasures and pains, transient joys and griefs, exultations and depressions. The true vital being, on the contrary is wide, vast, calm, strong, without limitations, firm and immovable, capable of all power, all knowledge, all Ananda. It is moreover without ego, for it knows itself to be a projection and instrument of the Divine: it is the divine Warrior, pure and perfect; in it is an instrumental Force for all divine realisations.

• If the inner being does not manifest or act, the outer will never get transformed.

• The outer consciousness is that which usually expresses itself in ordinary life. It is the external mental, vital, physical. It is not connected very much with the inner being except in a few—until one connects them together in the course of the sadhana.

• They [the inner mind and the inner vital] exercise an influence and send out their powers or suggestions which the outer sometimes carries out as best it can, sometimes does not follow. How much they work on the outer depends on how far the individual has an inner life. E.g. the poet, musician, artist, thinker, live much from within—men of genius and those who try to live according to an ideal also. But there are plenty of people who have very little inner life and are governed entirely by the forces of Nature.

• The outer being is a means of expression only, not one's self. One must not identify with it, for what it expresses is a personality formed by the old ignorant nature. If not identified one can change it so as to express the true inner personality of the Light.

• They [the outer mind, vital and body] are small, but not unimportant in spite of their apparent insignificance—because they are a necessary passage of transmission between the soul and the outer world.



Sri Aurobindo. Photo courtesy Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

• The outer consciousness is shut up in the body limitation and in the little bit of personal mind and sense dependent on the body—it sees only the outward, sees only things. But the inner consciousness can see behind the thing, it is aware of the play of forces, personal or universal—for it is in conscious touch with the universal action.

• The inner parts in everybody remain vulgar or become high according as they are turned to the outward forces of the Ignorance or towards the higher forces from above and the inner impulses of the psychic. All forces can play there. It is the outer being that is fixed in a certain character, certain tendencies, certain movements.

### *The Environmental Consciousness*

• The individual is not limited to the physical body—it is only the external consciousness which feels like that. As soon as one gets over this feeling of limitation, one can feel first the inner consciousness which is connected with the body, but does not belong to it, afterwards the planes of consciousness above the body, also a consciousness surrounding the body, but part of oneself, part of the individual being, through which one is in contact with the cosmic forces and with other beings. The last is what I have called the environmental consciousness.

• Each man has his own personal consciousness entrenched in his body and gets into touch with his surroundings only through his body and senses and the mind using the senses.

Yet all the time the universal forces are pouring into him without his knowing it. He is aware only of thoughts, feelings, etc., that rise to the surface and these he takes for his own. Really they come from outside in mind waves, vital waves, waves of feelings and sensation, etc., which take particular form in him and rise to the surface after they have got inside.

But they do not get into his body at once. He carries about with him an environmental consciousness (called by the Theosophists the Aura) into which they first enter. If you can become conscious of this environmental self of yours, then you can catch the thought, passion, suggestion or force of illness and prevent it from entering into you. If things in you are thrown out, they often do not go altogether but take refuge in this environmental atmosphere and from there they try to get in again.

• They [the subconscious and the environmental consciousness] are two quite different things. What is stored in the subconscious—impressions, memories, rise up from there into the conscious parts. If the environmental things are not stored up and fixed, although they move about there. It is full of mobility, a field of vibration or passage of forces.

### *The Cosmic Consciousness*

• The consciousness in the individual widens itself into the cosmic consciousness outside and can have any kind of dealing with it, penetrate, know its movements, act upon it or receive from it, even become commensurate with or contain it, which is what is meant in the language of the old yogas by having the Brahmanda within you.

The cosmic consciousness is that of the universe, of the cosmic spirit and cosmic Nature with all the beings and forces within it. All that is as much conscious as a whole as the individual separately is, though in a different way. The consciousness of the individual is part of this, but a part feeling itself as a separate being. Yet all the time most of what he is comes into him from the cosmic consciousness. But there is a wall of separative ignorance between. Once it breaks down he becomes aware of the cosmic Self, of the conscious-

ness of the cosmic Nature, of the forces playing in it, etc. He feels that as he now feels physical things and impacts. He finds it all to be one with his larger or universal self.

There is the universal mental, the universal vital, the universal physical Nature and it is out of a selection of their forces and movements that the individual mind, vital and physical are made. The soul comes from beyond this nature of mind, life and body. It belongs to the transcendent and because of it we can open to the higher Nature beyond.

The Divine is always One that is Many. The individual spirit is part of the "Many" side of the One, and the psychic being is what it puts forth to evolve here in the earth-nature. In liberation the individual self realises itself as the One (that is yet Many).

• 1. The spiritual consciousness is that in which we enter into the awareness of Self, the Spirit, the Divine and are able to see in all things their essential reality and the play of forces and phenomena as proceeding from that essential Reality.

2. The cosmic consciousness is that in which the limits of ego, personal mind and body disappear and one becomes aware of a cosmic vastness which is or filled by a cosmic spirit and aware also of the direct play of cosmic forces, universal mind forces, universal life forces, universal energies of Matter, universal overmind forces. But one does not become aware of all these together; the opening of the cosmic consciousness is usually progressive. It is not that the ego, the body, the personal mind disappear, but one feels them as only a small part of oneself. One begins to feel others too as part of oneself or varied repetitions of oneself, the same self modified by Nature in other bodies. Or, at the least, as living in the larger universal self which is henceforth one's own greater reality. All things in fact begin to change their nature and appearance; one's whole experience of the world is radically different from that of those who are shut up in their personal selves. One begins to know things by a different kind of experience, more direct, not depending on the external mind and senses. It is not that the possibility of error disappears, for that cannot be so long as mind of any kind is one's instrument for transcribing knowledge, but there is a new, vast and deep way of experiencing, seeing, knowing, contacting things... The thing one has to be on guard against in the cosmic consciousness is the play of a magnified ego, the vaster attacks of the hostile forces—for they too are part of the cosmic consciousness—and the attempt of the cosmic Illusion (Ignorance, Avidya) to prevent the growth of the soul into the cosmic Truth.... To enter safely into the cosmic consciousness and to pass safely through it, it is necessary to have a strong central unegoistic sincerity and to have the psychic being, with its divination of truth and unfaltering orientation towards the Divine, already in front in the nature.

3. The ordinary consciousness is that in which one knows things only or mainly by the intellect, the external mind and the senses and knows forces etc. only by their outward manifestations and results and the rest by inferences from these data. There may be some play of mental intuition, deeper psychic seeing or impulses, spiritual intimations, etc.—but in the ordinary consciousness these are incidental only and do not modify its fundamental character.

• As he [each human being] lives in a separative consciousness, he makes a mental world of his own out of his experiences of the common world in which all here live. It is built in the same way as that of others and he receives into it the thoughts, feelings of others, without knowing it most often, and uses that too as material for his separate world.

• All life is the play of universal forces. The individual gives a personal form to these universal forces. But he can choose whether he shall respond or not to the action of a particular force. Only most people do not really choose—they indulge the play of the



forces. Your illnesses, depressions, etc. are the repeated play of such forces. It is only when one can make oneself free of them that one can be the true person and have a true life—but one can be free only by living in the Divine.

• It is not possible for the individual mind, so long as it remains shut up in its personality, to understand the workings of the Cosmic Will, for the standards made by the personal consciousness are not applicable to them. A cell in the body, if conscious, might also think that the human being and its actions are only the resultant of the relations and workings of a number of cells like itself and not the action of a unified self. It is only if one enters into the Cosmic Consciousness that one begins to see the forces at work and the lines on which they work and get a glimpse of the Cosmic Self and the Cosmic Mind and Will.

[All the passages above are from *Letters on Yoga*, Vol. I, pp. 309-320.]

## HUMAN PERSONALITY AND EDUCATION

*Charles Maloney*

We have fallen on our heads. We are stunned, dazed, groggy, groping to orient ourselves, to find our place and purpose in life. If you have had the experience of awaking from what appears to be a very deep sleep and for a second or even several minutes you don't know where you are or who you are or where you've been or what you are supposed to do, you will be able to identify with what I am suggesting. It is a state that most often produces fear and anxiety until the dawn of memory comes and with a sigh of relief we grasp what is familiar and secure. However, this momentary amnesia is offered only as an analogy to a lapse of consciousness having universal dimensions—a cosmic amnesia. Given the present conditions in the evolution of the earth, it is a state that we all assume when our psychic being or soul takes the terrestrial plunge.

What does this have to do with education and human personality? If you go to meetings of educators, you will hear them speaking of many diverse phenomena: better techniques of teaching, source materials, size of classes, how students can be best prepared for certain fields of work, how many courses should constitute a major concentration, dealing with the slow learner, etc. This is the accepted machinery or technology of education, but behind it all are certain unspoken biases or presuppositions. For example, what is the aim or goal of education? What is the nature and role of the mind, the vital and the physical parts of the being in the process? On the depth and quality of your bias will depend the nature and value of education.

In speaking of the condition of cosmic amnesia I am immediately taking up the bias of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother in regard to education. It is a bias that carries with it the elements of a revolution that is psychic and spiritual in nature. It seeks nothing less than a total rending of the veil that separates us from our true individuality, psychic and supramental. In this context education is at least part of the process of recovering the memory of our origin, and human personality is the instrument or the bridge to that goal.

The dominant feeling that arises upon reading *Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on Education* is: "I must begin again! I must become a child again! Things must be new, fresh again!" It is not wishful or fanciful thinking but a true movement of consciousness, for these are the qualities of the psychic personality—a child, the eternal Child, ultimately the Golden Child. In its deepest and truest sense, it is the aspiration for a new individual, a new race and a new world. It is the experience of the psychic touch in the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

"The education of a human being should begin at his very birth and continue throughout his life. Indeed, if the education is to have its maximum result, it must begin even before birth" [1]. And

secondly, "education to be complete must have five principal aspects relating to the five principal activities of the human being: the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual" [2].

The Mother reveals very succinctly the tremendous scope of education and at the very least implies for those who will take up the work the necessity of a deep and thorough experience of human personality and psychology. To really have the aspiration to begin at the beginning, in order to develop a new attitude towards education, we have to see and feel the child not as some vague combination of mental and physical life but first and foremost as a psychic being who has come to earth for a certain experience in its evolution. In order to do this, the child has found it necessary to assume a mind, a vital and a physical as instruments for his growth or we might say the required native dress for earth habitation. Although the psychic being is not first in the order of our growing awareness or consciousness, i.e., it usually takes some time before we are conscious of it, it is first inasmuch as it is the part of our being that persists from birth to birth and is the foundation of what we call human personality. Sri Aurobindo has described it as "a spiritual personality put forward by the soul in its evolution; its growth marks the stage which the spiritual evolution of the individual has reached and its immediate possibilities for the future. It stands behind the mental, the vital, the physical nature, grows by their experiences, carries the consciousness from life to life.... At first it is veiled by the mental, vital and physical parts, limited in its self-expression by their limitations, bound to the reactions of Nature, but, as it grows, it becomes capable of coming forward and dominating the mind, life and body" [3].

And the Mother has given the following description: "The creation of an individual being is the result of a projection, in time and space, of one of the countless possibilities latent in the Supreme Origin of all manifestation which, through the one and universal consciousness, is concretized in the law or the truth of an individual and so becomes by a progressive growth its soul or psychic being" [4].

In light of this revolutionary understanding of individuality—psychic individuality—when one stands before a child of any age one must first cultivate the attitude of providing an opening, through the mental, vital and physical instruments, for the manifestation of the true Person. In the context of education, the Mother reminds us that "till now, the discovery of the psychic being, the identification with it, has not been among the recognised subjects of education" [5].

In contrast to this attitude that we are serving and guiding an evolving psychic being who is using mental, vital and physical instruments to eventually come fully to the front, very often children are not even considered to have the status of a human person. What we call education erects a calcified shell over the psychic being rather than creating the most favorable conditions for its manifestation. If we can imagine for a moment the passage of the psychic being into our present terrestrial conditions, it is indeed traumatic under the most favorable circumstances. This marvellous form of light plunges from the peace of the psychic world into the most constricting prison house of ignorance. In this regard the Mother points to the necessity for education to begin before the birth of a child:

"What you are at your birth is most of the time almost absolutely what your mother and father have made you, and also, through them, what your grandparents made you. There are certain vital traditions in families and, besides, there is the state of consciousness in which you were formed, conceived—the moment at which you were conceived—and...not once in a million times does that state conform to true aspiration.... The willed conception of a child is extremely rare; mostly it is an accident" [6].

The gifts of the parents to the child are precisely the mental, vital and physical components of the being which are both the obstacles and the aids to his evolutionary growth. And again the

Mother reminds us: "You go down to the subconscious root of the being—that exactly which comes from parents, from atavism—...all, almost all difficulties are there, there are very few things added to existence after the first years of life" [7].

Thus the preparation of the *adbara* or vehicle of the psychic is extremely important and the Mother urges women to have a conscious and definite will to form a child according to the highest ideal of which they are capable. In this light she has told us that the psychic being sometimes presides over the actual formation of mental and physical life, sometimes enters at the moment of conception, or after birth with the child's first cry, or weeks, months, years after, or never! Much depends on the aspiration of the parents and their effort to create a mental, vital and physical atmosphere of beauty and harmony.

The next thicket of ignorance through which the evolving soul must pass is the actual process of birth and it is here that man's attitude towards children is reflected in its most barbaric and unconscious form. We have to imagine the developing child residing in a warm aqueous world, for all practical purposes weightless and sustained directly by the mother over a period of nine months—and then complete chaos erupts. The life-supporting ocean runs dry, an all-encompassing pressure crushes him through a passageway whose only apparent function is to oppose him. And then it happens—he is forced out by a combination of pushing and pulling into a world of blinding light, deafening noise and excruciating sensitivity as air invades his uninitiated skin. His internal lifeline is severed, he is held upside down, which probably introduces him to vertigo, and he receives a blow allegedly to induce crying. Try to put yourself in his position—identify with him! If you find yourself saying, "Oh! he really isn't conscious at that point. He's certainly not a person. His reactions are instinctual and he really doesn't feel any pain," you are in concert with the majority of humanity. Is there any solution to a condition where birth and death are experienced as one? Yes, there is, and I believe that it is a direct result of the psychic evolution being carried on all over the world by the Mother of Sri Aurobindo Ashram. It must be remembered here that it was the Mother who brought the psychic dimension to Integral Yoga. Before her coming to join Sri Aurobindo, there was no direct or prominent mention of it in the work he was doing.

Here I wish to refer specifically to the work of Dr. Frederick LeBoyer, part of which has been printed in a book called *Birth Without Violence*. Dr. LeBoyer is a Buddhist who has by now delivered hundreds of children by a method which is a manifestation of the Buddha's teachings on compassion. It is a method that flows naturally from his attitude towards the child—his identification with his difficult journey, his recognition that he is something more than an unconscious piece of matter. It is as follows: the child is gently received from the mother by the father, when possible, under the supervision of the doctor, and placed face down on the stomach of the mother without severing the umbilical cord. The environment is softly lit and silence is respected. The father or the doctor gently massages the child for some time and then the umbilical cord is disconnected and tied. This gives the child a period to make the transition from a system of internal to one of the external life support. Next, the child is held in a container of water and allowed to move in that medium and finally he is put by himself for a short period of time in order to have the experience of being alone. The difference in the physical expressions of infants born in this way from those born in the ordinary method is extraordinary. The eyes are open very soon and there is an expression of calm and peace. Dr. LeBoyer has been making long-range studies on individuals born in this manner and finds them to be generally warm, loving, intelligent and creative individuals with great capacities for detachment and independence.

Keeping in mind our theme of developing human personality, mental, vital and physical, as a vehicle for the manifestation of

psychic personality, it is crucial in the light of Aurobindonian psychology to create the most favorable pre-birth and birth conditions. But in order for this to occur a reversal in consciousness must take place, a new attitude must be fostered whereby we consent to look with new eyes on our primitive and sometimes barbaric ideas or habits concerning our role as parents and educators. The grand paradox here is that what we ordinarily call "education" is, from the perspective of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, a force working against the growth of both the human and the psychic personality. It is, as we shall see, psychologically damaging in most cases. It is hard medicine to swallow that we should have to admit that most education as it exists is anti-evolutionary. In this regard the Mother remarks:

"I have known children who were much more conscious of their psychic being at the age of five than at fourteen, and at fourteen than at twenty-five and above all from the moment they go to school where they undergo that kind of intensive mental training which draws their attention to the intellectual part of their being, they lose almost always and almost completely this contact with their psychic being" [8].

In regard to the time when a child can become conscious of his psychic being, the Mother says it is usually between the ages of four and seven but sometimes earlier or even, in exceptional cases, almost immediately on birth. However, the psychic influence can direct all the child's life even if he is not externally conscious of it. It is, almost in every case, the mind acting as a protective device that veils the psychic being. Speaking of the light or wonder of the psychic in a child's eyes, the Mother says, "Children have this but as they learn more, become more intelligent, more educated, this is effaced.... And you may be sure it is the mind that has got in there, and the psychic has gone very far behind.... If you take a boy of fourteen...who is at school, who has ordinary parents and has been ill-treated, his mind is very much in the forefront; there is something hard in him, the psychic has gone behind" [9].

It is a combination of the attitude of the parents and the methods of formal education that severs the contact with the psychic personality. And as a result it also usually produces distortions in the human personality. Speaking of the educational system in Europe and India, Sri Aurobindo says, "It is based on an insufficient knowledge of human psychology, and it is only safeguarded in Europe from disastrous results by the refusal of the ordinary student to subject himself to the processes it involves, his habit of studying only so much as he must to avoid punishment or to pass an immediate test, his resort to active habits and vigorous physical exercise" [10].

He is quite obviously referring here to overloading the mind at the expense of the rest of the being, which can create psychological damage. In light of this, we must begin to view the so-called problem child, who rebels against the system, as being among the most healthy. Speaking even more pointedly, Sri Aurobindo warns, "The system prevailing in our universities is one which ignores the psychology of man, loads the mind laboriously with numerous little packets of information carefully tied with red tape, and, by the methods used in this loading process, damages or atrophies the faculties and instruments by which man assimilates, creates, and grows in intellect, manhood and energy" [11].

In educating the mental, vital and physical instruments of evolution, the keynote is receptivity. They must attain a plasticity and a depth in order to receive the inner and the higher knowledge and power: "This continual improvement of the *adbara* and increase in quantity and complexity of action of the informing energy, is the whole aim of evolution" [12]. In regard to nurturing the inner life of children by providing avenues of expression, both parents and formal educators have for the most part either ignored or actively discouraged this sphere of experience. How many times have we witnessed a child attempting to relate a dream, or tell a story to ex-



prefer an inner experience or say that he knows that a certain event will happen or has happened, only to be ignored, or told, "It is only your imagination! Stop that nonsense! You are lying." And after a while the child, as a protection and to gain approval from the parent or teacher, represses that whole wonderful world of inner experiences. One way he accomplishes this is to develop his mind, for it is the tool for breaking the inner ties. The Mother speaks of this inner contact in children:

"For the mind always separates the external being from the deeper consciousness. Little children are quite tied up. I knew children who were quite sincere but could not distinguish whether a thing was going on in their imagination or in reality. For them the inner life was as real as the external life. They were not telling stories, they were not liars; simply the inner life was as real as the external life. There are children who go night after night to the same spot in order to continue the dream they have begun—they are experts in the art of going out of their bodies" [12].

Sri Aurobindo has reminded us that the real malady of the world is that it has lost contact with its soul and we must be sincere enough to acknowledge that what we call "education" has been one of the primary collaborators in this event. In this light, the Mother has insisted "that from their infancy children must be taught that there is an inner reality—within themselves, within the earth, within the universe—and that they, the earth and the universe exist only as a function of this truth, and if it did not exist, the child would not last, even the short time that it does, and everything would dissolve even as it comes into being" [14].

This should not be communicated in a philosophical way but through the inner experience of comfort, satisfaction and intense joy. If we as parents and educators do not experience it, it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to communicate it to and foster it in the child. There is no set recipe for doing this outside of finding the Child in yourself and nurturing it. The Mother says, "Above all, do not be in a hurry not to be a child any more! One must be a child all one's life, as much as one can, as long as one can. Be happy, joyful, content to be a child, plastic stuff for shaping" [15].

Persisting throughout the thousands of volumes written on human personality the illusion is maintained that we can organize one unified combination of mental, emotional and physical dimensions that will have continuity throughout the multitude of life experiences. Still in the West, to suggest the possibility of more than one personality raises the spectre of abnormality. In brief, I am suggesting that surface or egoic personality is considered the beginning and the end of consciousness and individuality, and the majority of psychological and educational efforts labor at discovering the secret of its creation. From the perspective of the evolutionary psychology of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, the instrument of the true Person or psychic being, i.e., the human personality, is taken in the West as being sufficient to itself—the part is taken for the whole. This presents a huge obstacle to the integration of the being around its true center. Personality for Sri Aurobindo is not such a simple matter:

"The changing personality is not this mental person... It is a very complex composite with many layers: there is a layer of physical, a layer of nervous, a layer of mental, even a final stratum of supramental personality; within these layers themselves there are strata within each stratum. The analysis of the successive couches of the earth is a simple matter compared with the analysis of this wonderful creation we call personality" [16].

Indeed, without a guide we might wander interminably in this maze of multiple personalities, but it is the integral vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother that this multiplicity be integrated by a central Person:

"Man is in his self a unique Person, but he is also in his manifestation of self a multiperson; he will never succeed in being master

of himself until the Person imposes itself on his multipersonality and governs it: but this can only be imperfectly done by the surface mental will and reason; it can be perfectly done only if he goes within and finds whatever central being is by its predominant influence at the head of all his expression and action" [17].

This central being or unique Person is, as we have seen, the psychic being and until it fully manifests in its various ministers, mental, vital and physical, we are under the rule of our different selves. In some the physical man comes to the front and he is mainly preoccupied with his corporeal life. In another the identification may be mainly with the vital personality resulting in a concern with ambition, passion, impulse, desire, domination, power, battle and adventure. And yet another may develop and become the mental man, who subordinates the rest of his being to a mental idea or ideal. One is never purely one to the exclusion of the other personalities, but it is this dominant rule of the different selves that constitutes the stages of the development of human personality in Aurobindonian psychology.

This is the "infinitely subtle and sensitive organism" with which the educator must work [18]. He must work, not from the old attitude of supplying various kinds of information, but, rather, from the perspective of a midwife who is preparing the instrument of human personality for the birth of a higher knowledge and power. This is essentially Sri Aurobindo's maxim that "the first principle of true teaching is that nothing can be taught" [19]. His teaching is in continuity with the educational discipline of ancient Hinduism which "had the view that all knowledge is within and has to be evoked by education rather than instilled from outside" [20]. It is presumptuous to imagine that most of us know the intricate workings of this instrument of the psychic Person—only an integral yogic experience can reveal its true workings. But if we can nurture the vision of a higher Truth manifesting, so as to create a new man and a new race, we shall automatically open ourselves to both the inner worlds of ourselves and the children we are helping.

Any program of education that aspires to be integral must become aware of perfecting all of the parts of the being—mental, vital, physical, psychic and spiritual. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to offer particular methods for educating these various personalities, I would emphasize again that the indispensable key for discovering the ways is to learn to see the child as an evolving soul, an experiment of the Divine in which you have been given the grace to participate. This attitude will immediately produce a response in the child, for you will be making contact with his psychic being. Only the psychic can know another psychic—the mental, vital and physical can only suffer its sweetness, rapture and light. What I am suggesting is that the psychic Person become the teacher. While mental, vital and physical education serves as a means for developing the personality into a self-conscious entity, receptive and plastic to a higher manifestation of Truth, the discovery of the psychic is the true cure for the cosmic amnesia we spoke of in the beginning. To light this fire and nurture it is the primary objective of the future education. The Mother shows us the way:

"The starting-point is to seek in yourself that which is independent of the body and the circumstances of life, which is not born of the mental formation that you have been given, the language you speak, the habits and customs of the environment in which you live, the country where you are born or the age to which you belong. You must find, in the depths of your being, that which carries in it the sense of universality, limitless expansion, termless continuity. Then you decentralise, spread out, enlarge yourself; you begin to live in everything and in all beings; the barriers separating individuals from each other break down. You think in their thoughts, vibrate in their sensations, you feel in their feelings, you live in the life of all. What seemed inert suddenly becomes full of life, stones quicken, plants feel and will and suffer, animals speak in a language more or less inarticulate, but clear and expressive; everything is ani-

mated with a marvellous consciousness without time and limit" [21].

We carry within us the memory of our future and because we have forgotten it, we collaborate to make children forget it. Whatever we term as a success or an advance in the field of education, if it leaves the psychic veiled or increases the hard crust around it, it must, from the integral vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, be declared an utter failure. The goal must be nothing less than perfection which the Mother has described:

"We may say that perfection will be attained in the individual, the collectivity, on the earth and in the universe, when, at every moment, the receptivity will be equal in quality and quantity to the Force which wants to manifest" [22].

## Notes

1. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, *On Education* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1973), p. 96. 2. Ibid. 3. Sri Aurobindo, *Letters on Yoga* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1970), p. 281. 4. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, *On Education*, p. 123. 5. Ibid. 6. The Mother, *Questions and Answers 1950-51* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1976), p. 260. 7. Ibid., p. 261. 8. The Mother, *Questions and Answers*, p. 26. 9. Ibid., pp. 26-7. 10. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, *On Education*, p. 19. 11. Sri Aurobindo, "The Brain of India" in *The Harmony of Virtue* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1972), p. 330. 12. Ibid., p. 332. 13. The Mother, *Questions and Answers*, p. 128. 14. Ibid., p. 25. 15. The Mother, *Questions and Answers 1953* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1976), p. 288. 16. Sri Aurobindo, "The Reincarnating Soul" in *The Supramental Manifestation* (Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1972), p. 94. 17. Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine* (Pondicherry: Vol. 2, pp. 897-8. 18. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, *On Education*, p. 19. 19. Ibid., p. 20. 20. Sri Aurobindo, "The Brain of India," p. 335. 21. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, *On Education*, p. 124. 22. The Mother, *Questions and Answers 1950-51*, p. 16. [Reprinted from *Mother India*, September 1977, pp. 664-72.]

# EXPRESSIONS OF AUROVILLE

## AUROVILLE: THE FIRST NINE YEARS

### *An Evaluation of Its Development Process*

Since Auroville's first stirrings in February of 1968, the classic question of visitors arriving in Auroville with certain expectations and preconceptions of what a town looks like has been: "Where is Auroville?" In other words, where is the town? The largely dirt roads that weave their dusty trails through wide, open spaces, occasionally arriving in well-camouflaged settlements or rerouting unexpectedly around islands of newly planted forest, seem to sharpen the contrast of townlessness.

The minimetropolis that might have been anticipated, decorated with all our architectural projections of the future, simply was not there. So it might well be asked, what have these more than 400 residents of the Auroville community been doing for more than nine years? The assumption which the question implies is that the investment of nine years of labor should have produced more buildings—buildings, after all, are the very emblems of a town and the index of its growth...or are they?

### *The Local and Planetary Context*

To understand Auroville's approach toward townhood, one must see the matrix in which it has arisen. Physically situated on a barren, severely eroded plateau, Auroville inherited an environment and ecosystem on the verge of expiring. The first pioneer inhabitants, with little or no external means available to them, found themselves placed amidst a land virtually exhausted of its natural resources, rapidly receding into a desert; this immediate context found itself within the rural geography of south coastal India, a developing country faced with immense challenges; and this in turn found itself within the larger context of an Earth ravaged by 20 centuries of civilization, its natural resources and fossil fuels nearly spent, registering its anxieties in the first series of international economic crises and fuel shortages that shocked the early 1970s. Thus was Auroville's setting.

### *Plans and Needs, Abstracts and Actualities*

Prior to Auroville's actual inhabitation and continuing during Auroville's earliest occupation, an initial corps of architects and draftsmen produced a series of town layouts, designs, blueprints and models inspired almost exclusively by an abstract architectural concept divorced from the actual context and needs. It was an approach which saw "town" primarily as "buildings," it was an ap-

proach primarily interested in tangible results—the surface—rather than conscious process; and in this sense, even if the drawings and designs were innovative and imaginative, the basic approach was not new. It was the same surface-oriented consciousness that built New York or modern-day Tokyo.

Imagine if these first impressive plans could have been realized. Imagine the enormous and disproportionate investment of finance and energy, the massive technology required to achieve such a creation. And then, the incredible amount of high-technology paraphernalia and machinery required to run and maintain such a superstructure and on which it would depend. All of this coinciding with the first fuel crisis and the consequent unprecedented explosion in cost and contraction of available raw materials and manufactured goods.

But fortunately, the first Auroville residents had enough insight to recognize the real context of Auroville and its surrounding world. They found themselves living in an environment turning to dust in a world too dependent on its creations, over which it was rapidly losing a control it never really had. Despite man's fetish of complexity which confused buildings with results, Auroville was looking for the simple. It would build from the ground up, literally.

### *Down to Earth: Auroville's Actual Process of Development*

More or less swiftly, the mirage of superimposed plans faded and a more fundamental planning process came into focus. If one is consciously to build a town—a town where the rug doesn't get pulled out from underneath—one begins with the primary foundation: the land and its natural resources. If Auroville was not to be archaic before it began, dependent on the mechanism of a civilization and consciousness undergoing fossilization, then it would have to recover the true means of self-support, the real *Capital* of an economy.

**The Land and Its Resources: The Primary Capital:** Auroville thus far spans more than 2,000 acres of land, but it is actually spread out over a much wider area in larger or smaller patches, landlocked from one another by the private village-owned or government-owned plots in between. What seems to unite the land is its common devastation. Once covered by forests, now the region is reduced to a raw landscape, scarred with ever-widening ravines. Each monsoon sweeps away more topsoil, exposing more lifeless layers; each summer bakes the naked earth a denser red; and as if to undermine the earth's last desperate efforts to protect and revive itself, the villagers cut down the dwindling stands of trees and shrubs for firewood while the cows and goats overgraze the surviving ground cover. The human factors contributing to this impoverishment of the land represent a dilemma of worldwide con-



cern as witnessed by the recently concluded U.N. Conference on Desertification held in Nairobi, Kenya, where 110 nations met to confront the spreading terrestrial disease which has swallowed up more than one third of the Earth's land mass.

In this sense, Auroville's efforts have represented a significant gesture, containing and reversing a swiftly accelerating degeneration of the environment that would have, within a few more years, slipped beyond repair. Over the years, a grassroots labor, now coordinated through the Auroville Land Service, has approached the various interrelated problems of soil sterilization and erosion, groundwater depletion and deforestation, from the totality of the land irrespective of ownership. In other words, for the work of stabilizing the ecology of the region, it is necessary to deal simultaneously with Auroville land, village land and government land; in the case of erosion work, though the source of the gullies and ravines may be in one category of land ownership, it eventually erodes all three.

A potential town entering a world in disequilibrium must stabilize its basic natural resource—the land—if it is to be self-sufficient in food and water. Towards this end, the 400 residents of Auroville have planted over 100,000 flowering forest trees, 4,000 fruit trees, and over 100,000 casuarina pines, setting down the roots of a nascent "green belt." More than half of the 2,000 acres is under direct human care of settlement-habitation, afforestation, farmland and organic cultivation, while half of the remaining land is under some form of primary erosion control. (These figures were based on preliminary estimates gathered by Auroville Land Service.) Since 1976, in cooperation with the District Forest Officer, Auroville has also taken the responsibility for erosion work on some 50 acres of government land. It is a concrete translation of Auroville seeing itself and the land as belonging to "no one in particular" but "to humanity as a whole," Auroville as a Trust for the Earth.

**Infrastructure: The Means of Energy and Conveyance:** With oil reserves reaching the bottom of the barrel and power cuts becoming routine (particularly during the Tamil Nadu summers, when power for pumping water is most needed), Auroville as a town-in-the-making has been reorienting its attitudes towards alternative energy sources and more conscious patterns of consumption. The general trend has been to simple technology systems rather than massive and sophisticated machinery, decentralized and recyclable sewage operations, and minimal road networks encouraging cycle rather than large vehicle usage. Of the 44 bore wells scattered over the Auroville plateau, nearly a third of them are "free" energy-driven (seven windmills, six manual open wells).

Little theoretical research though much applied research has gone into developing an appropriate infrastructure that can adequately provide the future township of Auroville with its energy needs amidst a civilization running out of gas.

**Services and Industries: The Means of Production and Distribution:** If the land represents the capital asset of a town in terms of natural resources and the means for providing food and water supplies; and if the infrastructural development primarily represents the means of energy and dynamism for the town; then the farms, services and industries represent the provision of consumer goods and the generation of income for the inhabitants.

Auroville's approach to economic development is directed toward labor-intensive rather than capital-intensive units. Though an appropriate use of technology is sought for, the residents of Auroville prefer to participate directly in the various working processes rather than developing a dependency on large-scale energy-consumptive and dehumanizing machinery. Particularly in India, a country of more than 500 million people, the value of human resources rather than mechanical labor needs to be cultivated.

In keeping with this theme, village workers have integrated with Auroville residents in almost all of the various Auroville services and industries—afforestation and agricultural programs, erosion pre-

vention, transportation, maintenance and electrical workshops, handicrafts units, bakeries, construction sites—gaining not only employment but skills, wider visions and opportunities for self-exploration.

This contact between the surrounding village population, numbering 30,000, and Auroville has resulted in a noticeable improvement in rural standards: many more skilled workers (masons, carpenters, weavers and other craftspeople), a greater sense of village initiative, more water, health and nutrition facilities, as well as a growing environmental consciousness.

In terms of the actual production process, the various organic farms scattered throughout the Auroville "Greenbelt" cultivate about 100 acres during the season, largely under "dry-crop" farming. There are about 50 milk cows in three dairies and 1,500 chickens spread out through the communities. Aquaculture (fish farming) experiments have been set up along with a government-funded algae project.

The produce from these agri-units is then turned over, along with the bakery goods, to Pour Tous (For All), Auroville's food-distribution and Common Fund system. Income from Auroville's residents, donations and grants, as well as from the Auroville commercial units, is received by Pour Tous and accordingly distributed on the basis of collectively determined priorities (except in the case of specifically earmarked funds). The half-dozen commercial handicrafts and small-scale industries, such as incense and hand-woven garments, largely sell on export.

Auroville's present income, supplemented by its growing farms, is capable of sustaining the community's present food and essential maintenance needs. It is in the area of crucial project development, such as afforestation, which in most cases are not commercial enterprises, that Auroville requires urgent assistance.



In the Garden of the Matrimandir, December 1977. (Photo by Rakhal, Auro-Image.)



What has been presented thus far portrays the development of Auroville's economic basis as a township. But the work towards stabilizing this economic and material base—the land, the energy, the food, the income—is clearly a means and not an end in itself: it is a means to make something else possible; and all of Auroville's experiments, social, cultural and educational, in which men and women and children from every conceivable milieu on Earth are present, are only the fields for this discovery, this something else which is the magnet of Auroville's Dream.

—Auroville Communication and Information Service

### *Financial Perspectives: Priorities and Needs Auroville Pour Tous Budget (October 1977)*

[To determine dollar value, divide by 8.]

Income (Monthly)		Presently	
(A)	Contributions from friends and associations abroad	Rs 15,000	
(B)	Contributions from Auroville by Aurovilians and visitors	25,000	
	by Auroville production units	25,000	
	by produce of farms	10,000	
(C)	Short-term loans, special donations	<u>40,000</u>	
		Rs 115,000	
Expenditure (Monthly)		Presently	Target 1978
(A)	Basic necessities		
	food and welfare	Rs 50,000	60,000
	clothing & personal articles	3,000	4,000
	electricity	10,000	12,000
	community maintenance & amenities	4,500	8,000
	transport & maintenance workshop	5,000	7,500
	miscellaneous expenses	4,500	5,000
(B)	Land Managements		
	erosion control	25,000	40,000
	soil revitalization & environment farming	<u>13,000</u>	<u>20,000</u>
		Rs 115,000	156,500

The financial survey of Auroville's activities as set out above shows the approximate monthly disbursement of monies presently available through the Pour Tous Fund. The budget is able to cover only the absolute minimum subsistence and essential maintenance requirements of Auroville at the present level of development.

Although self-sufficiency in terms of ability to feed and clothe residents has been achieved, through necessity, the current work is of a pioneering nature and the funds to maintain existing land and forest resources, let alone to begin new work in reclamation and afforestation cannot be presently generated from within Auroville.

For some time these expenses have been balanced with the help of short-term loans and donations (item C above) received through the Pour Tous Fund, an increasingly overdrawn and unpredictable source. To date outstanding financial commitments are nearing Rs. 80,000/-.

Also given above are the target expenditures in each area which will be operational when additional funds are available. This indicates more adequate expenditures, which allow a more complete and efficient utilization of manpower, available expertise and resources. However, this does not allow for the possibility of significant expansion.

It is in this area that we need your support to keep alive crucial projects that exceed our present means. It is only after this firm

base has been established that we can effectively grow and explore our potentials.

The assistance Auroville needs can be given in many forms, but the essential and most practical at this time is financial support in the form of regular donations. These can be either of a general nature or for identified projects, and if given on a monthly or quarterly basis will provide the necessary stable base from which work can confidently proceed. [Prepared by Auroville Communication and Information Service.]

[Note: Contributions for Auroville can be sent to Matagiri Sri Aurobindo Center, Inc., Mt. Tremper, NY 12457. This is a non-profit tax-exempt corporation; specify the particular area of Auroville you wish your donation to assist.]



Watering trees at Fertile, Auroville. 1977. (Photo by Rakhal, AuroImage.)

### **NOTES ON SMALL-SCALE GREEN WORK IN AUROVILLE**

#### *A Collective Report*

Some 2,000 acres in the South Arcot District of Tamil Nadu in South India are presently available for use by Auroville. This land represents an open space, held in trust for humanity as a whole, where various possibilities for life on earth can be tried.

Interspersed with village and government lands, Auroville's acreage is scattered in relatively small plots over an area of six square kilometers, on which 30,000 Tamil villagers and 500 arrivals from elsewhere are based. The economy is marginal, services and "civilized" possibilities few.

Auroville uses the land in diverse ways, from supernatural architecture to monsoon agriculture, but all possible uses are conditioned by the fact that the physical health of the whole environment is extremely poor. On what is basically a plateau, sloping down to the west and south to catchments and bottomlands, on the east to the Bay of Bengal, deforestation, overcropping, overgrazing, exploitation and neglect in most of the usual ways have been devastating; less than 10% of rainfall is retained on unchecked land and washout has robbed wide areas entirely of topsoil. Although food production continues, and stands of scrub jungle, palmyra, cashew and casurina trees remain, these once heavily forested and fertile lands are rapidly becoming an untillable red clay desert.

Traditional land-use techniques, once adequately adapted to reality, are in the context of increasing human population and exploitation of natural resources no longer workable. Rather than a solution, they are part of the problem. These practices give most of such arable land as remains (generally a thin layer of sandy topsoil covering almost impermeable red clay—barely alive but still workable) to monsoon agriculture, an uncertain enterprise under the best of conditions, wholly dependent on forces outside the farmer's control and leaving little margin for regenerative, nonexploitive land use. Six months of the year—even in the best of years—the land is left bare to wind and sun and entirely at the mercy of large numbers of free-grazing cattle and goats. Human foragers for food, fuel, and shelter materials ensure that anything not grazed will eventually be cut. Human and domestic animal populations at present far exceed the life-support capabilities of the land. Not enough life is allowed to survive to maturity, so not enough “natural” death occurs (death as part of a balanced life-cycle on the land), so not enough decay takes place, so not enough new soil is created, so not enough life-increasing possibilities are there, so a spiral of entropy, of declining energy availability, which, if unchecked, can lead only to total waste.

The best village farmers are aware of this, but the situation is out of control. Each year brings more of a struggle simply to produce adequate amounts of food. Each year, therefore, less consciousness and energy is available to focus on reversing the entropic process. Each year, therefore, the land becomes less capable of producing food. Each year, therefore, the downward-tending spiral of degeneration continues, with the eventual destination—waste and sterile death—seemingly inevitable.

Even after years here, it remains difficult for many of us to comprehend the realities of this typical terrestrial situation. It is not so much an obvious catastrophe as a kind of slow-motion explosion: by the time we hear the bang, we'll be already past help. The land continues somehow to produce crops; people, if malnourished, are not actually starving; it seems, in fact, as if life were going on as usual. Once it has been grasped, however, that life is *not* going on as usual here but actually *winding down*, and that neither traditional nor industrial agribusiness technology shows signs of competence in dealing with this decline, the problem of response, individually and collectively, becomes acute. What, that is, are we going to *do* about it?



Construction of cow stable at Discipline, Auroville. August 1977. (Photo by Rakhal, AuroImage.)

It is hardly a simple question of “saving” the environment. The environment, left alone, is quite capable of saving itself. The soil may be infertile, or practically nonexistent, yet still much life is latent in the land. We notice many plants taking root on rocks, or fastening themselves onto trees, or digging into pavement-hard compacted red clay. Patches of scrub jungle which have managed to survive shelter jackals, monkeys, cobras, parrots, hares, and much, much else. The land could simply be protected from human use and it would soon—a hundred years, two hundred—heal itself.

But there are people and there are cattle and there are trees and there are wild things, and we're all in it and have somehow to make it together. The concept of the “environment” as something outside, separate from man, to be sucked at and exploited or protected and admired and “saved,” is simply not operative here.

“Ecology” and “economy” turn out rather to be coterminous: two ways of describing the same house kept in order. Saving the environment and saving ourselves amounts to precisely the same thing: conscious and kindly and entirely fruitful *use* of the land and resources.

Limited financial backing, the presence of a large underemployed land-based population, and the configuration of Auroville lands into small scattered plots has led most of us working the land here into small-scale, light-energy, labor-intensive operations. Circumstances encourage both thrift and awareness of locally existing materials and possibilities. Considerations of energy independence, simple maintenance, durable excellence, total impact take precedence over desires for sheer quantitative power and productivity. Small, individually managed plots evoke a wide diversity of approach and experience, make continuing research and experimentation almost a necessity of survival. Such backing as is available (small grants, contributions, personal savings) allows freedom from acute economic angst, gives us choices village farmers ordinarily don't have. We use bullock teams instead of tractors, for example, but avoid traditional wooden carts in favor of steel-frame, rubber-tire, larger-capacity vehicles. Besides lasting longer and carrying more, rubber-tire carts escape a typical eco-surprise inherent in the village model: traditional design uses narrow, steel-rimmed wheels, which cut deep ruts across dirt roads and fields, which—in the context of deforestation and a general lack of erosion control—soon become small gullies, which (that spiral again), if unchecked, become big gullies, gorges and canyons funneling tons of rainwater and topsoil off the land and difficult and costly to bring under control.

Particularly in a Third World situation, a certain lack of money can be a blessing, ensuring that the scale of error will not be catastrophic—you can afford to make mistakes—and guaranteeing the applicability of whatever is accomplished to cash-tight village economies. Above all—if the lack is not, as it too often is, chronic and total—short funding stimulates the imagination, helps one to learn. Thus, to continue with the tractor/bullock example, had large sums and big ideas been available to us at the beginning of our work here, we might have gone enthusiastically into tractors, with all the dependence on fossil fuels and sophisticated technology which use of those machines implies. Instead, we were more or less forced to choose animal-drawn vehicles, and the advantages of that alternative—nonpolluting, compost-producing, biologically fueled, simple and locally serviceable technology and maintenance—soon became apparent. The situation itself thus becomes our guru, and the situation here is such that one learns fast (i.e., over a period of years rather than generations) or one fails to survive.

One thing we've learned fast about is water. Basic afforestation and erosion-control work—the absolute prerequisite for any kind of sustaining human use on this land—can be and usually is done without dependable water. Taking advantage of whatever the monsoon offers—when the monsoon offers anything at all—teams hand-tool the red clay into bunds and dams, plant the toughest trees available, and hope for the best. We're working in this way now on what for



us is a fairly large scale often under government contracts and involving village and government as well as Auroville lands. The details are too intricate and fascinating to summarize here, but basically it's a holding operation, a way of checking ongoing degeneration until the land can be taken properly in hand. Development has to wait for dependable water.

In a tropical climate the importance of water is especially crucial, the effects of its presence or absence directly and intensely felt by all that lives. A year of good rain greens—at least until the goats arrive—the bleakest wastelands; dry years guarantee hunger, sickness, death. To work with water here it is necessary intimately to understand the precious liquid. To this end our situation offers an excellent hydrological education.

Instruction begins when you go to live on a piece of land without water. The nearest source will be at least 10 minutes' walk away, with bullock-drawn tanks or head-carried clay jars the only transport. This is not as difficult as it used to be, when wells were literally miles apart, but it is still difficult enough to be educational. Two hundred liters or less per day will have to suffice for all garden—few have the patience to wait for a well before starting a garden—and domestic use. The basic teaching here is doing more with less. You learn—or you thirst—how much it is possible to do with how little, and how necessary it is to do so. This teaching, once ingrained—and it will be *ingrained*; hand-dug wells (another project too fascinating to summarize) rarely takes less than 2 months to complete and outfit, and some of us have spent up to two years, for one reason or another, stuck without water—persists regardless of circumstances. It will never again be possible, for example, to let the shower run while you soap up.

The process of getting the water out of the ground focuses attention on the delicate balance between resources and human use. The level we can tap here with light energy and limited funding is a relatively shallow (30-40 meters on the plateau) rain-fed aquifer. Such shallow wells cannot indefinitely be sunk and tapped unless the aquifer is continually maintained and regenerated. This means wholly effective erosion control and broad-based afforestation: holding the water on the land and allowing it to permeate down to the aquifer for storage. It also implies a certain restraint of energy used to pump. Even a 5-horsepower engine can be a strain on a shallow well here. Less powerful but more consistently dependable hand, animal and wind pumps are preferable.

(It should be noted that some of us feel the delicate balance of energy with aquifer is exaggerated. With proper erosion control and afforestation, these people say, there's no reason that 5 horsepower can't be put, even on relatively proximate shallow wells. There *are*, however, reasons that 5 diesel or high-tension electric horses perhaps *shouldn't* be put, and why most of us prefer to use muscle or wind power. The noise and pollution of diesel, the whole-system offense of powerlines, the increasingly unappeasable dependencies and needs created by commitment to fossil fuels seem hardly worth the gains in energy availability involved.)

The knowledge of how much it is possible to do with how little, and awareness of the necessary balance between human needs and resource availability, integrate into the process of *using* developed water resources. We are just beginning to learn how to use our water, but already a gradually widening spectrum of possibility can be perceived: even (or especially) under energy limitations (specifically from a few hundred liters per hour by hand pump—depending on the hand—through perhaps 1,500 l.p.h. from the wind—depending on the wind—up to 5,000 l.p.h. by bullock power—possible only (?) on *very* shallow (less than 10 meters) open wells in the bottomlands: versus 2,000-5,000 l.p.h. from diesel or electric pump sets), options, paths, potentials are numerous.

Although individual approaches continue to be encouragingly diverse, the general pattern of limited-energy land use evolving here can be described as forest-farming: an agriculture based on and around trees.



Unity office, Center; Land Service display, December 1977. (Photo by Rakhal, AuroImage.)

The trees are in any case going to be here. We have planted, are planting, will continue to plant as many trees as possible. It is simply essential to do so, if the environment is to be brought back to health and wholeness. But there is more to it than the application of an obvious eco-tactic.

There is a basic, ancient symbiosis on this planet between trees and humans, which has latterly from our side been almost destroyed, and which many of us would now like to see restored. Most people, especially peasants and other traditional groups, find themselves today in a kind of economic no-man's-land, with the old life-support systems breaking up all around them, and no new alternatives in sight. They are not, under the circumstances, particularly receptive to ecological theory and argument. You'd think it would be obvious, but evidently it has to be demonstrated in practice that trees are beneficial, even necessary to humanity.

So we are learning to pay attention to the economics of afforestation, to let the forest become again what it has been throughout most of the human experience: home, hearth, larder, teacher, friend to human beings.

The potential for this in India is enormous: literally everything seems to grow on trees. Food, fodder, fuel, shelter, clothing, cleansing agents, medicines, craft materials, almost any human need can be met by a consciously developed forest in this climate. More than a hundred tree species have been planted and are prospering in Auroville, and hundreds more remain to be tried.

Planting trees as the basis for agricultural productivity makes sense here in many ways. Most species begin their productive lives within three to five years, and continue to produce for decades thereafter. Once established, they are far more dependable producers—less susceptible to vagaries of weather and pests, less dependent upon humans to survive—than are field crops. Their uses are diverse: a single tree can provide more than one type of food or material. And—at least in the tropics—most trees can be cared for or put to productive use throughout the year, promising fuller human employment than the 6 months on, 6 months off cycle of monsoon agriculture.

Trees give much more than they bear. The environment created by the presence of trees is as of much practical value as their fruits. It is an environment in which symbiotic, self-sustaining, and regenerative opportunities proliferate.



The usual monsoon crops—millets, pulses, oil seeds, manioc—can be sown between (not actually under) the trees. Tillage and manuring, and the plowing of green wastes back into the soil, help trees as well as crops; in turn, trees shelter the crops from wind and storm violence, feed and aerate the soil, facilitate water retention and permeation.

Small irrigated plots, progressively larger as the trees mature and become less dependent on the well, can provide bananas, papayas, pineapples, melons, vegetables, herbs, flowers. (This kind of garden use has to be carefully considered and planned, particularly in relation to fruit-tree claims on the water supply: guavas and mangoes, for example, are relatively drought-resistant, can share water with a larger garden than citrus trees and coconuts, which tend to burn out in the hot months unless lavishly attended.)

Animals and other life forms fit naturally in: cows, bullocks, ducks, chickens contribute manure, scratch for insects, can be at least partially maintained on tree-borne fodder; fish and edible algae ponds, besides providing protein for humans and animals, represent a valuable, nutrient-rich emergency water supply.

The agricultural diversity which is encouraged, even necessitated, by this kind of operation is humanly important for at least three reasons. It is essential, for one, if the health of the soil is to be enhanced and maintained. The physical condition of this land simply cannot long support anything like monoculture. It is also of great importance nutritionally: dependence on vegetable protein (in our area almost total) particularly requires a balanced and wide availability of foods. Finally, a highly diversified agriculture requires broad-based human participation: intensive care implies intensive labor. This requirement is ideally suited to our area, where the only untapped resources remaining are the unknown possibilities of human beings.

Even in the early stages of afforestation, erosion control, and forest-farm development, there are many opportunities for useful and healthy work. As the environment grows and prospers such opportunities will proliferate and, with careful nurturing and development of water and other resources, forest-farms can become not merely occasional economic options but lifelong working *habitats* for numbers of people: foresters, gardeners, farmers, artisans, craftspeople of all kinds, anyone who finds a way to fit in.

The process of whole-environment development—perhaps a decade from waste or wasting land to fully potent forest-farm—which such full human use implies is already underway. It is to a large extent unplanned and unforeseen, a more than human enterprise, a spontaneous arising interwoven with surprise and joy. Starting with a few plants and a house near a well, adding animals, trees, more trees, another family, another cow, environments under this kind of development expand gradually, as life-increasing possibilities gradually augment. With increasingly comprehensive afforestation and erosion control, more wells can be dug, more people come to live on the land, more gardens and trees and animals establish themselves, till eventually two developing environments find themselves growing into one, with resources and possibilities suddenly more than doubled, and the young trees of a third place visible in the near distance.

It has perhaps to be emphasized that this kind of development is not in the usual sense of the term a “profitable” agricultural enterprise. If we have not comprehended that there is *no way* to “make a profit” out of overexploited, wasted land; if we do not understand, for example, that a peasant here goes to the fields not in the expectation of making a “profit,” but simply because, if he wants to feed himself and his family, he has no choice; if we continue to judge agriculture in terms of cash profit and loss more than quality and value and effect on the soil and ourselves and the whole bit of planet we’re using, we’re missing the point, not only of the work here in Auroville, but of human life on earth at this moment of evolution....

Particularly in the early stages, regenerative land use implies cash deficits. It takes years of intensive care to work up into anything like full and balanced agricultural production. Years in which the cash value of the harvests will rarely equal the money spent in the planting and caring. Years of mistakes, disillusionings, falls, awakenings, growth, decay, new creation. It’s as though every drop of life squeezed out of the land over the centuries and not in some way replaced has now to be created anew.

The basic energy required for this work on what has been spoiled is human; what human beings have spoiled they must now make right, for their own sakes, if for no other reason. And the source of this human energy is here, waiting to be used. There are thousands of jobless or underemployed land-based villagers, and “Westerners” seeking for something worthwhile to do in the world, and the work of environmental regeneration has room for all of them. Until the work has succeeded, however, until, that is, full health and balance have been restored to the environment, the regenerative process simply cannot be asked to pay for itself.

That the work cannot of itself sustain the workers necessitates subsidy. Agriculture has here to be considered in the same light as afforestation and erosion control: not as a source of short-term “profits,” but as part of an eternal strategy for continued life—an act for the future. In order to bring the environment to the point where such a strategy becomes possible, a certain amount of non-refundable capital outlay is required. All debts owed to the earth must be paid off, if sustaining human use is to continue.

The process of subsidizing this kind of small-scale regenerative work, of paying off our debts to the earth, is more like a series of minor miracles, strokes of fortune, unexpected openings rather than the interplay of projects and foundations and resolutions and proposals which characterizes most “foreign aid.” The fact that a few hundred Westerners have chosen not merely to work but to live and be at home here evokes extraordinary lines and channels of contact between East and West. “Westerners” (it’s not actually a question of geography) here in a sense represent that minority of the world’s population which has gobbled the lion’s share of planetary resources. Through what in the West are extremely marginal sources of funds—birthday gifts, small grants and contributions, tax rebates, lottery wins—this affluent minority is able at least partially to disengage, redistribute, help to restore what has been gobbled.

In more ways than the financial, the potential here for human symbiosis and exchange is exciting, inherent in the nature of these new developments on whole-planet-available land. People from all over the world are living in close daily contact with Asian villagers, sharing—even despite themselves—energy, work, feelings, ideas, nourishment. With “Westerners” in loincloths driving bullock carts, “peasants” overhauling and redesigning wind machines, ordinary ideas about human karma and capability are seen to be needlessly limiting. This in itself makes possible, even inevitable, rather powerful human mutations, and quieter, more immediate, fruitful syntheses.

Traditional Tamil methods of food preparation, such as rendering coarse grains more digestible by fermentation, are evolving with techniques from elsewhere such as malting and sprouting into a diet making better use than ever of locally adapted plants. Village building materials and crafts mesh beautifully with new ideas about space, light, permanency, total impact of housing.

Sometimes the mesh is not so beautiful, which is also exciting. Extremes of both exploitive and nurturing consciousness are here amply represented. There have been dramas, even fist fights, over green branches cut for fuel and goats in the young trees. There are farmers who sell organic compost to Auroville, then use the cash to buy chemicals for their own fields. Guavas produced with total care and attention, eaten ripe off the tree a food beyond price, disappear green at 5 in the morning, reappear at evening in the market town, a bargain for someone at 4 for a rupee.

We're learning that a regenerative approach to the earth involves much more than socially disengaged "self-sufficiency" or caring—however lovingly or intensely—for a few scraps of salvaged land. It's becoming clear that human beings are not only *part* of but have actually somehow *invented* the "problem of the environment": our old, old game of seeking always *outside* ourselves for something to blame, study, work on, change. But somehow problems which seem purely "physical," and which we are accustomed to express and think about in entirely physical and quantitative terms (too many people, too few resources, not enough space, too much waste) cannot any more be simply "fought" or "attacked" in the old satisfying physical ways (chemical agriculture, strip mines, labor camps, genocide). They are in essence and origin not problems of the earth or the land or the whole environment but of human distribution and use, and ownership and greed, and fear and desire: problems of human psychology and quality of life, which can be dealt with nowhere if not within and among ourselves.

This awareness that humanity *is* the problem implies such strategies here as subsidized afforestation and erosion control on village land, simultaneous amelioration and depopulation of cattle and goat herds, a guava tree for every family and a return to demonetarized local economies, other things we can see and recognize but have no idea yet how actually to implement, much more we can't yet even see.

Nothing more important at the moment than watering the garden, keeping ourselves and each other and as much as possible alive and growing. And trying to see.

Given the state of the whole earth now, nothing can be offered as the exclusive answer, nothing rejected which may hold—even temporarily—hope. High-energy forest-farming operations don't seem to be designed to replace large-scale food production and environmental schemes. They are rather suited to the millions of acres of margins where the big projects aren't effectively taking root.

Small-scale green work as here described won't save already starving people, bail out the cities, reforest the Sahara. What it *can* probably do is bring some at least of the planet's vast waste and marginal lands back into health and fruitful balance, and allow some peasant cultures and other threatened groups to survive, even grow and prosper, on their land.

This kind of land-development work has been going on here for a few years now, on perhaps a dozen plots, with some 100 acres being worked intensely, maybe another 500 under preliminary afforestation and erosion control. (As the sloppy grasp of figures demonstrates, we've only recently begun to centralize information.)

We still have a lot of land to work with, a lot of space to grow, a lot to learn. We have in particular a great need for practical information, knowledge, and working contact with others involved in this kind of work. We are in no position to pronounce or lecture on the basis of our achievements. We are rather just beginning to learn our work. But a few things seem clear.

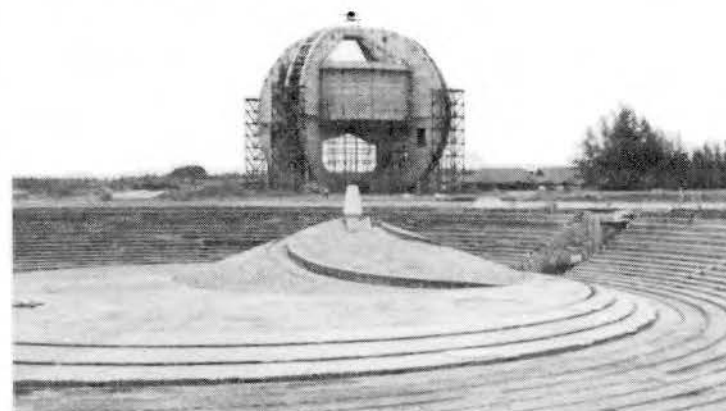
One is that the number of people both supported by and usefully employed on forest-farms seems likely—when the trees have matured and the environment is in balance—to be significantly greater than is possible on the same acreage with monsoon agriculture.

Another is that, with a certain amount of help and funding from elsewhere, this kind of operation is well within village capacities to realize. (Whether this kind of operation is what the village *wants* to realize is, of course, another story. Our brief experience—villagers working with us seem to like and appreciate the significance of the work, a few have moved out of the village to live on the land with us—indicates that it may.)

A third is that, with proper conservation practices, the amount of land—at least in this part of India—which could be developed in this way is practically unlimited. Although we are certainly *overpopulated* here, in the sense of having mouths to feed far in excess

of our present agricultural capabilities, we are not *overcrowded*, as may be Japan, in the sense of literally no more room. One of the great surprises of India is her vast acreage of waste, marginal, or otherwise uninhabited (because uninhabitable) land. If people are starving, if the cities are vile and the villages not much better, it is not due to sheer lack of space, but of *habitable, fertile* land.

A fourth, and this is very clear, is that the land, if present conditions of neglect and relentless exploitation are allowed to persist, will soon be dead. Truth.



Matrimandir seen across the amphitheater and urn. July 1977. (Photo by Rakhal, AuroImage.)

### *Toujours Mieux Workshop*

Toujours Mieux (always better) recommenced in 1974 with the aim of designing and fabricating prototype machinery. For 2 and a half years several prototypes were developed, primarily for the leather industry. During this period a limited commercial operation produced approximately 80 machines for marketing; however, this ceased in February 1976, following the Indian Leather Fair Exhibition held in Madras, in which all the Toujours Mieux entries were awarded first prize.

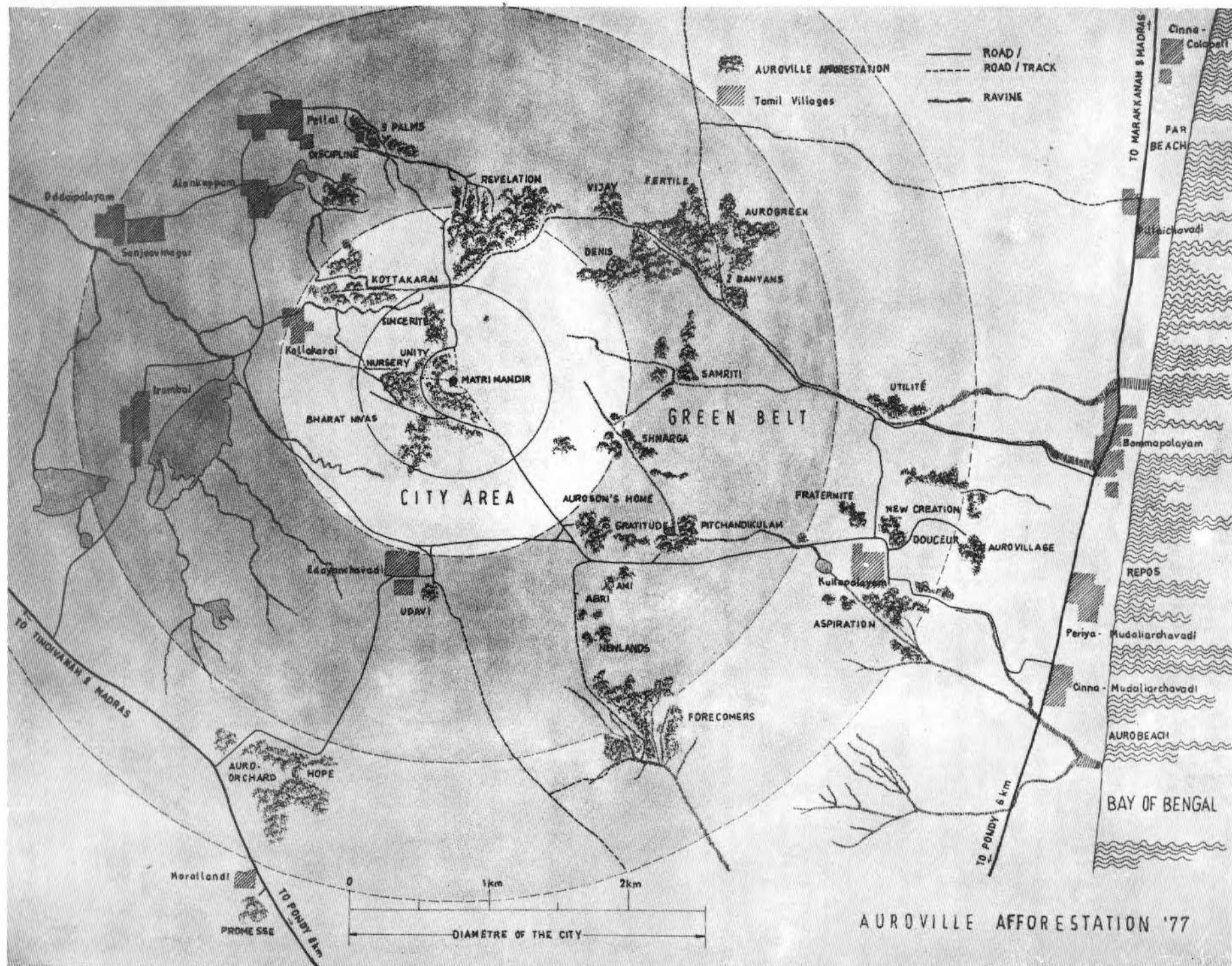
At this point, as a result of certain difficulties in Auroville, Toujours Mieux redirected its energies and resources towards the needs of Auroville, functioning as a community service unit rather than a commercial activity. In keeping with its original conception, which had become obscured in the business wind of 1974-1975, Toujours Mieux emerged as an engineering research unit focused in the field of alternative energy.

The workshop now is composed of three sections: engineering (machine tools); sheet-metal work; and structural work. Machines manufactured and tested by Toujours Mieux include a buffing machine (both single and double width), shaving machine, electronic area-measuring machine, wood lathe/sanding-buffing combination, arc-welding electrode holder, "Me 260" windmill (pictured in *Collaboration* last fall), and a dough mixer. Machinery studied includes dynamic balancing machine, shaving machine (single and double width, semihydraulic and hydraulic), and a solar water heater. Machinery under consideration includes a compost shredder, a second prototype of the "Me 260" windmill, a single-effect water pump, "Me 520" windmill, open-well windmill, low-cost solar water heater, biogas (methane) plant and a wind generator. (With the exception of a few machines specifically requested by Aurovilians, alternative-energy devices remain the primary interest of Toujours Mieux research.)

In order to facilitate this continuing applied research, Toujours Mieux requires certain basic instruments necessary for testing and documentation, such as an anemometer and a water-flow meter. Those interested in assisting, please contact Jean at Toujours Mieux, Aspiration, Auroville via Kottakuppam 605104, India.

(A more detailed, comprehensive report on the "Me 260" windmill along with other Toujours Mieux alternative-energy devices is available from Matagiri.)





MAP OF AUROVILLE (October 1977)



## Matrimandir

The white Italian marble to line the inner chamber has arrived. It is described as "white like snow." Aurovilians had to hand-carry the 26 cases of marble brought by truck from Madras as there was no mechanical means.

The marble was quarried from the mountains of Lasa (Bolzano) at a height of 1260 meters. Piero Cicionesi, the Matrimandir architect, went to Italy to select the marble. Funding and administrative work for the purchase were undertaken by Carlo Schuller of the Sri Aurobindo Verlag in Switzerland. The government of India waived customs duty for it and the Indian shipping company that transported it announced a reduction in the freight charges.

Tax-deductible contributions either for the marble or for the Matrimandir construction may be sent to Matagiri Sri Aurobindo Center, Inc., Mt. Tremper, NY 12457 or directly to "Matrimandir Account," (for the marble) to Sri Aurobindo Verlag (see address on last page) or Sri Aurobindo Memorial Fund Society, Pondicherry 605002, India.

*Matrimandir Letter* is a new monthly newsletter to provide information on the Matrimandir project. Contributors to the Matrimandir will receive it as well as anyone else who wishes it. There is no charge. The first issue came out in February and has a photograph of the quarry from which the white marble was taken. Address inquiries to Shyam Sunder, Sri Aurobindo Memorial Fund Society, Pondicherry 605002, India.

Construction of the Matrimandir entered its 8th year on 14 March 1978. The four preliminary concretings of the roof of the inner chamber were completed and the concreting of the roof itself was begun on 10 March. The roofs of the underground rooms of the Amphitheatre around the lotus urn have also been completed.

Prof. Jeffrey Cook of the College of Architecture, Arizona State University at Tempe, who recently visited Auroville, has undertaken to work with his students on the possibility of using the discs on the outside of the Matrimandir as solar collectors to provide energy for the Matrimandir and its gardens.

## Matrimandir Gardens

Excavation work for the lake-reservoir around a banyan tree near the entrance to the Matrimandir had to be discontinued because the monthly budget for the Nursery was cut to Rs. 12,000. A palm garden that will surround the lake is being designed and already 63 palms have been planted, with pits for more being dug. When excavation work is resumed and finished, then the lake bed will be waterproofed, planting will be done on the other side of the lake, and the pond filled with white lotuses.

New waterlily ponds have been prepared for bulbs sent by the Slocum Water Gardens of Winter Haven, Fla., and by Stephen Wolff of the Missouri Botanical Gardens. These lilies will form the basis of the Garden of Wealth, one of the 12 gardens to surround the Matrimandir. The workers have been studying the nature of all the plants received, color, rate of bloom, leaf size and shape, etc., and have planned each section of the pools to blend harmoniously with the others, and to have a balance between day and night blooming species.

Firooza, a young woman from the Aspiration community, recently joined the Nursery work and has taken up the extensive task of filing the horticultural data accumulated by the Nursery staff.

Much tree pruning has also been done recently. Some of the trees will be deciduous. Grasses and ground covers from California, Hawaii and elsewhere are doing well, as are two lambs kept by the

Nursery to "do the weeding." A new fern house is almost completed: it will have a mist spray to keep a constant humidity and will be planted with thousands of ferns. It is, reports Narad, "a prototype experiment for the sides of the petals of the Matrimandir, to attempt to create a living wall of cooling green plants, soft and delicate, light, airy and dense."

- Paolo Soleri, planner and designer of Arcosanti, the city in the "image of man," now under construction in Arizona, was sponsored by the Karass Project of Interface (of Massachusetts) to visit Auroville for 5 days during February. During his visit, he saw many facets of Auroville, held discussions, made slide presentations on Arcosanti and also helped in the concreting of the Matrimandir.

- Effective from 28 February it was agreed at a meeting of people resident in the area that the name "Certitude" should be adopted for what has loosely been referred to as "Auroson's community." "Auroson's Home" was the name given by the Mother to a particular house and not to a community or area in Auroville. "Certitude" came as the new name independently to two people on seeing a similarly titled photograph of the Mother during a centenary exhibition in Pondicherry.

- A new community kitchen has been established in Myrtle's house, Tapoloka, in Certitude. It provides only evening meals, with the work of cooking and cleaning up being rotated among those in the area.

- The visa situation remains difficult for newcomers. Except in very rare circumstances, no one can get more than a 3-month visa. Prem Malik recently visited Delhi and, as a result, there may be an improvement in the situation. In the meantime, Francis has taken over Jocelyn's work of representing Auroville to the authorities in Pondicherry.

- The experimental work on algae being conducted by Jim de Vries at Mango Grove as part of a 5-year government research project is to continue now with the injection of further government aid. Sri Kartikeyan, the Secretary of the State of Tamil Nadu, has arranged for two government scientists—a plant pathologist from the Sugar Cane Research Centre in Cuddalore and a District Officer from the Tamil Nadu Dept. of Agriculture—to assist the Mango Grove project. The following work program was scheduled to begin in March 1978:

1. Build a practical, cost-monitored, economy-oriented system in Auroville (probably Auro-Orchard or Auro-Green) which can become part of an integrated system involving cows and poultry, suitable for use by a private investor;

2. Develop a village-oriented system utilising shallow, uncemented ponds, bullock-driven water-lifting devices, etc., in a nearby village (possibly Kuilapalayam), which could produce algae to upgrade the nutritional value of food for village livestock. If successful, such a system would be introduced later in an extended experiment to some 200 villages in Tamil Nadu.

- Approximately 2 years ago Auroservice d'Auroville (now part of Aurofutur, Auroville's architectural and town-planning facility) undertook the master plan for a new steel city for 60,000 people to be built adjacent to the older town of Salem, some 250 km. northwest of Pondicherry. Now it has been confirmed that a follow-up contract for the second phase is about to be signed involving detailed design for the first part of the city, to accommodate some 6,000 people. The work embraces housing, public buildings, landscaping and public engineering services, to be completed with consultants in Bangalore under the coordination of Auroservice.

• The Trustees of the Findhorn Foundation in Scotland recently sent Auroville a 100-pound donation "as a gesture of love from one community to another." The money is to be used for Greenbelt afforestation work.

• The children's community at Auro-Ami, established late last year, is going well. There are now 9 children, all girls, aged 9 to 15, of several different nationalities. They run the place themselves, inviting various people to come to teach them subjects of general appeal, including music, English, math, sewing, etc. They have developed a vegetable garden producing tomatoes, aubergine, peppers, paprika, sunflowers and parsley; they do much of their own cooking and rotate in the work at Certitude; and are assembling a small library. They also have other projects, some requiring funding. Anyone interested, please write directly to Children's Community, Auro-Ami, Auroville 605101.

• The Karass Project of Interface Education Association in Massachusetts is funding and helping to establish a videotape letter ex-

change between key centers around the world, representative of the emerging planetary consciousness. Arcosanti, Findhorn, and Another Place (New Hampshire) are already linked. It is hoped to include Auroville when Peter Calloway visits there later this year. Bill Sullivan will be Auroville's recorder/operative.

• Joel Goodman and Cerge Catanes were sponsored by the Tata Energy Research Institute to attend the International Solar Energy Congress in Delhi in January. Followup fieldwork in alternative energy and its rural application is being coordinated by Joel (at Abri, Auroville 605101).

• Prof. V. Newcombe of Cardiff University (England) visited Auroville in early March to investigate the possibility of using Auroville as the site for the South Asia Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Human Ecology Council in about two years.

[We are grateful to Tim Wrey and the Auroville International—U.K. Newsletter for much of the above news.]

## GENERAL NEWS

• George Wald, the Nobel prizewinning Harvard biologist who is active in the anti-nuclear movement, visited Matagiri on 5 April. He had been much interested in Sri Aurobindo's vision as presented in Satprem's *Sri Aurobindo or The Adventure of Consciousness*, a copy of which had been sent to him by his friend George Nakashima, the designer and woodworker.

• M.P. Pandit, who was teaching and lecturing in the United States for 3 months this year, at the Krotana Institute in Ojai, Calif. and other places, concluded his trip with a two-day program at Matagiri. Mr. Pandit observes his 60th birthday in June.

• Dr. V. Madhusudan Reddy, formerly head of the philosophy department of Osmania University in Hyderabad, India, and long associated with the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, is teaching at the Cultural Integration Fellowship (2650 Fulton St., San Francisco, CA 94118). He is teaching "The Life Divine: The Yoga of Transformation" on Sundays from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.; and "Philosophy of the Upanishads" on Tuesday from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. Dr. Reddy will also be teaching at the California Institute of Asian Studies and is available for talks and seminars in the Bay Area. For further details on his classes etc., please write to Dhruva at the Fellowship.

• In our last issue we reported on the work of A.B. Patel of World Union and his involvement with the World Constitution and Parliament Association. We mentioned that the association had adopted a Constitution for the Federation of the Earth and said that copies were available. Mr. Philip Isely of the association has written to say that, while copies of this constitution are indeed available, there is a charge of \$5.00 each to cover the costs. Anyone wanting a copy, or who would be interested in subscribing to the association's new bulletin, *Across Frontiers*, should write to the association at 1480 Hoyt St., Suite 31, Lakewood, CO 80215.

How much hatred and stupidity men succeed in packing up decorously and labelling "Religion"! —*Sri Aurobindo*

Mankind has used two powerful weapons to destroy its own powers and enjoyment, wrong indulgence and wrong abstinence. —*Sri Aurobindo*

• Robert Lawlor, one of the pioneer settlers of Auroville and translator of Schwaller de Lubicz's study of the Egyptian temple at Luxor, *The Temple in Man*, has an article in the current (III:1) issue of *Parabola*, a quarterly devoted to myth and the quest for meaning. Lawlor's article is entitled "Geometry at the Service of Prayer: Cistercian Mystic Architecture."

• Mr. M.N. Menon (323 Spengler, Richland, WA 99352) is interested in organizing a weekly study group on Sri Aurobindo's works. Anyone interested please get in touch with him.

• The Government of India has issued a commemorative stamp of the Mother for her birth centenary. The 25-paise stamp was issued on 21 February 1978. First-day covers were cancelled in Pondicherry.

• Satprem's *By the Body of the Earth* was brought out in a new translation in this country on 29 March (incidentally, the date on which Sri Aurobindo and the Mother first met each other). The novel, which is dedicated to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, traces the spiritual quest of the protagonist and has been very popular in France. It is available (\$5.95) from Matagiri.

• The Alumni and Friends Association of the California Institute of Asian Studies (110 Reed Blvd., Mill Valley, CA 94941) is an organization whose aims include maintaining a creative exchange between the CIAS and its alumni, and those of the general public interested in East-West understanding, and in fostering the integral tradition of the CIAS. The Alumni and Friends is now offering a newsletter. For details write to the editor, S. Morgan Wilson.

Men are still in love with grief; when they see one who is too high for grief or joy, they curse him and cry, "O thou insensible!" Therefore Christ still hangs on the cross in Jerusalem.

Men are in love with sin; when they see one who is too high for vice or virtue, they curse him and cry, "O thou breaker of bonds; thou wicked and immoral one!" Therefore Sri Krishna does not live as yet in Brindaban. —*Sri Aurobindo*

• **Dr. Joan Price Ockham** (see list of Informal Centers) reported on the dedication of their center. It opened officially on 21 February 1978, but dedication ceremonies were held on 19 February. Some 35 people attended. A reading of the center's vision was part of the program:

"Valley Center for Contemplative Studies

"We have a vision—we perceive ourselves to be climbing slowly and clumsily upward toward some truth yet unseen.

"The great spiritual teachers, expert mountaineers, have gone and go now before us, and show us, if we care to learn, the way to freedom, to reality, to peace. They have seen the Promised Land, tasted the nectar of perfection, experienced the Divine Reality. They have attained the master key and have returned to the valley to open the door to realization so that we too may discover the way.

"The success with which we follow this Way to Freedom and full life will depend upon the intensity of our love and aspiration, our capacity for self-discipline, our courage to be 'in the world but not of it.' It will depend on the generosity and completeness of our outgoing soul passion for beauty, goodness and truth.

"As we climb, we are bound to meet suffering, pain and conflict—we are bound to taste joy, harmony and love: and the higher we climb, the more divine beauty, truth and goodness we can reveal here on earth.

"So, our small center here constitutes a symbol of evolving individuals in a developing society. Each of us represents a particular aspect in the Divine Plan. The spiritual growth of each of us will be shared in the center with people who apprehend the same vision—and will flow outward with support from the group into every walk of life we touch. From our Valley Center we climb mountains."

(Readers may be interested to know that Dr. Ockham is the author of a new book on Sri Aurobindo: *An Introduction to Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy*, which is available from Matagiri.)

• **Cultural Integration Fellowship** (2650 Fulton St., San Francisco, CA 94110) began offering several programs in April: A Dream Work series, conducted by Lois Jones; Guided Imagery and Music Workshop conducted by Alanna Hartzok; Hatha Yoga demonstrations and classes. There is also a regular series of Sunday morning lectures.

• **Jan O' Shinsky** (see list of Informal Centers) reports that a meditation/discussion group is being formed with Prof. and Mrs. Arun Misra of the University of Missouri. It is open to anyone interested.

• **East-West Cultural Center** (2865 W. 9th St., Los Angeles, CA 90006) offered a special program on Easter Sunday: "Spiritual Message of the Flowers" as given by the Mother. Dr. Judith Tyberg, founder of the center, and Trudy King presented the program, showing photographs of flowers in Auroville and giving their significance. Dr. Tyberg also regularly shares the wisdom of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, Thursdays 8-9:30 p.m. in the library of the center. Friday afternoons 2:00-3:30 Frederic Ross conducts the Spiritual Inquiry Group. Those interested in working for Auroville meet regularly at the center; call or write for times.

Sanskrit Mantra tape and booklet and a Sanskrit Pronunciation tape are available from the center, for \$10.00 and \$7.50 respectively. They have been prepared by Dr. Tyberg, who is a Sanskrit scholar.

Among those presenting programs at the center as part of its observance of the Mother's Centenary were Dr. Tyberg, Frank Mathur, Frederic Ross, Joey Baker, Tom Edgar and others.

• **Future Child (Discovery Train)** (Box 1419, Salmon Arm, BC V0 E 2T0, Canada) now has stock of wooden insect puzzles made in Auroville. Write to the center for details on cost and shipping. The puzzles are suitable for primary and middle-grade children. There are also short stories about specific insects to accompany each puzzle. Models include the monarch butterfly, lady-beetle, lacewing, lightning bug, praying mantis, and others.

• **Centro Sri Aurobindo** (Diagonal 434, 3<sup>o</sup>. 1<sup>a</sup>., Barcelona 9, Spain) has announced a new quarterly, *Savitri*. It contains Spanish translations of selections from the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, as well as disciples, including, in the first issue, Pavitra, Romen, Maggi and Nata. Details on subscribing may be obtained by writing the center.

• **Sri Aurobindo Ashram—Delhi Branch** (Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110016, India) is holding the 4th international youth camp from the 5th to the 14th of June, 1978. The program includes meditation, lectures and discussions on integral education, Asanas and Hatha Yoga, health and posture training, singing, hiking, games, etc. It is being held at Ban Nivas, in Nainital in the Himalayas.

The Ashram itself is open to anyone interested in Sri Aurobindo and the Mother; there are daily collective meditations, a library, dining hall, playgrounds, and the Mother's International School, as well as guest facilities.

• **Sveriges Auroville** (Fack 6009, S-220-06 Lund, Sweden) has published a booklet on Auroville, giving its background and development, with many photographs. This center also publishes *Nasta Framtid* (Next Future), a quarterly devoted to Sri Aurobindo and Auroville. Marten Stormquist of the center writes that the group does all the translation, typing and printing themselves.

• **Société de Développement pour Auroville** (4461 rue Saint-André, Montréal, Qué. H2J 2Z5, Canada) offered a variety of programs for their regular Friday evening meetings during February and March: talks of the Mother, lectures on Rudolf Steiner, Auroville, a comparison of Sri Aurobindo and Carl Jung, and on Eckankar, among others. The Auroville Office of the center is open Saturday afternoons for anyone interested in obtaining information on Auroville, using the lending library, or meeting with others interested in Auroville.

• **Integral Yoga Centre** (% J.I. Patel, 139 St. John's Road, Colchester, Essex CO4 JH4, England) is now issuing a newsletter of center activities. I

has been arranged for 1978, held at Stanway Village Hall, Villa Road, Stanway, Colchester. The schedule: January 14, Yoga of Sri Aurobindo; March 4, Mysticism—Savitri; May 6, pathy; July 8, Integral Education and Auroville. For details and fees, please write or call Margherita Barret, 3 Church Cottage, Well Lane, Easthorpe, Kelvedon, Essex, England. World Union group meets to study *The Human Cycle* and *The Ideal of Human Unity*. For details, contact Suzanne Rowland, 16 E. Stockwell St., Flat 4, Colchester, England.

To find that saving a man's body or mind from suffering is not always for the good of either soul, mind or body is one of the bitterest experiences for the humanly compassionate. —*Sri Aurobindo*



## The Experience of Death

Man stands at an evolutionary nexus facing, as it were, a Great Sphinx, and is confronted with a question which must necessarily drive him to the limits of his present consciousness. What do you know of death? In a society which constantly denies death, the solution to this problem will not be found in philosophical speculation or other mental meanderings, but only in a cartography of consciousness which can bring us face to face with this Shadow of Life.

It is indeed the great enigma of present-day humanity that it wades in the density of death to such an extent that it comes to wear the guise of life. And yet it would seem that the more modern man seeks to ignore Death's presence, the more it presses for recognition. In the midst of a cancerous force that desires to destroy the balance of both the body of the earth and the human body we attempt to shield our children, those facing imminent death and ourselves from the Unmentionable. It is as if we are witnesses and participators in the great struggle of the mind to repress the force of death grown to cosmic proportions.

It is a strange paradox that our so-called advanced scientific-technological society which has fought so hard against death has equally repressed its reality on a subjective level and enhanced its enormity via its creative process. The medical sciences seek to preserve various organs of the body for transplant while the same scientific community, aided by the business establishment, infects the water, earth and air with the "wastes" of its research. The doctor deals with questions of life and death daily, and yet avoids the moment when death speaks through the personality of a patient asking for a prognosis. Relatives "hide" it from terminal patients and vice versa, although it is usually the case that all concerned know. Man fights so fiercely to conceal the knowledge of death from himself and his fellowman, and it is perhaps for this very reason that it breaks out in a multitude of other forms demanding recognition as a legitimate sphere of knowledge, power and existence—or even as a teacher.

It has been the long-standing belief and experience that a knowledge of death can both enhance the quality of life and expand our consciousness of existence. So much so that other times and cultures have recorded their experiences of death in the form of "death manuals," e.g., *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* and *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*. In this light modern man, as an inheritor of scientific materialism's thoroughgoing attempt to "demythologize" our world, stands before death without guide or teacher. Whether he confronts death in life or physical death, he must seek anew rites of passage and record in a new idiom his experience.

Amidst what often appears as a "conspiracy of culture" to veil the presence and experience of death, one can discern the emergence of a new consciousness. It has assumed the form of a new field of study, referred to as Thanatology and encompassing Elizabeth Kubler-Ross' therapeutic work with the dying (*On Death and Dying*), Dr. Raymond Moody's investigations concerning the possibility of survival after death (*Life after Life*), as well as Stanislov Grof's LSD therapy with terminal cancer patients (*The Human Encounter with Death*). This evolving study, the ongoing investigation of altered states of consciousness and the emerging reality of a spiritual renaissance can, perhaps, provide some of the needed vehicles for a remembrance of the experience of dying. Any hope or aspiration to conquer death, whether on a spiritual, psychological or physical level, must face first the necessity of an evolution of consciousness whereby modern man reacquaints himself with Death's many forms.

With an aspiration to nurture this movement of consciousness, a ten-week course will be offered, exploring the psychological, philosophical and spiritual dimensions of the experience of dying. Some of the areas to be explored will include sources for the experience of dying, attitudes toward death, therapy with the terminally ill, death and the medical profession, physical and psychological death, death as a key to the meaning of human existence, the relevance of mythology for a deeper understanding of death,

a cross-cultural approach to death, the psychological sources of death, and death as a necessary condition for the spiritual life. Periodically throughout the course leading figures in the field of Thanatology will share their particular experiences. The deep objective is not to offer just another course for the numerous reasons that courses are constructed, but to provide the conditions for people to think about, meditate on, contemplate the experiences of death in their own lives.

The course will begin on 7 October 1978 and run for ten consecutive weeks. It will meet once a week, on Saturday, from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and the cost per person will be \$100.00 for the ten sessions. As there will be a limited registration, we ask that those who wish to enroll send a \$10.00 deposit *no later than 1 August* to Matagiri Sri Aurobindo Center, Inc., Mt. Tremper, NY 12457. Further information can be obtained by writing to Charles Maloney at the address given above or phoning (914) 679-8322.

## Other News of Matagiri

At press time there was the possibility of offering some introductory Hatha Yoga classes at Matagiri during July and August. If you are interested, please write to Matagiri.

In addition, other courses, including drawing ("Learning to See"), may be offered by Matagiri. If you wish to be notified of any such offerings, please let us know.

**Sri Aurobindo's Birthday:** On Tuesday, 15 August 1978, there will be an observance of Sri Aurobindo's birthday at Matagiri. It will begin with a 10:00 a.m. meditation and will include lunch and an afternoon program, probably a concert. All who wish may attend, but should let us know *no later than 1 August* of their intention to join us.

• A group of students from Ulster Academy, a private progressive high school in Kingston, spent a day at Matagiri in April. They were studying Eastern thought. At Matagiri they heard talks on Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, and meditation, and were shown slides of the Ashram and Auroville.



A view of Matagiri in winter 1978.

*Mere: Carnet de Laboratoire 1950-1973. Noté par Satprem.*  
Paris: Institut de Recherches Evolutives, 1977. 275 pp.

This "laboratory notebook" is a condensation of the some 6,000 pages of *The Mother's Log*, the record of notes, letters and recorded talks with the Mother which Satprem kept. This condensation serves to give an overview of the 23 years of the Mother's monumental labor for physical transformation. While the passages quoted are very brief, for the most part, they are nevertheless not only fascinating for anyone familiar with the vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, but powerful and illuminating. It is almost overwhelming to read through this book covering such a period of time and dealing with such an extraordinary task, in fact the task of man on earth now, to see passing before one, like a fast-action motion picture, the rapid movement of the supramental force through the Mother.

For 30 years, she says, she did no sadhana; rather, she says, Sri Aurobindo did it for her. She "merely" made her body and being receptive to his action and he carried on the work. Then he left his body and she had to do the work all alone. So she took up the sadhana of the body (in a sense not previously understood by traditional spiritual disciplines) and slowly began to find the way. With the supramental manifestation in 1956, the work accelerated and changes were noted, not only in the Mother but in the world. For in fact her body had become the "body of the earth." What happened in the world was felt in her body. (Interspersed with the quotations are notations of various world events such as the Bay of Pigs, the space flights, student revolts, etc.) And the Mother speaks not only of the progress of the transformation of her body but of many other things as well. One waits expectantly for the full Log to come out and in English!

A sampling of passages from the *Carnet* (all translations are by the reviewer):

*September 15, 1954:* As long as you believe that what you do depends on your own ability, you close a host of doors one after the other and nothing can enter.

*June 23:* It is necessary to begin above: first purify the higher and then purify the lower.

*February 29, 1956* [the day of the supramental manifestation]: The true transformation is the transformation of the *consciousness*, all the rest will follow automatically.

*March 21:* The age of Capitalism and business draws to an end. But the age of Communism is also going to pass. It is an armed struggle to fight against Plutocracy, but when the battle is over, the armies are disbanded and Communism having no more use will be transformed into something else which will express a higher truth. This truth we know and it is for it that we work so that it can reign on earth.

*March 10, 1957:* The control of one's body is the first indispensable step. A body which governs you is an enemy.

*December 27:* One carries in oneself, with oneself, around oneself the atmosphere produced by one's acts. It is that you breathe every minute of your existence and that is the misery, the perpetual malaise.

*January 28, 1960:* For other yogas, the paths have been beaten, but for the material yoga nothing has been done, ever, so it is necessary to invent at every moment.

*May 6, 1960:* I have seen this secret: it is in Matter that the Supreme becomes perfect. I have seen it in the outer life of every day, in the very physical life which all other spiritualities reject: a sort of precision, exactitude, even in the atom.

*June 4:* Sound has a power in itself. By obliging the body to repeat its sound (mantra), one obliges it to receive the vibration.

*February 18, 1961:* To act from above? I have acted from above for more than 30 years. It changes nothing.

*January 1, 1962:* Don't take my words for a teaching: they are always a force in action.

*January 9:* (Fainting) A sort of decentralization. In order to form a body, the cells are concentrated by a centripetal force, then it is just the contrary: as if there were a centrifugal force which causes them to be diffused. And when that becomes a little too much, I faint.

*January 12:* No supramental vibration is transmitted except in perfect equality.

*January 22, 1964:* Human beings always do something for something: a vibration which always has a tail before it. And the cells have perceived that if one can have the "vibration without the tail," the power is increased tenfold.

*October 30:* But all the great spiritual realizations, the great schools, the religions, oh! how childish they are. At bottom, all those beings, the gods, know nothing of the problem, they know nothing at all. The true problem is here.

*July 7:* To make girls and boys—there are millions of people who do that!

*July 10:* Doctors have a hypnotic power over the material consciousness. The mental deformations of the doctor stick in your brain and come back ten years later.

*August 3, 1968:* Auroville: A center of accelerated evolution.

*December 21, 1969:* I have refused to be a prophet. To be a prophet, one must crystallize things—that is just the Falsehood of the creation, it is not necessary to help it! To allow full suppleness to things so that they can at each moment change.

*March 25, 1970:* All human organizations are based on: the visible fact (which is a falsehood), public opinion (which is another falsehood), and the moral sense which is a third falsehood. So ....

*April 29:* Still cardiac crises.... But at bottom (if this body "died"), it would be especially for others that it would make a difference. They are still in that kind of illusion of death.

*August 5:* I no longer have the impression of a limit, even physically. And it is not even like a person who grew large to take all others within himself: it is a force, a consciousness which *diffused* into things.

*July 10, 1971:* The inner consciousness can be conscious that this suffering is unreal, but the physical consciousness cannot: it is necessary for it to change. Cancer, all those things, it is necessary that it change. It cannot be considered as a thing which one must see in another way: it is necessary for the *fact* to change. For the transformation to be true, it is necessary that the body *also* attain to a harmony above. The other parts of the being can transform their consciousness while remaining as they are—the body has to change.

*September 4, 1971:* People are not ready, my little one! They have a frightful vulgarity of consciousness, no aspiration, no need of perfection, nothing at all!

*April 14, 1973:* It is the transfer of the nervous system. It is worse than dying.

*May 5* [The Mother's mantra for the body]: Om Namō Bhagavate, Om Namō Bhagavate, Om Namō Bhagavate....



**LOVE'S EMBRACE**  
**Patrick Stimer**

When words from far horizons  
Sing the mysteries of the night  
And the moon in cloudless heavens  
Seems a dream of gold and white,

When the breath of every moment  
Grows felicitous and fair  
Like hues of paradise, or scents  
That jewel the midnight air,

When soft and secret leadings  
Grow warm with Her delight  
And the toil of all our seekings  
Is hushed in happy light,

May Love's embrace, Her fiery kiss  
Compel each nerve and cell  
To heights of unimagined bliss  
Where vasts of wonder dwell.

**A POEM FROM ANOTHER PLACE, AND ANOTHER  
TIME (IN WHICH I SOMETIMES DWELL)**  
**Navoditte**

It was winter; and the morning  
of the new year's first sin,  
the sixth of January, found  
the three men dying of anger.

Secured by habit, soured by hope,  
they had built their shelter  
in a clearing in the woods,  
and had carved their marks upon the trees.

While counting their miracles they cast about  
their dry words like fools scattering husks:  
"New laws now apply here," they said.  
"They come from outside the borders,

And from a higher authority."  
But the stranger merely answered:  
"Do not be afraid. You still have  
sovereignty over many ruins."

And although they were offended,  
they stayed beyond the usual season.

[From *Poems from Auroville*]

**Informal Centers and Study Groups**

[The following individuals hold informal study and meditation meetings. These are not public centers but private homes. People interested in knowing more about Sri Aurobindo's teaching or attending the meetings should write or call in advance. Anyone else willing to serve as an informal center or contact, please write to Matagiri.]

**Scottsdale, Ariz.:** Dr. Joan Price Ockham, 8409 Via Del Parque, Scottsdale, AZ 85258. (602) 991-2072. *Synthesis of Yoga* class Thursday evenings.

**Tampa, Fla.:** Malati & Arvind Jani, 500 E. Davis Blvd., Tampa, FL 33606. (813) 254-7153. A meditation/study group was being planned at press time.

**Boston, Mass.:** Steve Phillips & Hope Schlorholtz, 21 Revere St., No. 3, Boston, MA 02114. (617) 723-3614. *Synthesis of Yoga* class Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m., meditation at 7:30 p.m.

**N. Plainfield, N.J.:** Paul Molinari & Janice Edl, 87 Ridge Ave., N. Plainfield, NJ 07060. (201) 561-8997. Study group meets Sunday evenings; meditation on *Savitri*, Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.

**Blakeslee, Penna.:** Dr. Jan Price, Anandawood, Blakeslee, PA 18610. (717) 646-2139. Study group, Sundays at 7:00 p.m.

[The following individuals do not hold regular meetings at present, but anyone interested in knowing more about the teaching of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother may contact them.]

**Berkeley, Calif.:** Wayne & Jacqueline Bloomquist, 2323 Eunice St., Berkeley, CA 94708. (415) 845-2455.

**Greenwich, Conn.:** David & Navaja Mitchell, 33 Evergreen Rd., Greenwich, CT 06830. (203) 869-4508.

**Washington, D.C.:** Mrs. Rose Kupperman, 5601 Seminary Rd., Apt. 1516N, Falls Church, VA 22041. (703) 379-4016.

**Savannah, Ga.:** Marnie Muller, 120 E. 46th St., Savannah, GA 31405. (912) 236-8824.

**Boston, Mass.:** Gene Finn, 91 Kilmarnock St., Boston, MA 02215. (617) 262-6390.

**Highland Park, Mich.:** Umesh Desai, 20 Cortland, Highland Park, MI 48003. (313) 868-9688.

**Hallsville, Mo.:** Jan O'Shinsky, Rt. 1, Box 279, Hallsville, MO 65255. (314) 696-3568.

**Billings, Mont.:** Richard Gilson, 1001 Rimrock Rd., Billings, MT 59102. (406) 259-4901. Also Jonathan Anderson, (406) 252-7645.

**Reno, Nev.:** Joel & Evelyn Gross, 1902 Hillboro Ave., Reno, NV 89512. (702) 323-6532.

**Ithaca, N.Y.:** Mrs. Irene Jessen, 111 W. Yates St., Ithaca, NY 14850. (607) 272-7339.

Sandy McAfee, 700 Stewart Ave., Ithaca, NY 14850.

**Portland, Ore.:** Seja Borich, 710 SW Madison, No. 707, Portland, OR 97205. (503) 226-6615.

**Providence, R.I.:** Mario Santonastaso, 25 Marshall St., Providence, RI 02909. (401) 521-4081.

**Knoxville, Tenn.:** Arun & Kalpana Chatterjee, 8912 Ripon Circle, Knoxville, TN 37919. (615) 2321.

**Memphis, Tenn.:** William Jones, 726 S. Graham, Memphis, TN 38111. (901) 323-9140.

**Seattle, Wash.:** Kenneth & Ellen Carlin, 312 NW 84 St., Seattle, WA 98117. (206) 784-4907.

**Leathercraft in Greenbelt, August 1977.**

(Photo by Rakhal, AuroImage.)

## SRI AUROBINDO AND AUROVILLE CENTERS

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

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

### UNITED STATES

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

### CANADA

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

### SOUTH AMERICA

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

### AFRICA

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

### ASIA & THE FAR EAST

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

- New Delhi:** Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 11016.
- The Mother's International School, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 11016.
- Madras:** Matri Bhavan, % K.R.S. Iyengar, 91 Kutchery Rd., Mylapore, Madras 600004.
- Sri Aurobindo Society, 4-A Smith Rd., Madras 600002.
- Shimoga:** Sri Aurobindo Society, % N.M. Kasetty, B.H. Road, Shimoga 577201, Karnataka.
- Visakhapatnam:** Mother's Centre, % Dr. Prema Nandakumar, D-11, B.H.P.B. Township, Visakhapatnam 530012.

**Bangladesh:** Sri Aurobindo Society, 17/2 Rankin St., Wari, Dacca 3. (Tel. 244671).

**Bhutan:** Sri Aurobindo Society, % R. Srinivasan, First Secretary, Indian Mission, India House, Thimphu.

**Japan:** Auroville Foundation, % Mrs. L. Hamsen, Kobe Port, P.O. Box 331, Ibuta-bu, Kobe.

Sri Aurobindo Society, 54/52 Chome, Awajimachi, Higashi-ku, Osaka. (Tel. 06.231.5426).

**Malaysia:** Sri Aurobindo Society, % P.P. Narayanan, 3 Jalan, 6/19 Petaling Jaya.

**Mauritius:** Sri Aurobindo Cultural Circle, 105 Pontre St., St. Croix, St. Louis.

**Nepal:** Sri Aurobindo Society, % K.P. Ramal, Indo-Nepal Friendship Society, Lagan Tole, Kathmandu.

**New Zealand:** Sri Aurobindo Study Center, Box 8564, Auckland.

**Singapore:** Sri Aurobindo Society, Trade Union House, Shenton Way, Singapore 1. (Tel. 2226555).

**Sri Lanka:** Sri Aurobindo Society 75 3/1 Hemas Building, York St., Colombo 1. (Tel. 29975).

### EUROPE

**Belgium:** Sri Aurobindo Auroville Society, Mira Hoeve, Nieuwmoersesteenweg 17, Essen.

**England:** Integral Yoga Centre, % Patel, 139 St. John's Rd., Colchester, Essex, CO4 4JH. (Tel. Colchester 5224).

Integral Yoga Group, % Michael Shenton, Charterhouse Adult Education Centre, London Rd., Coventry.

Sri Aurobindo Society, 82 Bell St., London NW 2.

Sri Aurobindo Society (South London), 10 Gosberton Rd., Balham, London SW12 8LF.

Sri Aurobindo Group, % C.P. Patel, 84 Ashton Rd., Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV11 5EJ. (Tel. [0683] 66473).

Sri Aurobindo Group % K. Patel, 28 Bourne St., Dudley, Warwickshire, West Midlands DY2 7AL.

Sri Aurobindo Group, % K.B. Parmar, 42 Park Rd., Rugby, Coventry. (Tel. Rugby 76008).

Sri Aurobindo Group, % Mrs. Marguerite Smithwhite, 24 Ian Rd., Billericay, Essex. (Tel. Billericay 57110).

Sri Aurobindo Group, % D. Chauhan, 40 Glossop St., Leicester, LE 5 5HN.

**France:** Auroville International France, 67 rue de Rome, 75008 Paris. (Tel. 522 2619).

Sri Aurobindo Centre, 7 avenue Carnot, 75/Paris 17. (Tel. 380 1188).

**West Germany:** Atmaniketan Ashram, Merchstr. 49, 4715 Ascheberg-Herbern. (Tel. [02599] 1364).

Aurora-Zentrale, D-8033 Planegg bei München, Elisabethweg 34. (Tel. [0-89] 859 6088).

Freunde Aurovilles, % Brockhaus, Tengstr. 22/II, 8000 München 40.

Sri Aurobindo Society, % Kappes, Belchenstr. 19, Karlsruhe 75. (Tel. 0721-881459).

**Italy:** Centro Anandamayi, Vicolo delle Terme 8, 60035 Iesi (An.).

Centro Sri Aurobindo, Via Fonseca Pimental 4, 20127 Milano. (Tel. 28 47 325).

Dr. Mariano Salemmé, Monte Lario, 00068 Rignano Flaminio, Rome.

**The Netherlands:** Auroville International, Namaste Aurowinkel, Bloemdwarsstraat 9, Amsterdam. (Tel. 020-66217).

Sri Aurobindo Auroville Society, Th. Jeffersonlaan 311, Rijswijk Z.H. 2105.

**Poland:** Zbigniew Madeyski, Warszawa 00355, Tamka 49 m. 64.

**Spain:** Inaki & Manoli Ceballos, c/Oyarzun-140D, Irun.

Lupe & Javier Garcia Penalver, Avenida José Antonio 727, Barcelona 13.

**Sweden:** Auroville International, Fack 6009, S-220 06 Lund. (Tel. 046 13 3871).

Sri Aurobindo Center, Lilla Sodergatan 16 III, S-223 53 Lund. (Tel. 046 13 3871).

**Switzerland:** Marinus Rykebnoer, Artisanat d'Auroville-Inde, 1411 Vugelles-la-Mothe. (Tel. 024 371510).

Sri Aurobindo Verlag, Seestrasse 34, CH-8702 Zollikon, Zurich. (Tel. 01 658189).