



Collaboration

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The inner courtyard of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram showing the samadhi (tomb) of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Floral designs are made daily on top of the samadhi. (Photo by Sri Aurobindo Ashram.)

In this issue we feature the views of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on money, one of the three great forces exercising the most powerful influence on man. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother place money in a new spiritual perspective and indicate how we may help to redirect it to a truer role; that of helping the new world to manifest.

A word about our series on Integral Psychology. This compilation has been made by Eric, the editor of *Collaboration* (since someone has asked), and will continue for a number of issues. It began with a general psychological description from the evolutionary point of view and is now in the process of describing the various planes of consciousness from the top down. We will dwell for some time on the mind. This series has proved unexpectedly popular and

a number of readers have asked for copies of back issues so that they can have the complete series. We regret that some back issues containing the series are no longer available. However, we can supply back issues where they are available and where they are not, we will supply Xerox copies of the series instalment, for anyone interested.

We wish to draw our readers' attention particularly to the Auroville projects under News of Auroville and to the videotape "letter" project linking spiritual communities which is the unique and special work undertaken by the Karass Project of Interface, reported under General News.

As always we welcome communications from our readers, though the pressure of work sometimes may delay our response.

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MONEY

Sri Aurobindo

Money is the visible sign of a universal force, and this force in its manifestation on earth works on the vital and physical planes and is indispensable to the fullness of the outer life. In its origin and its true action it belongs to the Divine. But like other powers of the Divine it is delegated here and in the ignorance of the lower Nature can be usurped for the uses of the ego or held by Asuric influences and perverted to their purpose. This is indeed one of the three forces—power, wealth, sex—that have the strongest attraction for the human ego and the Asura and are most generally misheld and misused by those who retain them. The seekers or keepers of wealth are more often possessed rather than its possessors; few escape entirely a certain distorting influence stamped on it by its long seizure and perversion by the Asura. For this reason most spiritual disciplines insist on a complete self-control, detachment and renunciation of all bondage to wealth and of all personal and egoistic desire for its possession. Some even put a ban on money and riches and proclaim poverty and bareness of life as the only spiritual condition. But this is an error; it leaves the power in the hands of the hostile forces. To reconquer it for the Divine to whom it belongs and use it divinely for the divine life is the supramental way for the Sadhaka.

You must neither turn with an ascetic shrinking from the money power, the means it gives and the objects it brings, nor cherish a rajasic attachment to them or a spirit of enslaving self-indulgence in their gratifications. Regard wealth simply as a power to be won back for the Mother and placed at her service.

All wealth belongs to the Divine and those who hold it are trustees, not possessors. It is with them today, tomorrow it may be elsewhere. All depends on the way they discharge their trust while it is with them, in what spirit, with what consciousness in their use of it, to what purpose.

In your personal use of money look on all you have or get or bring as the Mother's. Make no demand but accept what you receive from her and use it for the purposes for which it is given to you. Be entirely selfless, entirely scrupulous, exact, careful in detail, a good trustee; always consider that it is her possessions and not your own that you are handling. On the other hand, what you receive for her, lay religiously before her; turn nothing to your own or anybody else's purpose.

Do not look up to men because of their riches or allow yourself to be impressed by the show, the power or the influence. When you ask for the Mother, you must feel that it is she who is demanding through you a very little of what belongs to her and the man from whom you ask will be judged by his response.

If you are free from the money-taint but without any ascetic withdrawal, you will have a greater power to command the money for the divine work. Equality of mind, absence of demand and the full dedication of all you possess and receive and all your power of acquisition to the Divine Shakti and her work are the signs of this freedom. Any perturbation of mind with regard to money and its use, any claim, any grudging is a sure index of some imperfection or bondage.

The ideal Sadhaka in this kind is one who if required to live poorly can so live and no sense of want will affect him or interfere with the full inner play of the divine consciousness, and if he is required to live richly, can so live and never for a moment fall into desire or attachment to his wealth or to the things that he uses or servitude to self-indulgence or a weak bondage to the habits that the possession of riches creates. The divine Will is all for him and the divine Ananda.

In the supramental creation the money-force has to be restored to the Divine Power and used for a true and beautiful and harmonious equipment and ordering of a new divinised vital and physical existence in whatever way the Divine Mother herself decides in her creative vision. But first it must be conquered back for her and those will be strongest for the conquest who are in this part of their nature strong and large and free from ego and surrendered without any claim or withholding or hesitation, pure and powerful channels for the Supreme Puissance. [1]

Economic Barbarism

But if Science has thus prepared us for an age of wider and deeper culture and if in spite of and even partly by its materialism it has rendered impossible the return of the true materialism, that of the barbarian mentality, it has encouraged more or less indirectly both by its attitude to life and its discoveries another kind of barbarism,—for it can be called by no other name—that of the industrial, the commercial, the economic age which is now progressing to its culmination and its close. This economic barbarism is essentially that of the vital man who mistakes the vital being for the self and accepts its satisfaction as the first aim of life. The characteristic of Life is desire and the instinct of possession. Just as the physical barbarian makes the excellence of the body and the development of physical force, health and prowess his standard and aim, so the vitalistic or economic barbarian makes the satisfaction of wants and desires and the accumulation of possessions his standard and aim. His ideal man is not the cultured or noble or thoughtful or moral or religious, but the successful man. To arrive, to succeed, to possess is his existence. The accumulation of wealth and more wealth, the adding of possessions to possessions, opulence, show, pleasure, a cumbrous inartistic luxury, a plethora of conveniences, life devoid of beauty and nobility, religion vulgarised or coldly formalised, politics and government turned into a trade and profession, enjoyment itself made a business, this is commercialism. To the natural unredeemed economic man beauty is a thing otiose or a nuisance, art and poetry a frivolity or an ostentation and a means of advertisement. His idea of civilisation is comfort, his idea of morals social respectability, his idea of politics the encouragement of industry,

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the opening of markets, exploitation and trade following the flag, his idea of religion at best a pietistic formalism or the satisfaction of certain vitalistic emotions. He values education for its utility in fitting a man for success in a competitive or, it may be, a socialised industrial existence, science for the useful inventions and knowledge, the comforts, conveniences, machinery of production with which it arms him, its power for organisation, regulation, stimulus to production. The opulent plutocrat and the successful mammoth capitalist and organiser of industry are the supermen of the commercial age and the true, if often occult rulers of its society.

The essential barbarism of all this is its pursuit of vital success, satisfaction, productiveness, accumulation, possession, enjoyment, comfort, convenience for their own sake. The vital part of the being is an element in the integral human existence as much as the

physical part; it has its place but must not exceed its place. A full and well-appointed life is desirable for man living in the society, but on condition that it is also a true and beautiful life. Neither the life nor the body exist for their own sake, but as vehicle and instrument of a good higher than their own. They must be subordinated to the superior needs of the mental being, chastened and purified by a greater law of truth, good and beauty before they can take their proper place in the integrality of human perfection. Therefore in a commercial age with its ideal, vulgar and barbarous, of success, vitalistic satisfaction, productiveness and possession the soul of man may linger a while for certain gains and experiences, but cannot permanently rest. If it persisted too long, Life would become clogged and perish of its own plethora or burst in its straining to a gross expansion. [2]

THE PURPOSE AND USE OF MONEY

The Mother

For about a century mankind is suffering from a disease which seems to be spreading more and more, and in our days it has become most acute; it is what we may call "utilitarianism." Things and persons, circumstances and activities seem to be viewed and appreciated exclusively from this angle alone. Nothing has any value unless it is useful. It goes, of course, without saying that what is useful is better than what is not so. But one must first of all understand what one calls useful—useful to whom, to what, for what?

Indeed more and more, the races who consider themselves civilised have been naming as useful that which serves to bring, to acquire or to produce money. Everything is judged from this monetary angle. This is what I call utilitarianism. And this disease is very contagious, for even children do not escape from it. At an age when one should have dreams of beauty and greatness and perfection, perhaps too sublime for ordinary common sense, but certainly higher than this dull good sense, they dream of money and worry how to earn it.

So when they think of their studies they think above all of what can be useful to them, so that later on when they grow up, they can earn a great deal of money.

And the thing that becomes most important for them is to prepare to pass examinations with success; for it is with diplomas and certificates and titles that they will be able to get good positions and earn much.

For them study has no other interest.

To learn in order to know, to study in order to have the knowledge of the secrets of Nature and of life, to educate oneself in order to increase one's consciousness, to discipline oneself in order to be master of oneself, to overcome one's weaknesses, one's incapacity and ignorance, to prepare oneself in order to progress in life towards a goal that is nobler and vaster, more generous and more true...they hardly think of that and consider all that as mere utopia, the only important thing is to be practical, to prepare and to learn how to earn money. [3]

* * * * *

First of all, from the financial point of view, the principle on which our action is built is that money is not meant to bring more money—this idea of money making money is a falsehood and a perversion—money is meant to increase the wealth, the prosperity and the productiveness of a group, a country or, preferably, the whole earth. Money is a means, a force, a power, not an end in itself. As all forces and all powers, it is by activity and circulation that it grows and intensifies, not by accumulation and stagnation.

What we are attempting here is to prove to the world, through a concrete example, that by some inner psychological realisation and some outer organisation a world can be created where most of the causes of human misery will cease to exist. [4]

* * * * *

The conflict about money is what might be called a "conflict of ownership," but the truth is that money belongs to no one. This idea of *possessing* money has warped everything. Money should not be a "possession": like power it is a means of action which is given to you, but you must use it according to what we can call the "will of the Giver," that is, in an impersonal and enlightened way. If you are a good instrument for diffusing and utilising money, then it comes to you, and it comes to you in proportion to your capacity to use it as it is meant to be used. That is the true mechanism.

The true attitude is this: money is a force intended for the work on earth, the work required to prepare the earth to receive and manifest the divine forces, and it—that is, the power of utilising it,—must come into the hands of those who have the clearest, most comprehensive and truest vision.

To start with, the first thing (but this is elementary) is not to have the sense of possession—what does it mean, "it is mine"?... Now, I don't quite understand. Why do people want it to belong to them?—so that they can use it as they like and do what they want with it and handle it according to their own conceptions? That's how it is. On the other hand, yes, there are people who like to store it up somewhere... But that is a disease. To be sure of always having some, they hoard it.

But if people understood that one should be like a receiving and transmitting station and that the wider the range (just the opposite of personal), the more impersonal, comprehensive and wide it is, the more force it can hold ("force" that is translated materially: notes and coins). This power to hold is proportional to the capacity to use the money in the best way—"best" in terms of the general progress: the widest vision, the greatest understanding and the most enlightened, exact and true usage, not according to the warped needs of the ego but according to the general need of the earth for its evolution and development. That is to say, the widest vision will have the largest capacity.

Behind all wrong movements, there is a true movement; there is a joy in being able to direct, utilise, organise in such a way that there is a minimum of waste and the maximum of result. It is a very interesting vision to have. And this must be the true side in people who want to accumulate money: it is the capacity to use it on a very large scale. Then, there are those who very much like to have it and spend it; that is something else—they are generous natures, neither regulated nor organised. But the joy of being able to satisfy all *true* needs, all necessities, is good. It is like the joy of changing a sickness into health, a falsehood into truth, a suffering into joy; it is the same thing: to change an artificial and foolish need—which does not correspond to anything natural—into a possibility which becomes something quite natural—so much money is needed to do this or that or the other, so much is needed to arrange this, to repair that, to build this, to organise that—that is good. And

I understand that people like to be channels through which the money goes exactly where it is needed. That must be the true movement in people who like to...translated into foolish egoism, who need to appropriate.

When the need to accumulate and the need to spend (which are both blind and ignorant) are combined, they can lead to a clear vision and a most efficient utilisation. That is good.

Then there comes, slowly and slowly, the possibility of putting it into practice.

But, naturally, the need is for very clear heads and for intermediaries of high integrity (!) to be able to be everywhere at the same time and do all at the same time. Then this famous question of money would be solved.

Money does not belong to anybody. Money is a collective possession which should be used only by those who have an integral, comprehensive and universal vision. I would add something to that: not only integral and comprehensive, but essentially *true* as well; a vision which can tell the difference between a use which is in accord with the universal progress, and a use which could be termed fanciful. But these are details, for even the mistakes, even, from a certain standpoint, the waste, help the general progress: these are lessons learned the hard way. [5]

* * * * *

Question: What is the role of the United States with regard to the building of the new world?

Mother: The work of the U.S.A. is to provide the financial help needed to prepare the earth for the new creation.

Question: What must the people of the United States do in order to begin to be able to fulfil this role?

Mother: Become aware of those, individuals or organisations, capable of bringing about this transformation and give them the necessary money. [6]

Question: How can money be reconquered for the Mother?

Mother: Ah!...There is a hint here. Three things are interdependent (Sri Aurobindo says here): power, money and sex. I believe the three are interdependent and that all three have to be conquered to be sure of having any one—when you want to conquer one you must have the other two. Unless one has mastered these three things, desire for power, desire for money and desire for sex, one cannot truly possess any of them firmly and surely. What gives so great an importance to money in the world as it is today is not so much money itself, for apart from a few fools who heap up money and are happy because they can heap it up and count it, generally money is desired and acquired for the satisfaction it brings. And this is almost reciprocal: each of these three things not only has its own value in the world of desires, but leans upon the other two. I have related to you that vision, that big black serpent which kept watch over the riches of the world, terrestrial wealth—he demanded the mastery of the sex-impulse. Because, according to certain theories, the very need of power has its end in this satisfaction, and if one mastered that, if one abolished that from human consciousness, much of the need for power and desire for money would disappear automatically. Evidently, these are the three great obstacles in the terrestrial human life and, unless they are conquered, there is scarcely a chance for humanity to change. [7]

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2. *Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on Money*. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Society, 1972.
3. *Ibid*.
4. *Ibid*.
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INTEGRAL PSYCHOLOGY (7)

Sri Aurobindo

Mind (2)

The mind proper is divided into three parts—thinking Mind, dynamic Mind, externalising Mind—the former concerned with ideas and knowledge in their own right, the second with the putting out of mental forces for realisation of the idea, the third with the expression of them in life (not only by speech, but by any form it can give). The word “physical mind” is rather ambiguous, because it can mean this externalising Mind and the mental in the physical taken together.

Vital Mind proper is a sort of a mediator between vital emotion, desire, impulsion, etc. and the mental proper. It expresses the desires, feelings, emotions, passions, ambitions, possessive and active tendencies of the vital and throws them into mental forms (the pure imaginations or dreams of greatness, happiness, etc. in which men indulge are one peculiar form of the vital-mind activity). There is still a lower stage of the mental in the vital which merely expresses the vital stuff without subjecting it to any play of intelligence. It is through this mental vital that the vital passions, impulses, desires rise up and get into the Buddhi and either cloud or distort it.

As the vital Mind is limited by the vital view and feeling of things (while the dynamic Intelligence is not, for it acts by the idea and reason), so the mind in the physical or mental physical is limited by the physical view and experience of things, it mentalises the experiences brought by the contacts of outward life and things, and does not go beyond that (though it can do that much very cleverly), unlike the externalising mind which deals with them more

from the reason and its higher intelligence. But in practice these two usually get mixed together. The mechanical mind is a much lower action of the mental physical which, left to itself, would only repeat customary ideas and record the natural reflexes of the physical consciousness to the contacts of outward life and things. [1]

It is quite usual for the dynamic and formative part of the mind to be more quick to action than the reflective and discriminative part to control it. It is a question of getting a kind of balance and and harmony between them. [2]

The thinking mind does not lead men, does not influence them the most—it is the vital propensities and the vital mind that predominate. The thinking mind with most men is, in matters of life, only an instrument of the vital. [3]

The physical mind can deal only with outward things. One has to think and decide other things with the mind itself (Buddhi), not with the physical part of it. [4]

It is the physical mind that would like everything made easy. [5]

Repetition is the habit of the mental physical—it is not the true thinking mind that does like that, it is the mental physical or else the lowest part of the physical mind. [6]

The mechanical mind is a sort of engine—whatever comes to it it puts into the machine and goes on turning it round and round no matter what it is. [7]

There is no reason why one should not receive through the thinking mind, as one receives through the vital, the emotional and the body. The thinking mind is as capable of receiving as these are, and since it has to be transformed as well as the rest, it must be trained to receive, otherwise no transformation of it could take place.

It is the ordinary unenlightened activity of the intellect that is an obstacle to spiritual experience, just as the ordinary unregenerated activity of the vital or the obscure stupidly obstructive consciousness of the body is an obstacle. What the sadhak has to be specially warned against in the wrong processes of the intellect is, first, any mistaking of mental ideas and impressions or intellectual conclusions for realisation; secondly, the restless activity of the mere mind which disturbs the spontaneous accuracy of psychic and spiritual experience and gives no room for the descent of the true illuminating knowledge or else deforms it as soon as it touches or even before it fully touches the human mental plane. There are also of course the usual vices of the intellect—its leaning towards sterile doubt instead of luminous reception and calm enlightened discrimination; its arrogance claiming to judge things that are beyond it, unknown to it, too deep for it by standards drawn from its own limited experience; its attempts to explain the supraphysical by the physical or its demand for the proof of higher and occult things by the criteria proper to Matter and mind in Matter; others also too many to enumerate here. Always it is substituting its own representations and constructions and opinions for the true knowledge. But if the intellect is surrendered, open, quiet, receptive, there is no reason why it should not be a means of reception of the Light or an aid to the experience of spiritual states and to the fullness of an inner change. [8]

To have a developed intellect is always helpful if one can enlighten it from above and turn it to a divine use. [9]

Intellectual activities are not part of the inner being—the intellect is the outer mind. [10]

[The intellect's] function is to reason from the perceptions of the mind and senses, to form conclusions and to put things in logical relation with each other. A well-trained intellect is a good preparation of the mind for greater knowledge, but it cannot itself give the yogic knowledge or know the Divine—it can only have ideas about the Divine, but having ideas is not knowledge. [11]

The intellect of most men is extremely imperfect, ill-trained, half-developed—therefore in most the conclusions of the intellect are hasty, ill-founded and erroneous, or, if right, right more by chance than by merit or right working. The conclusions are formed without knowing the facts or the correct or sufficient data, merely by a rapid inference and the process by which it comes from the premises to the conclusions is usually illogical or faulty—the process being unsound by which the conclusion is arrived at, the conclusion is also likely to be fallacious. At the same time the intellect is usually arrogant and presumptuous, confidently asserting its imperfect conclusions as the truth and setting down as mistaken, stupid or foolish those who differ from them. Even when fully trained and developed, the intellect cannot arrive at absolute certitude or complete truth, but it can arrive at one aspect or side of it and make a reasonable or probable affirmation; but untrained, it is a quite insufficient instrument, at once hasty and peremptory and unsafe and unreliable. [12]

The mind does not record things as they are, but as they appear to it. It catches parts, omits others; afterwards the memory and imagination mix together and make a quite different representation of it. [13]

Most people who have not knowledge are apt to be opinionated—they have their ideas and don't want them to be changed or their fixity disturbed. [14]

The point is that people take no trouble to see whether their intellect is giving them right thoughts, right conclusions, right views on things and persons, right indications about their conduct or course of action. They have their idea and accept it as truth or follow it simply because it is *their* idea. Even when they recognise that they have made mistakes of the mind, they do not consider it of any importance nor do they try to be more careful mentally than before. In the vital field people know that they must not follow their desires or impulses without check or control, they know that they ought to have a conscience or a moral sense which discriminates what they can or should do and what they cannot or should not do; in the field of intellect no such care is taken. Men are supposed to follow their intellect, to have and assert their own ideas right or wrong without any control; the intellect, it is said, is man's highest instrument and he must think and act according to its ideas. But this is not true; the intellect needs an inner light to guide, check and control it quite as much as the vital. There is something above the intellect which one has to discover and the intellect should be only an intermediary for the action of that source of true Knowledge. [15]

For the human thinking mind there are always many sides to everything and it decides according to its own bent or preference or to its habitual ideas or some reason that presents itself to the intellect as the best. It gets the real truth only when something else puts a higher light into it—when the psychic or the intuition touches it and makes it feel or see. [16]

It is very usual for intuitive suggestions to come like that and the mind to disregard them. It is because the mind is accustomed to follow its own process and cannot recognise or have confidence in the intuition when it comes. The mind has to learn to look at these things when they come and give them value if experience confirms their truth. [17]

In the sphere of the Spirit are only the eternal truths—all is eternally itself there, there is no development, nothing unrealised or striving to be fulfilled. There are no such things as possibilities therefore.

In life, on the other hand, all is a play of possibilities—nothing is realised, all is seeking to be realised—or if not yet seeking, then waiting behind the veil for that. Nothing is realised in its highest form, in its truth or completeness, but all is possible. All these possibilities are derived from the truths above, e.g., the possibility of knowledge, the possibility of love, the possibility of joy, etc.

Intellect, will, etc. are intermediaries which try to catch something of the hidden higher truths and bring them into life or else raise life to them so that the possibilities of life here may become the complete realities that are already there above. [18]

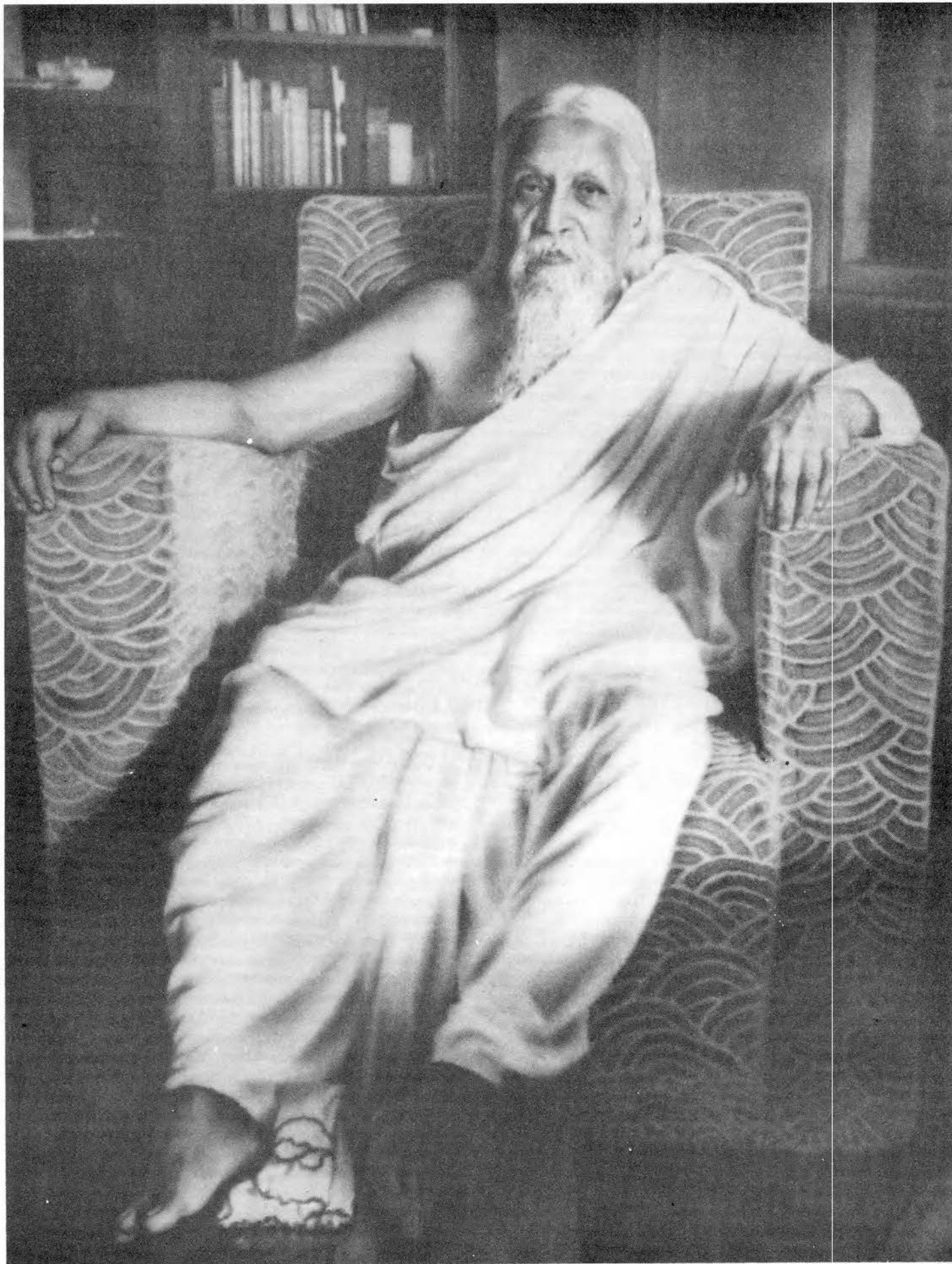
The intellect is made up of imaginations, perceptions, inferences. The pure reason is quite another thing, but only a few are able to use it. [19]

Pure reason deals with things in themselves, ideas, concepts, the essential nature of things. It lives in the world of ideas. It is philosophic and metaphysical in its nature. [20]

References

1-7: *Letters on Yoga I*, Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1971, pp. 326-329.

8-20. *Letters on Yoga III*, Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1971, pp. 1243-1248.



Sri Aurobindo. Photo courtesy Sri Aurobindo Asram.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF YOGA Sri Aurobindo

Yoga is not a modern invention of the human mind, but our ancient and prehistoric possession. The Veda is our oldest extant human document and the Veda, from one point of view, is a great compilation of practical hints about Yoga. All religion is a flower of which Yoga is the root; all philosophy, poetry, and the works of genius use it, consciously or unconsciously, as an instrument. We believe that God created the world by Yoga and by Yoga He will draw it into Himself again.... Yoga is the birth and passing away of things. When Srikrishna reveals to Arjuna the greatness of His creation and the manner in which He has built it out of His being by a reconciliation of logical opposites, He says, ... Behold my divine Yoga. We usually attach a more limited sense to the word; when we use or hear it, we think of the details of Patanjali's system, of rhythmic breathing, of peculiar ways of sitting, of concentration of mind, of the trance of the adept. But these are merely details of a particular system. The systems are not the thing itself, any more than the water of an irrigation canal is the river Ganges. Yoga may be done without the least thought for breathing, in any posture or no posture, without any insistence or concentration, in the full waking condition, while walking, working, eating, drinking, talking with others, in any occupation, in sleep, in dream, in states of unconsciousness, semiconsciousness, double-consciousness. It is no nostrum or system or fixed practice, but an eternal fact of process based on the very nature of the Universe.

Nevertheless in practice the name may be limited to certain applications of this general process for specific and definite ends. Yoga stands essentially on the fact that in this world we are everywhere one, yet divided; one yet divided in our beings, one with yet divided from our fellow creatures of all kinds, one with yet divided from the infinite existence which we call God, Nature or Brahman. Yoga, generally, is the power which the soul in one body has of entering into effective relation with other souls, with parts of itself which are behind the waking consciousness, with forces of Nature and objects in Nature, with the Supreme Intelligence, Power and Bliss which governs the world either for the sake of that union in itself or for the purpose of increasing or modifying our manifest being, knowledge, faculty, force or delight. Any system which organises our inner being and our outer frames for these ends may be called a system of Yoga. [Bulletin of the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, August 1978, pp. 38, 40.]

To give oneself is the secret of sadhana, not to demand and acquire a thing. The more one gives oneself, the more the power to receive will grow. But for that all impatience and revolt must go; all suggestions of not getting, not being helped, not being loved, going away, of abandoning life or the spiritual endeavour must be rejected. —Sri Aurobindo

TRANSFORMATION (2) Rishabhchandra

Process of Transformation

The most essential condition of transformation is a total and active surrender of the whole being of man to the divine Presence within and above him. The first stage of this long process is marked by an increasing emergence of the psychic being or the soul and its self-infusion into the mind, life and body. This is called psychisation. The innate aspiration, devotion, love and joy of the psyche are transmitted into the mind, life and body which, progressively cleansed of the taint of the inconscience in Matter, begin to radiate the soul. This psychic transformation is in itself a great achievement. It makes a global opening in the entire nature and initiates a wealth of uplifting spiritual experiences which flood the being with

light and bliss and raise its consciousness above mortality. "As a final result the whole conscious being is made perfectly apt for spiritual experience of every kind, turned towards spiritual truth of thought, feeling, sense, action, turned to the right responses, delivered from the darkness and stubbornness of the tamasic inertia, the turbidities and turbulences and impurities of the rajasic passion and restless unharmonised kinetism, the enlightened rigidities and sattwic limitations or poised balancements of constructed equilibrium which are the character of the Ignorance" (Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*).

The second stage is characterised by an ascent of the liberated, psychicised consciousness into the teeming vastness of the universal Self. An unprecedented wideness, a realisation of the Cosmic Divine, a direct perception of and participation in the cosmic movement, and an influx from the spiritual planes of Light and Power and Peace and Bliss into the human vessel, are some of the outstanding experiences of the middle stage of transformation, which is called spiritual transformation.

At the third stage there is a victorious ascent beyond the spiritual ranges of the mind, beyond even the universal formula, into the Supermind, which is the Truth-Consciousness, the almighty Creator-Consciousness. This is the entry into the very home of Light and Unity and Harmony, which is regarded as the highest achievement of man, or more truly, the highest gift of Grace. This ascent is followed by a succession of descents, which give the final, finishing, decisive touches to the work of transformation, and consummate the divine perfecting of the human being. The supramental Light penetrates into the subconscious and the inconscient and illumines them and liberates the supramental principle latent in them. The supramental Force is the supreme, authentic Force of the Divine, capable of grappling with all the obscure resistance of Matter and conquering and compelling it to be an outlet of the divine splendour. A radical, integral conversion and transfiguration of human nature is the result of the supramental transformation.

It can be said that the psychic transformation liberates the inner and considerably refines and enlightens the outer being of man; the spiritual transformation universalises it, illumines it, within and without, and brings into it the native rhythm of the Infinite; and the supramental transformation integrates and sublimates the whole being from the inconscient to the superconscient, forging all its parts into a luminous unity and harmony, and makes of it a perfect manifesting instrument of the Divine. The infinite Knowledge, the infinite Power, the infinite Freedom and Bliss of the Divine, which the human soul secretly aspires after, can be not only possessed but sovereignly expressed in life, a natural outcome of this supramental transformation.

Evidently, this triple transformation is not an easy work. Nothing like it on such a vast collective scale has ever been conceived and attempted in the history of spiritual culture. It is not, as we have already affirmed, a moral purification and enlightenment of the human nature by self-discipline, prayers and contemplation. It is much too radical, much too comprehensive and conclusive to be effected by any of the agencies and powers normally available to man. It is only the Supermind and its omnipotence that can achieve it. The whole colossal enterprise, therefore, depends upon the discovery of the Supermind and its descent into the earth-consciousness. [From *In the Mother's Light*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1967.]

The Ashram is the central consciousness, Auroville is one of the outward expressions. In both places equally the work is done for the Divine.

The people who live in the Ashram have their own work and most of them are too busy to give time to Auroville.

Each one must be busy with his own work; this is essential for a proper organisation. — The Mother

"Can man's work in the future still be expected to thrive in the fertile ground of a homeland and mount into the ether, into the far reaches of the heavens and the spirit? Or will everything now fall into the clutches of planning and calculation, of organisation and automation?"

—Martin Heidegger (1955)

Sri Aurobindo, in an early treatise on education (titled *The National Value of Art*, 1909), stressed the importance of the aesthetic principle in education, for a developing nation and for an evolving humanity—as opposed to the merely utilitarian principle of Science. Science, he said, in ministering to the luxury and convenience of humanity has, by creating and satisfying a plethora of new wants and needs, established its importance to the mass of men and in doing so has done much to undermine the older, simpler tribal and village type of civilization, thus laying the necessary groundwork for a new state of humanity. But the aesthetic impulse working to refine tastes, emotions, manners, appearances, habits and helping to form the moral and ethical sense of value has done more than any other faculty, he said, to raise man from the beast and to lead him up, through the purification of heart and mind, to the state of intellectual man—although in its higher forms of expression the utility of the aesthetic principle is still not recognised by the mass of men. At the peak of man's aesthetic development, Art, Music and Poetry, said Sri Aurobindo, are a perfect education for the soul and cannot profitably be neglected by an evolving humanity. The purifying, harmonising and deepening effect that they can have on our consciousness is one of the appointed roads whereby we can discover our true selves and attain our highest fulfilment.

Sri Aurobindo was speaking about both the sublimation and the universalisation of the aesthetic principle. He concluded his argument with the following remarks:

"It is not necessary that every man should be an artist. It is necessary that every man should have his artistic faculty developed, his taste trained, his sense of beauty and insight into form and colour and that which is expressed in form and colour, made habitually active, correct and sensitive. It is necessary that those who create, whether in great things or small, whether in the unusual masterpieces of Art and genius or in the small common things of use that surround a man's daily life, should be habituated to produce and the nation habituated to expect the beautiful in preference to the ugly, the noble in preference to the vulgar, the fine in preference to the crude, the harmonious in preference to the gaudy. A nation surrounded daily by the beautiful, noble, fine and harmonious becomes that which it is habituated to contemplate and realises the fullness of the expanding spirit in itself."

In a later work (*...The Human Cycle*, 1949), in which Sri Aurobindo dealt systematically with the history and development of civilisation, he said that the hope of the race lay in a more and more subjective turn and the bringing to the front, even in our social life and outward endeavours, our inner psychic being, that secret and divine source of energy and light which is the true man in each of us. He saw that this subjective turn and the coming of a spiritual age were the real significance behind the dramatic renaissance in Indian art at that time as well as behind certain movements in modern poetry, in psychology and in education in the West at the same time. But in a shorter work, titled *The Renaissance in India*, he warned that the last fortresses to be penetrated by this new spirit would be those of economics and politics, and he said that a new opening could come in these areas only after India gained her independence and arrived at a normal state of social and economic stability. We only need to look around us to see that the need is great for such an opening and for such a spirit in every field of development. And perhaps the time is ripe.

If what is happening in the West today can be any indication for us, and surely it will be if we are wise enough to learn from the mistakes of others, then the last fortresses are, in theory at least, about to fall. A fine thread of contact between the visionary past and the increasingly subjective present can be seen and the renaissance prophecy heard echoing back a half century even in the writings of some modern economists and political thinkers in the West, as though they were the contemporary inheritors of the spirit of Rabindranath and Sri Aurobindo. The well-known British economist E.F. Schumacher writes, for example, in his ... *Small Is Beautiful* (A Study of Economics as if People Mattered, 1973) that we are suffering from a metaphysical disease which can only be cured metaphysically. He says that more education can help us only if it gives us more wisdom. And indeed he calls for an education that will create "whole men," not men who have detailed knowledge but men who are "in touch with the centre," men who are sure about their basic convictions and therefore able to create an orderly system of ideas about themselves and about the world and to avoid using their highly developed scientific know-how destructively.

Another Western thinker, similarly disenchanted with Science and Technology but more extreme in both his criticisms of modern society and his prophecies for the future, is the radical American interpreter of Marx and Freud, Herbert Marcuse. In his *Essay on Liberation* (1969) Marcuse writes:

"The so-called consumer economy and the politics of corporate capitalism have created a second nature of man which ties him libidinally and aggressively to the commodity form. The need for possessing, consuming, handling, and constantly renewing the gadgets, devices, instruments, engines, offered to and imposed upon the people, for using these wares even at the danger of one's own destruction, has become a 'biological' need. ...The radical change which is to transform the existing society into a free society must reach into a dimension of the human existence hardly considered in Marxian theory—the 'biological' dimension in which the vital, imperative needs and satisfactions of man assert themselves. Inasmuch as these needs and satisfactions reproduce a life in servitude, liberation presupposes changes in this biological dimension, that is to say, different instinctual needs, different reactions of the body as well as the mind... The aesthetic as the possible Form of a free society appears at that stage of development where the intellectual and material resources for the conquest of scarcity are available.... But the construction of such a society presupposes a type of man with a different sensitivity as well as consciousness: men who would speak a different language, have different gestures, follow different impulses; men who have developed an instinctual barrier against cruelty, brutality, ugliness....The liberated consciousness would promote the development of a science and technology free to discover and realise the possibilities of things and men in the protection and gratification of life, playing with the potentialities of form and matter for the attainment of this goal. Technique would then tend to become art, and art would tend to form reality."

I suppose that Marcuse was not particularly conscious of or concerned about the spiritual precedents of his vision or that he had touched on the central theme of Yoga and that his intuitions at this moment of apparent clarity and conviction with regard to the coming of a new sensibility and an aesthetic form of society were prescient of the luminous and plastic *supramental* world of the future envisioned by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother—but there it is. The Indian sage, the European economist and the American scholar have concurred and there are many other signs in evidence to validate their opinions. Science and technology have their place, their utility cannot be denied; their achievements are even of crucial importance to the progress of civilisation. But as their power increases and dif-

fuses itself throughout the world, it becomes dense and its value diminishes proportionately to the point of reversal: it becomes a danger. A new cycle has then to begin—the higher and deeper inner qualities and powers of human existence, aesthetic, psychic, spiritual, have to be activated at this critical end of our materialistic and individualistic cycle of progress to restore truth, harmony, and beauty to consciousness and to life. This necessity is the touchstone of Auroville and, especially, of education in Auroville.

But what is the theory of aesthetics which can solve our metaphysical problem, restore the central truth of our existence and give a secure foundation to all our attempts to create a centre of education and a new life for the man of the future? The pivotal point or axis that separates civilised humanity from barbarism is the higher aesthetic and intellectual mentality. This is the bridge between the ordinary and a spiritualised consciousness and the ladder of ascent and descent for a revolutionary new humanity. In each age it is the inspired poet, painter, musician, mystic who mediates between the hidden worlds and formative planes of consciousness, past, present and future, which are invisible to our eyes but whose influence is more real and powerful than anything we see and know and do. It is he who by his heroic sacrifice is able to remove the brilliant golden lid and to gaze upon the face of Truth, as the Ishopanishad puts it, and this gives him the power to create not only disciplined and rational and beautiful forms, but forms that change the consciousness of an age and open the way for humanity to pass into a new cycle of progress and a higher order of existence.

Perhaps, if we have somehow been able, even for an instant, to glimpse the subtle significance behind the expression of the renaissance painters of West Bengal and to identify to some extent with the serenity, grace, splendour, freedom and power of Halder's forms, for example, or if we have been charmed and entranced by the songs of Rabindranath, or elated and illumined by the hymns and ragas of the bhaktas and tantrics, then we may have some idea of the inestimable importance of these arts to humanity. But few of us will, I am afraid, understand what Sri Aurobindo meant when he said that to read Homer with an adequate power of expression in Greek, or Vyasa in the original Sanskrit, is literally to bring the Gods down from Mt. Olympus or the heavenly sage Narada chanting out of the vales of paradise to incarnate the Immortals on earth.

Our modern culture and academic training do not initiate us into the mystery of which Shelley spoke when he said that poets are the divine (but unacknowledged) legislators of the world, or into the true nature and power of his extraordinary poetry, which Sri Aurobindo said would not be adequately understood or fully appreciated until the new consciousness, from which Shelley had fallen to earth as a star from heaven, had manifested itself here as an operative principle in the general consciousness of our evolving species. It is this principle and power of consciousness and its manifestation to which Sri Aurobindo dedicated his life and his epic poetry as well as his subtle presence [which will] re-establish a direct and living contact with its forms and forces for everyone who aspires to reach by this means the Divine and to realise the Ideal in Life.

It will probably be easier for us to identify with Marcuse's theory of aesthetics, which is partially true, and to see in the great works of both classical and modern art the tendency to sublimate and resolve the forces, conflicts and paradoxes of life on an abstract plane which only gives a momentary release from reality but does not really have much effect on the nature of our situation. He concludes negatively that this type of *katharsis* is ultimately illusory and at best only preparatory of an eventual aesthetic transformation of our material conditions of life and our normal consciousness. But what he fails to see is the positive side of the highest aesthetic function, the ladder of return as well as of escape, which gives one the supreme transcendental power to stand with one's feet firmly set in both worlds, purified by the rays of a spiritual sun. From this standpoint the work of transformation can be done, as Sri Krishna tells us in the Gita, with an illumined detachment and creative delight, for the salvation of all creatures and the unobstructed expression of His infinite and absolute Love. This was the long journey and the difficult labour accomplished by Sri Aurobindo and narrated in his *Savitri*, which has brought into play a new vibration to leaven the whole inadequate stuff of which we are made. And this power is one of the keys to the eventual success of Auroville. The knowledge and experience of the truth of ourselves that it gives is the foundation, the new ground upon which the man of the future may stand. [From *The Golden Bridge*, edited by Shyam Sunder, Auroville: Auropublications, 1978.]



Matrimandir Gardens Nursery,
February 1978.

(Photo by Rakhal, AuroImage.)

THE ASPIRATION TALKS

[From March to July 1970, the Mother met a group of people from Aspiration each week. Some of the meetings were a "bath of silence," in others she would answer questions. The Mother wanted to revise the texts of these talks before publication, but this did not happen. Here are some extracts as they appeared in The Mother on Auroville, Auropublications 1977.]

Aurovilian: We would like to speak to you about work in Aspiration. What we would like to know, what we are looking for is the right attitude....

Mother: What is the trouble?

Aurovilian: The trouble is...

Mother: Each one pulls in his own direction.

Aurovilian: Each one pulls in his own direction. No one is really in contact with what is true....

Mother: We should take into account that we are starting from the present state of humanity. So you must face all the difficulties; you must find the solution...

Aurovilian: But, Sweet Mother, you know, several solutions are open to us. For instance, on the one hand...

Mother: Every man has his own solution, and that is the great difficulty. To be in the truth, each one has his own solution. And yet we must find a way for all these solutions to work together. [silence]

So the framework must be vast, very flexible, and there must be a great goodwill from everyone: that is the first condition—the first individual condition, goodwill, to be flexible enough to do the best thing to be done at each moment.

Aurovilian: But for example, we are told that factories are needed, that there must be production, and some of us don't feel like doing work in that sense. They would rather do some research that is more...

Mother: More inward?

Aurovilian: More inward rather than to launch into factories, work, production to make money, etc. That is not what we feel, that is not what we want to do in Aspiration at the moment. We would like to know what you think about it.

Mother [after concentrating, long silence]: To be practical you must first have a very clear vision of your goal, of where you are going. From this point of view, take money for an example. An ideal which may be several hundred years ahead of its time, we don't know: money should be controlled by the most universal wisdom of the place; on earth, say, by someone who has a vision vast enough to be able to know the needs of the earth and precise enough to be able to tell where the money should go. You understand, we are very far from that, aren't we? For the moment, the gentleman still says, "This is mine," and when he is generous, he says, "I give it to you." That's not it.

There is a long way to go between what we are and what must be. And for that we must be very flexible, never losing sight of the goal, but knowing that we cannot reach it at one bound and that we must find the way. Well, that is much more difficult, even more difficult than to make the inner discovery. Truly speaking, that should have been made before coming here.

For there is a starting point: when you have found within yourself the light that never wavers, the presence which can guide you with certitude, then you become aware that constantly, in everything that happens, there is something to be learnt, and that in the present state of matter, there is always a progress to be made. To have a life that wants to grow and perfect itself, that is what the collective ideal of Auroville should be: "A life that wants to grow and perfect itself," and above all, not in the same way for everyone—each one in his own way.

Well, now there are thirty of you, it is difficult, isn't it? When there are 30,000 of you, it will be easier, because, naturally, there

will be many more possibilities. You are the pioneers, you have the most difficult task, but I feel it is the most interesting one. Because you must establish in a concrete, durable and growing way the attitude that is needed to be truly an Aurovilian. To learn everyday the lesson of the day... Each sunrise is an opportunity to make a discovery. So, with that state of mind, you find out. Everyone does.

And the body needs activity: if you keep it inactive, it will begin to revolt, become sick, and so on. It needs an activity, it really needs an activity like planting flowers, building a house, something really material. You must feel it. Some people do exercises, some ride bicycles, there are countless activities, but in your little group you must all come to an agreement so that each one can find the activity which suits his temperament, his nature and his needs. But not with ideas. Ideas are not much good, ideas give you preconceptions, for example, "That is good work, that work is not worthy of me," and all that sort of nonsense. There is no bad work—there are only bad workers. All work is good when you know how to do it in the right way. Everything. And it is a kind of communion. If you are fortunate enough to be conscious of an inner light, you will see that in your manual work, it is as if you called the Divine down into things; then the communion becomes very concrete, there is a whole world to be discovered, it is marvellous.

You are young, you have plenty of time before you. And to be young, to be really young, we must always, always keep on growing, always developing ourselves, always progressing. Growth is the sign of youth and there is no limit to the growth of consciousness. I know old people of 20 and young people of 50, 60, 70. And if one does manual work, one keeps in good health. [To be continued.]

Only those who have resolved to stay in Auroville for good have the right to intervene in its organisation. — The Mother



The children of Children's Community (formerly Auro Ami) on the windmill.

Matrimandir News

• The onerous and exhausting task of chipping the concrete to create a rough surface for the inner chamber roof is nearing completion. It was hoped that the job would be finished by early October. A similar work will be necessary on the outer surface of the vertical walls of the chamber, but this will be done at a later date, probably using light industrial equipment to speed the process.

• Accurate positioning and double-welding of the sections of the spiral ramp are proceeding well and should be finished soon.

• In recent months there has been a heightening of interest in Auroville concerning progress of and design features relating to the Matrimandir. Group meetings have been held and a number of topics has been discussed, including a method for constructing the interconnecting triangular space frame of the outer spherical cover of the building. One approach considered was to use an open, light tubular metal frame onto which the proposed discs could be directly mounted. The original plan, however, was for the use of reinforced concrete with a subsequent covering before mounting discs. The group meeting eventually chose to stick to the original approach.

• Work is now progressing well on the engineering drawings and calculations relating to the formation of the structure. These were expected to be completed at the end of September. The construction process will begin with the formation of a ring beam at the base, out of which will project the first link pieces for the interconnecting triangles.

Auromitra

Since Auroville's founding in 1968, numerous national and international organizations have participated in supporting or assisting Auroville in its development. On 21 February 1978 a new organization emerged, Auromitra, Friends of Auroville Research Foundation, a registered trust located in New Delhi. Founding trustees include Bijoy Singh Nahar, Member of Parliament; Satprem, the well-known writer; J.R.D. Tata, industrialist; Kireet Joshi, educationist long associated with education in not only Indian government but the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. The purposes of Auromitra, as outlined in its trust deed, are "to organise, sponsor, promote, undertake, establish or conduct scientific research for the advancement of knowledge, relevant particularly to rural, educational and community development, and without prejudice to the generality of the said premises, to cooperate with the community of Auroville as a living laboratory for applying, testing, or evaluating the said research."

As liaison between Auroville and bodies such as Auromitra which are prepared to assist Auroville in its growth, a representative body of Aurovilians has emerged, known simply as the "Cooperative." This Cooperative, formed around a nucleus of 12 (which is neither a fixed number nor a legal entity), meets weekly to discuss priorities and problems in a more concentrated way than is possible in the wider Pour Tous meetings.

Auromitra, Friends of Auroville Research Foundation, a registered public trust, has been granted tax exemption by the Indian government. Donations may be sent to Auromitra at 28 Gurudwara Rakab Road, New Delhi 110001, India, or Auromitra Centre, Aspiration, Kottakuppam (South Arcot) 605104, India.

It is only in silence that a true progress can be made; it is only in silence that one can rectify a wrong movement; it is only in silence that one can be of help to somebody else.

—The Mother

Program for Integrated Rural and Educational Development in South India 1977-78 to 1979-1980

[This is one of the first projects to be undertaken by Auromitra—Friends of Auroville. The area covered by the program covers several villages in Tamil Nadu as well as Auroville and presents the work undertaken by Auroville in the areas of soil and water conservation, afforestation, agriculture, habitation, employment, and education and is presently being financed by self-generated income and personal contributions. What follows is the introduction to the formal proposal intended to seek maximum financial assistance for the duration of the program. A copy of the full proposal, which includes details on all the areas outlined above, may be obtained from Matagiri, Mt. Tremper, N.Y. 12457.]

Among the many problems involved in the development of India, some of the most important are those related to education and rural development. In fact, the concept of integrated rural development as a basic component of education has now come to occupy a central place in recent planning. However, this concept stands in need of further precision, particularly in the light of UNESCO's concept of a "learning society." According to this concept: (a) education is a lifelong process, (b) development is not only the goal of education but also the instrument of education, and (c) all activities—manual, technical, intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual—have to be harmonized together and directed in such a way that in their combined strength they furnish an integrated field of education not only for children but for all the members of society and contribute progressively to the economic, financial and all-round prosperity of the society. In this process, it would seem very desirable to have a new departure from the normal process of rural development and education—a new experiment with bolder vision and action.

1. Presupposition of the Program

It is in this context that a program has been conceived and is in the process of being implemented in South India. The first premise of this project is that there should be an introduction of appropriate technology, not merely as a sporadic and piecemeal strategy but as a continuing and living process, by integrating people of greater technical and expert knowledge into a selected rural area in a determined effort to provide a living interchange with the people living there. The second premise is that this very process of interchange and consequent development of the rural area would constitute a field of education for the children living in this area as well as a life-long education for all the adults.

2. Present Situation of the Program Area

Physically situated on a barren, severely eroded plateau 6 miles north of Pondicherry in Tamil Nadu, the area represents an environment and an ecosystem on the verge of expiring. Once covered by forests, the land is now reduced to a raw landscape, scarred with ever-widening ravines, and while each monsoon sweeps away more topsoil, exposing more lifeless layers, each summer bakes the naked earth a denser red. Villagers cut down dwindling stands of trees and shrubs for fire wood while the cows and goats overgraze the surviving groundcover. The human factors contributing to this impoverishment of the land represent a dilemma of worldwide concern as witnessed by the recently concluded UN Conference on Desertification held in Nairobi, where 110 nations met to confront the spreading terrestrial disease that has swallowed up more than a third of the earth's land.

Auroville is an international community that came into existence ten years ago.... During its brief history, it has already worked in close collaboration with several agencies for the development of rural conditions. Among these are the local Government District Forest Offices and the Tamil Fund for Rural Development, a

mutual trust fund between Auroville and the German branch of F.A.O. (Food and Agricultural Organisation of the U.N.), which in 1977 has sponsored with matching grants afforestation work and has assisted village-based projects for self-employment and education. The District Forest Office itself has done soil conservation and afforestation work on neighboring government land in collaboration with Auroville....

The prevailing practices among the various villagers in regard to land and water management, agriculture, habitation, work and education are based on the traditions of rural India. This area has been declared as backward by the government of India, even a superficial view of the conditions will show that unless an urgent and united effort is launched, the land will deteriorate beyond repair and the inhabitants will continue drifting into urban areas to try their chances as daily labourers.

3. Aim of the Program

The aim of the program is to reverse this movement by revitalising the land and providing attractive and effective habitation, work, education and cultural activities within villages themselves in such a way as to motivate the inhabitants to revive and rejuvenate the rural life of the village.

Proposal for Grant Assistance in Auroville

[Narad of the Matrimandir Gardens Nursery has recently prepared the following proposals.]

Large-Scale Composting Program

Since 1968 small groups of Aurovilians have settled in pockets of land in the vast area designated by the Mother to be the "Green Belt" of Auroville. Afforestation has begun in earnest with the planting of tens of thousands of trees; a variable mixed forest of numerous indigenous and exotic species. Concurrent with this work is the building of check dams, bunding of lands, collaboration with the forestry department in planting roadside trees on peramboke land and composting. An ecologically conscious, organic farm formed "with the idea of establishing a model setting to demonstrate nature's ability to restore itself under impoverished biological conditions" is the major agricultural project of the Green Belt.

Composting is undertaken seriously in the agricultural and horticultural communities of Auroville but the amount produced is a minute portion of that consumed with the result that each year more and more compost has to be purchased from the surrounding villages. Local compost is usually of a fairly high quality containing cow and goat manure, leaves, ashes and straw. There is not a great quantity to be found, however, and with new agricultural lands being developed in Auroville each year there is now a noticeable scarcity. The local farmers who have sold their compost to Auroville resort to the use of chemical fertilizers which deplete soil fertility even faster. Compost rates have gone up and more villagers are encouraged by the prospect of ready cash to sell their compost rather than return it to their own fields.

Purchasing compost from Pondicherry is a time-consuming, costly, and often frustrating affair and few farmers, or Aurovilians, pursue it. Firstly, although the compost is relatively inexpensive, it must be purchased through the government office. This entails the usual filling out of innumerable forms, an inevitable delay for papers to be passed from department to department, etc. The round trip of 30 km enables only one bullock cart per day to be bought unless one has the facilities for tractor and trailer. (These, obviously, are not within the financial possibility of the small farmer or Aurovilians.) Finally, a word about the compost itself. Its benefit is questionable since chemicals (ammonium sulphate) are used to break it down. (This is true of the large depot at one end of town. I am informed that no chemicals are used at the second de-

pot, though it is filled with rubbish, plaster, glass, leather, plastic and more. One is allowed to sift it at no extra charge from the city, but personal experience confirms that the process is very costly and time-consuming.) There is also the question of disease transmitted by human excrement since most of this compost is derived from raw sewage sludge and merely deposited in place without any scientific composting process.

The utilization of available organic matter in Auroville and the surrounding villages is limited because of a lack of suitable equipment to shred the tissue of woody and fibrous plants to a size whereby they can be easily digested by bacteria and micro-organisms in an aerobic composting process. The value of shredded material over nonshredded material is in the rapidity of the decomposition process, creating sufficient heat to destroy all pathogens and in the ability to utilize semi-woody and woody material. An excellent compost can be produced in 2 to 3 weeks instead of the usual 4 to 6 months.

Here, in these local villages, where a man, usually with a family of 4 or more, can barely survive on rain-fed agriculture and totally depleted soil, where one feels that there is almost no waste, that everything is utilised for one purpose or another, if one looks carefully one can find many ways in which organic matter such as old palmyra leaves and fruits, used keet and sambu, wild grasses, weeds, and thorns could quickly become composting material with the use of a shredder.

Low-lying wastelands, usually mosquito-infested puddles, could, with waterproofing, become large ponds for the cultivation of water hyacinth.... Already the water hyacinth covers most of the wetland irrigation canals from Cuddalore to Kanyakumari: it has no need to prove adaptability to climate or resistance to disease and insects. The studies carried out on the utilization of this plant for compost and mulch have been necessitated by its widespread infestation of major waterways throughout the world and the inability to control it successfully with the use of chemicals.... The water hyacinth is able to purify wastes from raw sewage, can extract minerals from water and is one of the most promising sources for methane gas generation.

Another equally important plant capable of cultivation on a large scale and of being cut back a number of times a year is *Gliricidia sepium*.... It is a member of the family *Leguminosae* and is therefore a valuable soil builder with its ability to fix atmospheric nitrogen and to strike root from cuttings set down in the rain. Its rapid growth and the high nitrogen content of its leaves and branches make it ideal for our purposes. It is disease- and insect-free and grows easily in all our soils with no care. Established plantings thrive without irrigation.

A third group, again valuable soil builders and excellent green manure plants, includes *Sesbania* and *Tephrosia* species. These attain heights of 2 to 3 metres in a few months and can be cut many times a year yielding tons of compost material per acre.

These 4 plants alone could provide tons of raw material even during the first year of the experiment. One could immediately add to this the already prolific species *Prosopis*, *Jatropha gossypifolia*, *Thespesia populnea* and others. The immediate shredding and composting of nitrogen-rich groundnut plants, ragi, kambu and varugu stalks instead of a gradual breakdown which provides plenty of food for the termites, could enrich the quality of village compost immeasurably with the aforementioned materials already in use.

Trees must be planted immediately wherever possible before any major regeneration of the land can be achieved. However, we cannot expect village ways and habits to change rapidly and most certainly there will be no change in the type of rain-fed agriculture practices on this plateau for years. The benefit then of large quantities of high-quality compost being returned to the land each year is tremendous.

operated by the power-takeoff tractor, the shredder could be transported to specified shredding grounds in the surrounding villages on a regular schedule and kept at a central location in Auroville for general use the remaining days of the week. Tractor, driver, and shredder operator would be provided by Auroville.

Lastly, it is my feeling that one of the most important benefits of this program will be the beginning of a close collaboration of Aurovilians and villagers, working together at the level of life equally important to both, the restoration of the land. Auroville in many ways is the testing ground of the future and one of its significant contributions can be to assist in returning health and fertility to the land. If the results of our experiment in Auroville are sufficiently positive, then perhaps a nationwide program could be started with shredders manufactured for the first time in India.

Financial requirements: [8 rupees to the dollar]

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Waterproofing of low-lying wasteland areas | Rs 80,000 |
| 2. Purchase of compost shredder from U.S. or England with all attachments | 200,000 |
| 3. Import duty for agricultural equipment | ? |
| 4. Transport of equipment | 7,000 |
| 5. Village training programs in making compost | 10,000 |
| 6. Planting <i>Gliricidia</i> on wastelands, etc. | 8,000 |

[Notes and references for this proposal have been omitted here. Anyone wishing a copy may obtain one by writing to Matagiri.]

Developing Reservoir Technology in the Arid Tropics

As part of an integrated ecological program in Auroville, concentrating primarily on erosion control, conservation and afforestation, the following proposal is advanced for the construction of reservoirs and catchment areas beginning at the centre of Auroville (the highest point of land in a radius of more than 3 km) and radiating to the Green Belt agricultural and afforestation communities and local villages.

Construction of check dams and field bunding proceeds steadily in most of the areas of Auroville. Erosion control on government lands has also been taken up with the full sanction of the departments of forestry and water conservation. Even with these measures there is still a loss of approximately 90% of the monsoon rainfall. This could be greatly reduced by building dams in the deeply eroded canyons and sealing them with the chemical sealant sodium tripolyphosphate (STPP).

After numerous inquiries as to the various methods of pond sealing in use today, such as clay blankets, plastic and rubber covers, salt and other chemical sealants, the recommendation of experts in Australia and the U.S.A. is STPP. For ease in handling, permanency of waterproof seal and the fact that all work can be executed at village level technology, STPP is clearly the best choice. The cost of chemical and application is less per square metre than any other method.

STPP is manufactured in India and has been tested on the local soils with excellent results. There are no negative environmental effects to wildlife or plant life and the sealant is in use in Australia and the U.S.A. for drinking water reservoirs....

A grant of Rs. 180,000 would enable us to complete 10 lakes and reservoirs during this pre-monsoon season. Some of these have already been partially excavated during the past year. Funding would include excavation and hauling of soil, which could be utilized for further dam building and bunding, labour for sealing and cost of STPP.

[Readers may be interested to know that, in replying to the reservoir proposal, the Tata Environmental Research Institute spokesman, Mr. D.S. Seth, said that such a project was not strictly within TERI's scope but invited Aurovilians to carry out the experiment for Tata Chemicals in Uttar Pradesh. The compost proposal has been sent to Delhi, and no further report had been received by press time.]



Laying sod and compacting it on a recently constructed earth dam at the Matrimandir Nursery. (Photo by the Nursery.)

Guest House: Since last autumn when Auro-Ami changed from a guest facility to a children's community, there has been no special provision for the accommodation of guests and visitors to Auroville. Now, a tiled-roof house begun by Diane Hassinger, who has returned to the United States, will be used as a guest house for visitors from New Age communities around the world. Part of the funding for this has come from the Karass Project of Interface of Newton, Mass. (See General News for a report on the Karass Project and its videotape "letters" between communities.)

The guest accommodation (3 double rooms, living room, kitchen and bathroom), when completed, will be charged for but will be available only to people who have booked in advance with Pour Tous via a New Age center. Other visitors will have to seek accommodation in the various Auroville communities or in Pondicherry.

The guest house, near a banyan tree in the Field, near Centre, Matrimandir, may eventually sleep up to 8 people, though the immediate goal is to provide for 4. A resident housekeeper/mentor for visitors is also part of the plan.

Certitude kitchen: The evening kitchen at Certitude has closed. A vain attempt has been made to find an alternative site. Certitude residents are now either eating at Centre or cooking for themselves for evening meals.

Sincerity: A small residential community just northwest of Centre, which was begun soon after Peace, in the early 1970s. Its original purpose was to provide alternative, more permanent accommodation for Matrimandir workers. It still fulfils a certain role to that end, though of its 10 to 12 present residents only 3 work full time on the Matrimandir.

As Sincerity lies within a garden area of Auroville, according to an earlier plan, a good deal of land work has been undertaken by the residents, including bunding, the planting of trees, damming a ravine, and fencing against goats and cattle. A well is being dug and should be operational within a few months. The houses are of a variety of styles, though mostly of a temporary nature, with keel roofs.

Discipline: A small family grouping of Aurovilians on the north-west perimeter of the city area, occupying 3 buildings, and engaged mainly in agricultural work. Having started in 1973, they produce rice, peanuts, ragi and cambu, giving their surplus to Pour Tous for distribution. They are also doing bunding and afforestation.

Shnarga: Originally named "Sharnaga" (the name of Krishna's bow), popular spelling and pronunciation have somehow produced "Shnarga."

First impressions, based on the present physical nature of Sharnaga, would lead one to describe it as a farm, but actually it is much more. Starting with nothing but a single Wisdom tree in an area of open ground, on 19 July 1976, Bernard and Claude Borg, with children Aurokali and Aurokripa, helped by a number of paid workers, have already transformed several acres of remote land on the southeast perimeter of the city area into a thriving, productive agricultural unit, with more land constantly coming under intensive cultivation. It started as and continues to be an answer to Auroville's needs.

Sharnaga has a total land area of 14 acres, at present, which is used as follows: 5 acres, cashew nut topes, planted in 1976; 4 acres, orchard, currently growing mango, lemon, guava, jackfruit, papaya and banana; 2 acres, cows and cowfeed (hybrid grass)—present herd includes 10 milk cows giving enough milk for a half liter a day per person for 160 people; 1 acre, vegetables, 700 kilos of tomatoes, 4,000 lettuces and peppers already given to Pour Tous this year—some 75-100 free-range hens and cocks—fishponds, stocked with both exotic and edible fish (in the latter category are 4 different breeds of carp, now in sufficient quantity to farm off to kitchens, once Bernard has worked out a way to catch them!); 2 acres, gardens/residential—in addition to the main house with its beautiful lotus-filled moat, there are also two houses for workers and their families; 3 other workers presently come in daily.

Two 120-foot wells—one electric and the other wind-pumped—provide current water requirements. However, it is hoped that a submersible pump can be acquired in place of the wind pump to give extra water for irrigation. If it can, it should be possible to provide another \$200 of vegetables a month.

Sharnaga is not only a farm, but a conscious attempt to create a productive agricultural unit which can not only make a good contribution to Auroville's self-sufficiency, but which expresses beauty and retains such a balance with nature that the feeling is more of a park. Says Bernard: "To truly help Auroville, one has not to plan for Auroville or even to think anything about Auroville. One has only to listen to the Mother. Just that. The rest doesn't matter. We have to find within ourselves the force, the strength, the harmony which is the means by which we can manifest everything around us. That is the way we are following at Sharnaga."

Aurodam: Quietly, effectively, and with much promise for the future of other parts of Auroville's previously abused landscape, a large check dam has been built in a severely eroded area beyond the perimeter of "The Field," southwest of the Matrimandir.

The work has been undertaken during the past year by a group of young Aurovilians (ages 16-25) whose cluster of semi-temporary huts and buildings nearby make up a new small subcommunity of Auroville, population presently ranging from 3 to 8. The dam itself, which is a full 3 meters wide at the top and large enough for a bullock cart to traverse, widens to some 20 meters at the base and stretches more than 30 meters across a broad section of canyon. A 5-meter-wide overflow of cemented stone channels off excess water.

Construction of the bulk of the dam, which should eventually be paid for by the Tamil Nadu Forestry Dept., took approximately a month and a half. Local labor was used to help move the huge quantity of clay, stones, and earth. Tamping and packing of material was done partly with hand tools, but later with a small industrial machine.

It seems fairly certain that the dam will prove effective, as the small lake already formed above from early monsoon rains is being well contained with only minimal signs of seepage. The next stage will be to bring more topsoil into the area, plant trees and ground-cover, and increase the already effective bunding.



Shnarga farm, Auroville, 1977. (Photo by Rakhal, AuroImage.)

Aurodia: A small production unit located north of the Matrimandir in the proposed industrial zone of Auroville. Originally established in late 1974 as an industrial-diamond cutting and tool-making workshop, it had produced tools for watch-making and turning tools for lathes, which proved successful and found a demand in India, when the key person involved left the project in 1975 to return to Europe. The remaining people working there then found themselves lacking the essential know-how to continue with the specialized industrial-diamond market, and were obliged to turn instead to the cutting, grinding, and polishing of semiprecious stones for more localized markets. Since early 1977, their work has taken a new turn with the production of beautiful rosewood, teak, and brass boxes, and marble and serpentine incense-stick holders. The boxes invariably have semiprecious stones decorating their lids. Some additional stonecutting, including faceting, is also undertaken. Products are mainly sold in Pondicherry outlets, such as Lotus, La Bottega, and Exotic India, but some small orders are also being met for European markets.

Aurodia hopes it can gradually expand its production, though currently it needs more people and, eventually, more equipment. The skills of a trained silversmith would also be particularly welcome.

•For those who may have read the article on Auroville under the Update section of the October 2 issue of *Newsweek* magazine, the Auroville news we have reported in this issue should indicate that Auroville is alive and well (though in need of funds and other help), contrary to the bleak forecast of the journalistic consciousness of *Newsweek* staffers.

[News items courtesy Auroville Information Service, Auroville International-U.K. newsletter, and Narad.]

GENERAL NEWS

• David Voremberg of the Karass Project of Interface (of Somerville, Mass.) left on 17 September for Auroville. The Karass Project is engaged in linking new age communities by videotape "letters." Karass provides the video equipment, including camera and monitor, to the communities being linked and instructs community members in the use of the equipment. The aim is to encourage communities to "talk" to each other about themselves, their aspirations, their difficulties, their work, etc. So far linked in this manner are Arcosanti in Arizona, Another Place in New Hampshire, Findhorn in Scotland. Auroville is now being added to the chain.

David took a number of tapes for Auroville, including one shot at the United Nations just before he left. This tape is most interesting. It is a message to Auroville from two U.N. officials. Introduced by Peter Calloway of Karass, it records messages to Auroville from Peter Landelius, director of the N.Y. liaison office of UNESCO, and from Robert Müller, secretary of the U.N. Economic and Social Council, former chef du cabinet for U Thant, and author of the forthcoming *Most of All They Taught Me Happiness*. Müller, among other things, proposed an ongoing communication among the U.N., diplomats, and Aurovilians.

Prior to the taping, participants (which included besides these already mentioned, Seyril Rubin of Auroville, Dennis Evenson of Findhorn, Langdon Morris of Arcosanti, and David Voremberg of Karass) spent time meditating together in the U.N. meditation room. In this regard it may be interesting to note that an early proposal from the Auroville architects included a peace pavilion in the International zone with a replica of the U.N. meditation room.

• The July 1978 issue of *The UNESCO Courier*, the monthly magazine of UNESCO, contains an article, "The Mother: The Spiritual Heir of Sri Aurobindo," by Emanuel Pouchpa Dass, Director of UNESCO's Division of Cultural Studies. The article covers the lives of both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother and their search for the key to transformation.

• Carolus Verhulst's publishing company, Mirananda, has brought out a Dutch language edition of *The Mother on Auroville*. Entitled *Auroville: Stad van de toekomst*, it contains 24 full-page photographs of the city. Anyone interested in this book should write directly to Mirananda uitgevers bv, Zijdweg 5a, Wassenaar, The Netherlands.

Incidentally Hollanders wishing to make donations to Auroville should contact Ancy Perizonius-van Pelt, Hammerskjoldlaan 729, Rijswijk (Z.H.), The Netherlands.

• We have received a letter of appreciation for *Collaboration* from Michael Shenton and other members of the Integrational Yoga Group of the Charterhouse Adult Education Center in Coventry, England. They have expressed an interest in having introductory works of Sri Aurobindo for their library. Anyone who would care to help them out, please write directly to Michael, c/o Charterhouse Adult Education Center, London Road, Coventry, England.

• Charles Maloney of Matagiri was scheduled to speak on "The Experience of Death" at Rutgers University on 16 November.

• Charles E. Tuttle Co. has published the autobiography of Antonin Raymond, the French architect who now resides in the United States. Raymond designed and helped build the Sri Aurobindo Ashram guesthouse called Golconde, in the 1930s. In his book he recalls his experiences during his stay at the Ashram. The passage appears also in *Sri Aurobindo's Action Journal* of September 1978.

• Larry and Else Jacobs of Palm Springs, Calif., who have been teaching hatha yoga for a number of years, are offering two health-aid products, a fold-up body slant which can be used also as a lounge or bed, and a body lift, for headstands, which can be converted to a footstool. If you are interested in further information on either of these items, please write to Matagiri.

• The June issue of *Interchange*, the bimonthly newsletter of the Teilhard Centre for the Future of Man in England, is devoted to Auroville, with general information, an open letter from Auroville, and an editorial on yoga and evolution. To find out about obtaining a copy, write to Sri Aurobindo Society of Great Britain, 82 Bell Street, London NW 1, England.

NEWS OF CENTERS

[Because of several changes in the centers we have been listing in *Collaboration*, we will not publish the list in the next few issues. All changes and corrections we have learned of recently are recorded below. New centers and study groups are requested to notify us of their opening and their schedules and other information relative to their work and activities.]

• **East-West Cultural Center** (2865 W. 9th St., Los Angeles, CA 90006) has tapes for sale, including lectures by M.P. Pandit on Sri Aurobindo, the Mother, meditation, etc., and by Dr. Judith Tyberg, on *Savitri*, spiritual significance of flowers, etc., as well as Sanskrit mantra and pronunciation tapes.

Among recent programs at the center: Stan Zundell narrated his film *Escape*; John Richard Turner of the Siddhartha Foundation of Aura-Therapy spoke on how to clear the aura; Dr. Framroze Bode, Zoroastrian high priest of Bombay, gave his final talk.

There are regular programs at the center, including Dr. Tyberg sharing the wisdom of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, and an Auroville group which meets to discuss ways to help Auroville. For further details write the center or call (213) 480-8325.

• **Anie Nunnally** (408 W. 57, Apt. 8F, N.Y., NY 10019, tel. 212-757-7584) may be contacted by anyone interested in knowing more about Sri Aurobindo, Auroville, etc., or participating in meetings in New York City.

• **Steve Phillips & Hope Schlorholtz** (144 Willow Ave., Somerville, MA 02144) have moved to this new address. Their Sri Aurobindo study group and meditation is meeting Sunday evenings.

• **Umesh Desai** (20 Cortland St., Highland Park, MI 48203) reports a new telephone number: (313) 869-8239.

• **Joel and Evelyn Gross** have moved from Reno, Nevada, to 295 Dean Ave., Eugene, OR 97404. They are planning to open a store to sell Ashram and Auroville products.

• **Paul Molinari and Jan Edl**, who maintained a study group in Plainfield, NJ, have moved to San Francisco.

Two Sri Aurobindo centers have been brought to our attention which have been functioning for some time and have not been listed in *Collaboration*:

• **Hasmukh B. Shah**, Centre, opposite Kagadiwad, Kocharab, Ellisbridge, Ahmedabad 380006, India.

• **Sri Aurobindo Society, Gowribidanur Branch**, Gowribidanur, Karnataka 561208, India, which has meetings every Wednesday and has arranged monthly lectures on the philosophy and yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. They have begun the Auro Nursery School using the Free Progress method developed in the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. They have also built a Mathra Mandir in memory of the Mother, which is the center now of all their cultural activities.

• The center in Kenya has a new address: Sri Aurobindo Society, P.O. Box 40839, Nairobi, Kenya.

Note: We are interested in hearing from anyone about whether the Sri Aurobindo centers in Uganda and Zambia are still functioning.

• **Namaste Auro-Import** (Tweede Bloemdwarsstraat 9, Amsterdam) has a new telephone number: 020-266217.

• The center in **Vancouver**, Sri Aurobindo Society and Auro Book Store, has closed with the return to India of the person in charge. Anyone interested in information may contact Ramesh Maniar, 1401-1725 Pendrell St., Vancouver, BC, Canada V6G 2X7.

• **Auroville International-U.K.** (82 Bell St., London NW 1, England) participated in the 2nd Festival of Mind and Body at Olympia. Three Aurovilians, Rod Hemsell, Peter Clarence-Smith, and Kevan Myers, assisted.

Rod Hemsell, an American Aurovillian, has also been trying to establish sales outlets for Auroville products. He has sold hammocks, leather bags, incense and decorative mica panels to shops in London. (The hammocks and other Auroville handicrafts are available in the United States from Sri Aurobindo's Action Center, P.O. Box 1977, Boulder, CO 80306, or Auro Imports International, P.O. Box 585, N.Y., NY 10025.)

Max Payne spoke on Sri Aurobindo at the national yoga seminar, Yoga and the Future of Man, held June 10 at Westminster, England. The Sri Aurobindo center manned a bookstall during the seminar.

• As reported in our last issue, there is now a new center in Spain: Centro Sri Aurobindo, Diagonal 434, 3^o, 1^a, Barcelona 37.

• Sri Aurobindo Center in **Lund, Sweden**, is moving to new quarters. Their new address was not known at press time. They have just brought out the 10th issue of their quarterly *Nāsta Framtid* (Next Future).

• Sri Aurobindo reading and meditation group meets regularly in **Israel**. Anyone who wishes to join it or simply to meet with aspirants there, please contact Omkar and Hadassah Haskale, P.O. Box 51, Rosh Pina, Israel. They are hoping to develop a more active center eventually and are requesting donation of books of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.



Matagirians and friends watching a showing of their videotape "letter" to be shown to Aurovilians and Ashramites.

In August Gordon Davidson, Corinne McLaughlin and Hans from Findhorn visited and showed slides of various communities and centers they had visited in the U.S. over the past few months. They also spoke of the history and organization of Findhorn and showed slides of that community.

Peter Calloway of the Karass Project and Maya Staver also visited and introduced Matagiri to the Karass Project. He showed some videotape letters from Arcosanti and Findhorn, which were very interesting as glimpses into the life of those communities.

In September David Voreberg of Karass, on his way to Auroville (see General News) spent two days at Matagiri videotaping a "letter" from Matagiri to Auroville. It was a largely spontaneous presentation of the daily life and work of Matagiri, introducing the residents and showing the buildings and grounds. It was expected that copies of the Matagiri videotape will eventually be available for the use of other communities in the Karass linking project.



Part of Matagiri's observance of Sri Aurobindo's birthday on August 15, was a program of reading and chanting from the Gita and the Rig Veda.

Sri Aurobindo's birthday, August 15, was observed by about 40 people at Matagiri. The highlight of the day was a reading of Sanskrit slokas from the Rig Veda and the Gita arranged by Gopal Bhattacharya, and Seyril, and a brief reading from volume 1 of the *Agenda* of the Mother.

Gopal Bhattacharya, recently retired head of a teacher's college near Calcutta, and now a resident of Matagiri, is giving a Sanskrit class to several Matagirians and some local people. A *Savitri* group also meets weekly. Both are open to anyone who wants to attend.

Recent visitors to Matagiri included Muriel Spanier of Sri Aurobindo's Action Center, Boulder; Rutledge Tompkins on his way to the Ashram; Gene Finn of Boston; Rose Kupperman, who has been working for funds for the Matrimandir; Julian Lines, from the Early Learning Center in Conn.; Timothy Jacob, who lived at Matagiri for 5 years; Marc Salvas, Angeline Millar, Ramesh Mehta (with the center in Vancouver) and L.K. Mehta (who teaches Amerindians), all from Canada; Navaja Mitchell, who lived for many years in the Ashram; Jacque Swartz, recently returned from the Ashram and now living and studying in N.Y.C.; the Indian film producer Ajit Bose; Sheldon Rocklin, a filmmaker who spent several years in India, and who showed his work in progress *Hymn to the Mystic Fire*, much of which was filmed in Auroville and the Ashram (his videotape of the Mother's last Darshan, April 1973, was also shown at Matagiri in September, and we hope to obtain a copy for our library); and Judi Cozzi and Maria and Luigi Amidani, from Italy.



Some of the people who were present at Matagiri for Sri Aurobindo's birthday observance.

BOOK REVIEW

Revelation: The Birth of a New Age, by David Spangler. Rainbow Bridge, 1977. 256 pp.

The theme of this book, as the title indicates, is the account of the birth of a new age with the emergence of a new and higher consciousness in humanity. The author narrates how he has been aware of the higher worlds since his childhood and how later, in collaboration with Martyle Glines, he developed his inner experiences and made programs of lectures and workshops in the U.S.A. and Europe, which ultimately drew them to Findhorn Foundation in northern Scotland, where they became impressed with the esoteric vision of Peter and Eileen Caddy and Dorothy Maclean and joined them as co-director of their spiritual community.

On July 31, 1970, in a meeting of the executive body of the Findhorn Foundation, the author felt the presence of a Higher Being (to be called John) and the result was the revelation of a new consciousness transmitted through him. Spangler says that it is Limitless Love and Truth which was revealed to them and through him.

The message of the revelation is that the new age has come and it means a change of our consciousness from egoistic separation and isolation to the unity and wholeness, to the holistic attunement to Limitless Love and Truth which is within us and the universe.

Spangler describes their experiences in detail, particularly the processes, in chapters 3 & 19 and the other chapters deal with the text of the revelation and its commentaries and interpretations; chapters 4 through 10 especially describe the transmission of Limitless Love and Truth.

These transmissions of the revelation are no doubt inspirational expressions based on communion with higher planes of consciousness attributed to the Limitless Love and Truth. This kind of communion of Spangler with the higher worlds continued until Sept. 3, 1970, and all the transmissions, except one, are the core of this book. To Spangler, however, there is no end of the revelations of the Limitless Love and Truth, and part 4 of the book contains another transmission received on Jan. 8, 1975, in California direct from the Limitless Love and Truth personified, besides John.

The author urges that the content of the book should be regarded not as a message but as a sharing of an experience of the divinity within us in tune with the divinity of the universe which is the Limitless Love and Truth. He believes that this can usher in the new age and higher consciousness through our creative relationship with each other and the world around.

Since the beginning of the second decade of this century there has been an emergence of new types of spiritual communities throughout the world in general and in the United States in particular. The novel characteristic of almost all such communities is an aspiration for a higher, better, deeper, and fuller life with a global vision of Truth and Love.

When the Mother of Sri Aurobindo Ashram first met Sri Aurobindo, in Pondicherry on March 24, 1914, she in her deep concentration could see that the Supermind had touched the earth and was beginning to be realized. On February 29, 1956, during the common meditation in the Ashram, the Mother declared that "the supramental Light and Force and consciousness rushed down upon earth in an uninterrupted flow." The descent of the supramental on the earth might be the cause of this awakening throughout the world. Whether it is because of the cosmic Christ or second coming of Jesus in our heart or the new manifestation of the Aquarian Christ, as Spangler says, or the inevitable step of spiritual evolution, the force higher than the mental has been at work. But the question is how mental beings such as we are can realize it and transform our consciousness after it.

Spangler feels the difficulty of people like us and says that without knowing who we are and our role in the dynamic universe, we are not quite able to understand what the new age means and how it could be brought about (p. 239). Spangler is, therefore, writing another book, *Emergence*, in which probably he will discuss such problems.

By the way, Spangler has mentioned in his book P. Teilhard de Chardin and Sri Aurobindo as advanced "revelators" (p. 145). As for Sri Aurobindo, he has already discussed such problems and also the questions of transformation of human consciousness both individually and collectively in detail in his seminal works including *The Life Divine*, *Savitri*, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, *The Human Cycle* and others. The new humanity as envisaged by Sri Aurobindo found expression in his *Supramental Manifestation* as follows:

"A new humanity would then be a race of mental beings on the earth and in the earthly body but delivered from its present conditions in the reign of cosmic ignorance so far as to be possessed of a perfected mind, a mind of light which could even be a subordinate action of Supermind or Truth-consciousness....

"But it is clear that all this could only come as a result of the evolution which is already taking place upon earth extending far beyond its present bounds" (p. 60).

The question of how the transformation could be brought about has also been dealt with by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Constant aspiration for the Truth-consciousness and rejection of egoistic desires and surrender of one's self to the Supreme Being are the ways through which one can bring in himself the triple transformation, i.e., psychic, spiritual, and supramental. (*Life Divine*, Book 2, Chapter 25). This is the path of integral yoga, which leads from mental to higher mental, overmental, and supramental consciousness not only individually but collectively as well, leading ultimately to the establishment of a gnostic community.

David Spangler with his illumined mind has already become a spiritual leader and his books are in great demand. We extend our hearty welcome to him and wish him and the Lorian Association all well. How much we also wish he might be more familiar with the works of his forerunners, particularly Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

—Gopal Bhattacharya

To concentrate on one's own spiritual growth and experience is the first necessity of the sadhak—to be eager to help others draws away from the inner work. To grow in the spirit is the greatest help one can give to others, for then something flows out naturally to those around that helps them.

—Sri Aurobindo

Timothy Jacob

If you would like to contribute to the work of the Matagiri Sri Aurobindo Center, or Auroville, including the Matrimandir, or the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, make your check payable to Matagiri Sri Aurobindo Center, Inc., specifying the particular organization or project for which your donation is intended. All contributions to Matagiri Sri Aurobindo Center are tax deductible and very much appreciated.

In addition to funds, Matagiri also has great need for a photocopying machine, either new or used. Also needed is an oscilloscope to be used in the designing of a light control for the Matrimandir. It will be used at Matagiri.

Anyone who can help with either of these items in any way, please contact Jim Hurley at Matagiri, (914) 679-8322.

Note: We appreciate being notified of people who are traveling to the Ashram or Auroville and who would be willing to take small items needed there. We usually have such items on hand waiting for someone to carry them. If you are planning to go and would be willing, please write to Matagiri.

THE WAYS OF RETURN

Carlo Schuller

In three ways She may be restored to us:
From subtle planes She could materialize
A supramental body glorious,
Brought down from Heaven to dazzle our eyes.

Or Her return might be more down-to-Earth;
She could once more accept the inconscient fall,
The upward struggle marring human birth,
Unrecognized, belittled, spurned by all.

Or the Samadhi could a secret hold—
Most intimate, a promise unfulfilled,
A tale divine, its marvelous end untold—
And Transformation's ultimate mystery yield.

There is no hope for a humanity
Which would discredit any of these three.

From THE MEDITATIONS OF MANDAVYA

Sri Aurobindo

Lo, I have cursed Thee, lo, I have denied
Thy love, Thy being. Strike me with Thy rod,
Convince me that Thou art. O leave it not
To Thy dumb messengers that have no heart,
No wrath in the attack, no angered love,
No exultation in the blow that falls,
The cry that answers. Let me feel a Heart,
Even though an evil one, that throbs and is
Against our tears, our pressure and our search.
Beware, for I will send my soul across the earth
And all men turn against Thee at my word.
There is no sign, there comes not any voice.
And yet, alas! I know He will return
And He will soothe my wounds and charm my heart;
I shall again forgive, again shall love,
Again shall suffer, be again deceived.
And where is any end, O Heaven, O Earth?
But there is never any end when one has loved.

O Keepers of the Gate to Mother's Mountain,
Only didst thou wish to open to the Madonna of Light
And follow the gate's swing upon the trailing of Her joy-robe?
Knowest thou now twain is She and second walks
Bearing the veil of the Mother of Sorrows.
She too must stand upon Her hill.
From there across the subtle space arching black gulfs,
Her light is seen o'er Darkness' fief
Like torchlight of the Woman of the Harbor
Once held to the tired, the poor, the huddled masses
Seeking across long weeping waters.

O Thou who wouldst wed the Bride of Bliss,
Cast not off before Her gate thy world-torn garb,
Insignia of thy missioned soul.
For what was meant for thee who else couldst wear?
From thy shoulders She Herself must pluck thy robe.
Then o'er thy nature drape the transformed fabric,
Peacock flag of victory won.

O Suitor Hearts, hearing Her love call like a lilting melody,
Lighting upon thy soul caressed,
Waking to dreams of rapt embrace,
Knowest thou Her entreaties will imperatives become.
But this never wilt thou know,
Which is sweeter, nor evermore compelling:
The voice of thy Lover,
Or the command of thy Queen.
To lie couchant in Her love embraced,
Or prostrate at Her royal feet enslaved.

O Ye Many who only know Love and Joy
Reflected in their opposites,
O Ye Few who wert blest the pair to hold
For but a single second,
And thus forever art seekers,
Rightly ye search midst the growths of Earth.
Though futile the quest to faithless worldly knowings,
And elsewhere the goal to other-worldly wisdoms,
Yet still ye pursue and here.
For embowered in the primeval green
Thy Earth-soul wast conceived.
Thy searchings are stirrings of the Child within.
Thy strivings to gain are pangs of birth
Of need to give himself and utterly.
Thy means of quest are his being's end.

O Ye Seekers gathered at the Mountain,
Graced to dwell in the home of thy Mother,
Amongst children of the same golden womb,
By Her mighty love toward Godhead grow.
Of the mountain a school and playground make,
Where to swing on delight,
To slide laughing down joy,
To run hand in hand round Harmony's embrace
Mid high-fluted notes trilling down the laureled slope.

Ours is neither a political nor a social but a spiritual goal. What we want is a transformation of the individual consciousness, not a change of regime or government. For reaching that goal we put no confidence in any human means, however powerful, our trust is in the Divine Grace alone. —The Mother