

Interacting  
with UNESCO  
during  
the Mother's years





# **INTERACTING WITH UNESCO DURING THE MOTHER'S YEARS**



**Research based on material extracted  
from the autobiography by Kailas Jhaveri  
*I am with you***

Compiled by Paulette Hadnagy.

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*I am with you.*

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*ascent to the Truth*

**“...freedom, equality, unity are the eternal attributes of the Spirit. It is the practical recognition of this truth, it is the awakening of the soul in man and the attempt to get him to live from his soul and not from his ego which is the inner meaning of religion, and it is that to which the religion of humanity also must arrive before it can fulfil itself in the life of the race.”**

**SRI AUROBINDO, *The Human Cycle*, p. 570**

I dedicate this work to the memory of Mia Berden, an honorary life member of Auroville International. Her charismatic presence as a board member of Stichting De Zaaier, the Dutch organization sponsoring the present book, was behind the funding of a significant variety of Auroville projects.

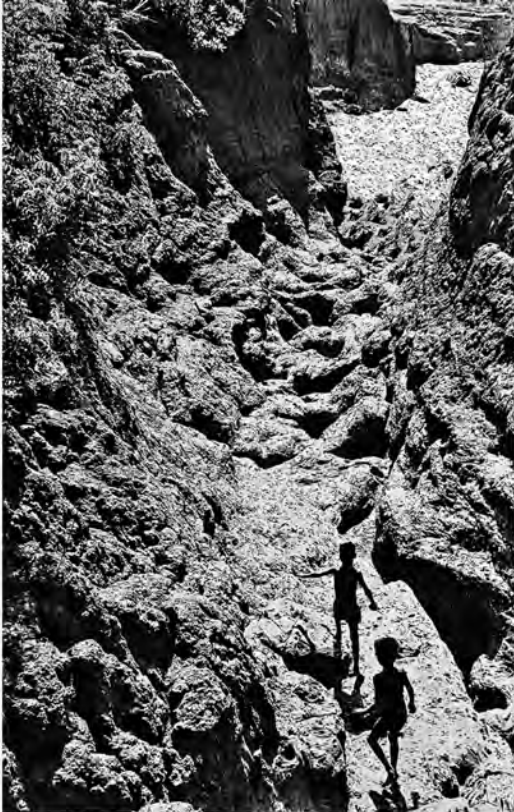
These two excerpts from memorial messages from around the world pay due tribute to this great soul championing a just, humane society:

*“I learnt a lot from her all encompassing commitment and struggle for social justice – for women, yes, but also workers, refugees, migrants and other vulnerable groups. She had worked as a Labour Inspector and spent many hours in factories and workshops in Holland.”*

*“In the passing away of Mia Berden, the movement for women’s ‘human rights’ and the rights of the working class and marginalized sections of society in the third world has lost a precious source of inspiration and guidance – a person who could truly be called one of its patron-saints of several decades.”*

Mia’s luminous being and path points to Sri Aurobindo’s call for the fulfilment of a truly lived “religion of humanity”. Remembering her cheerful boldness gives me confidence that the Avatar’s model town, Auroville, will manifest in all its plenitude.





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# UNESCO'S ROLE AT THE INCEPTION OF AUROVILLE

## Introduction

Auroville is a unique project that needs the support of governments and major organizations from all over the world. This was always the Mother's approach and consequently UNESCO, for which involvement with Auroville had begun in 1966, prior to Auroville Foundation Day, has played a major role in helping in the establishment of the city of dawn, particularly when the Mother was directly involved. As early as 1966, then in 1968 and 1970, and once again in 1983, ten years after the Mother's passing away, UNESCO appealed to all its member-states to actively support and promote Auroville and its ideals. In addition, in 2007 the Executive Board of UNESCO invited "the Director-General to reinforce the association of UNESCO, and in particular its Culture Sector, with Auroville in the context of the commemorative activities for its 40th anniversary."

In 2009 the Director-General of UNESCO, Mr K. Matsuura, joined by the Secretary for Education of the Government of India Mr R. P. Agrawal, and by Dr Karan Singh, Chairman of the Auroville Foundation, unveiled a bronze statue of Sri Aurobindo installed in UNESCO's Headquarters premises, in Paris. "“Observing that the crises that the world is traversing are not only economic and financial, but moral, ethical, and spiritual, Mr Matsuura said that “The teachings of Sri Aurobindo, who will forever be associated with the founding of Auroville, the unique international township founded as a place where people from different cultural, educational and political backgrounds could work together towards their common goal of human unity and sustainable living, resonate particularly strongly as we search for long-term solutions.””<sup>1</sup>

What follows is a brief presentation of UNESCO'S mission and activities and the reasons for which it is drawn to the city of unending education, as well as the Mother's guidance on Auroville's relationship with this international organization. This should help the reader

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[http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=46462&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=46462&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

understand what prompted the Mother to give her support and blessings to Kailas Jhaveri, the ashramite who, since 1966, acted as the Mother's liaison with this specialised agency of the United Nations (UN) agency.

### **UNESCO's aims, principles, scope and activities<sup>2</sup>**

UNESCO is the acronym for "United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization." Founded in 1945, this specialised agency of the United Nations (UN) is based in Paris, France. As stated in the UNESCO Website (2000), its main objective is to "contribute to peace and security in the world by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science, culture and communication in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations".

UNESCO's grand themes, which unfold over some fifty year periods of time, are riddled with contestations over the nature of its higher aims in the context of divisive, polarising social orders. History proceeds by evolutionary leaps. There have always been avant-garde movements, which herald momentous changes that foster the regeneration of society, but which also trigger tremendous resistances by the old order, unwilling to give way to the new one seeking to manifest. In such times, while some people are swept up in the movement one way or the other, others resist or look on from the sidelines in perplexity. The difficulty of coming to terms with the manifold crises of our time, a crisis of civilization that seems insolvable at the core, can be understood within this perspective.

As of November 2013, UNESCO comprises 195 member-states, including Palestine, added on 23 November 2011; 9 associate members (non-independent states); 2 permanent observers; and 10 intergovernmental organizations with permanent observer status. "Three UNESCO member states are not UN member states: Niue, Cook Islands and Palestine, while one UN member state (Liechtenstein) is not a UNESCO member."<sup>3</sup> This fact highlights UNESCO's distinctiveness

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<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise specified, the following excerpts are taken from Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UNESCO>.

<sup>3</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Member\\_states\\_of\\_UNESCO](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Member_states_of_UNESCO)

from the intergovernmental organization, the United Nations itself, while still being one of its principal agencies. UNESCO also has official relations with 322 international non-governmental organizations (NGOs); it has national, regional, cluster, serving more than one country, and liaison offices, serving international organizations, established throughout the world. It awards 22 prizes in education, science, culture and peace. Unless specified otherwise, the following excerpts are taken from Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UNESCO>:

““UNESCO and its mandate for international co-operation can be traced back to the League of Nations resolution on 21 September 1921 ... UNESCO pursue its objectives through five major programs: education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture, communication and information. Projects sponsored by UNESCO include literacy, technical, and teacher-training programmes; international science programmes; the promotion of independent media and freedom of the press; regional and cultural history projects; the promotion of cultural diversity; translations of world literature; international cooperation agreements to secure the world cultural and natural heritage (World Heritage Sites) and to preserve human rights, and attempts to bridge the worldwide digital divide. It is also a member of the United Nations Development Group.

UNESCO’s aim is ““to contribute to the building of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information”. Other priorities of the organization include attaining quality Education For All and lifelong learning, addressing emerging social and ethical challenges, fostering cultural diversity, a culture of peace and building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communication.””

The Constitution of 1946 was amended in 1954, to the effect that “members of the Executive Board would be representatives of the governments of the States of which they are nationals and would not, as before, act in their personal capacity. ... Among the major achievements of the organization is its work against racism ... starting with a declaration of anthropologists (among them was Claude Lévi-Strauss) and other scientists in 1950 and concluding with the 1978

Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice.” ““In 1956, the Republic of South Africa withdrew from UNESCO claiming that some of the organization’s publications amounted to “interference” in the country’s “racial problems.” South Africa rejoined the organization in 1994 under the leadership of Nelson Mandela.””

“UNESCO was perceived by some as a platform for communists and Third World dictators to attack the West, a stark contrast to accusations made by the USSR in the late 1940s and early 1950s. In 1984, the United States withheld its contributions and withdrew from the organization in protest, followed by the United Kingdom in 1985. ... Following a change of government in 1997, the UK rejoined. The United States rejoined in 2003.” “In 2011, Palestine became a UNESCO member following a vote in which 107 member states supported and 14 opposed. Laws passed in the United States in 1990 and 1994 mean that it cannot contribute financially to any UN organisation that accepts Palestine as a full member.” In protest over the decision by UNESCO to accept Palestine as a full member, the United States has withheld \$ US 80 million a year, which accounts for some 22% of UNESCO’s budget, forcing the UN agency to cut American-led initiatives and lay off people from work. ““Israel also reacted to Palestine’s admittance to UNESCO by freezing Israel payments to the UNESCO and imposing sanctions to the Palestinian Authority, claiming that Palestine’s admittance would be detrimental “to potential peace talks””<sup>4</sup> On 8 November 2013, two years after halting their payments, the US and Israel have automatically lost their voting rights in the UNESCO general assembly, in application of UNESCO’s constitutional bylaws.

### **UNESCO’s role within the Mother’s grand vision**

In Auroville’s history there are references to UNESCO’s support since 1966, when the first resolution was passed, “for the commemoration of

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4 “In 1974, UNESCO stripped Israel of its membership on the grounds of alleged damage being done by Israel’s archaeological excavations ... but renewed Israel’s membership in 1977, after the United States threatened to withhold \$40 million of funding from the organization.” In 2010 the announced restoration work of the self-designated National Heritage Site prompted ““criticism from the United States and protests from Palestinians... UNESCO’s Executive Board voted to declare the sites ... “an integral part of the occupied Palestinian Territories” and any unilateral Israeli action was a violation of international law.” “On 28 June 2011, UNESCO’s World Heritage Committee, at Jordan’s insistence, censured Israel’s decision to demolish and rebuild the Mughrabi Gate Bridge in Jerusalem for safety reasons.”



the 20th anniversary of the UNESCO”. Regarding her own goals on the development of Auroville, the Mother had told Satprem, “Those people [UNESCO] are 200 years behind the earth’s progress, consequently there isn’t much hope that they will understand. But in the end, I didn’t tell them not to bother with it – I don’t give advice.”<sup>5</sup> And yet, on November 29, 1966, two months later, for the commemoration of UNESCO’s 20th anniversary, the General Conference of UNESCO unanimously passed its first resolution on Auroville, beginning with this statement: ““Being apprised that in connection with the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of UNESCO, the Sri Aurobindo Society, Puducherry, India, a nongovernmental organization affiliated to the Indian National Commission for UNESCO, proposes to set up a cultural township known as “Auroville” where people of different countries will live together in harmony in one community and engage in cultural, educational, scientific and other pursuits.”” As Kailas recalls, this was the background behind UNESCO’s active support for Auroville: “... in 1966, Shree E. Pouschpa Dass from India, who was the Director of the Division of Cultural Development at UNESCO, eloquently presented the resolution which I had prepared with Salah-El-Din Tewfik [*UNESCO’s representative in New Delhi*].”

In 1966 the Mother had appointed Kailas Jhaveri to be the “Secretary-in-charge, UNESCO section”. The latter was well prepared for the position, given that she had been working in the information department, at the United Nations’ headquarters in New York, from 1954 to 1956. At that time Kailas, who already had a degree in philosophy, changed her course of study from psychology to international organization and relations. In one of her classes she met Dr. M. Adiseshiah, Deputy Director-General of UNESCO, who had been invited to give a talk on UNESCO and the subject of her new course of studies. This marked the beginning of a life-long relationship. Following an exchange of letters with the Mother, in 1964 Kailas left New York, where she had lived and worked for over ten years, for Pondicherry, to become an ashramite.

The Mother was fully behind Kailas Jhaveri’s dynamic exchange with UNESCO, particularly through the medium of Dr. Malcolm Adiseshiah. In December 1968, following his speech at the conference on Adult Education, held in the Ashram Theatre, which he addressed

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<sup>5</sup> Mother’s Agenda, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 1966.

as its chairman. The Mother commented, “He is very open to my Force. Many good things will come from his contact with Kailas.” On Mahasaraswati’s day, listening to the interview of Dr. Adiseshiah by Dr. Melville de Mello on Auroville, to be broadcast on the first anniversary of Auroville, the Mother commented with great force, “A very powerful being came down and tied Auroville to the ground. It was needed and he did it. Now, Auroville will be a reality and the world will see it.”

Under the Mother’s direct guidance, and with her blessings, Kailas played a pivotal role in explaining the ideals of Auroville to representatives of UNESCO. Her past experience proved very useful for the task the Mother assigned her; so much so that when Kailas wished to withdraw – following her main interlocutor’s, Dr. M. Adiseshiah, retirement from UNESCO at the end of 1970 – the Mother asked her to continue. Besides contacting ambassadors, other eminent personalities and representatives of major institutions, Kailas undertook other activities deemed necessary to help materialize the Mother’s grand project. Kailas’ tasks ranged from public relations to submitting papers, to collaborating in drafting resolutions and organizing interviews on Auroville, in addition to planning for the celebrations for Sri Aurobindo’s Centenary Year (including writing articles for the special issue of *The UNESCO Courier* in 1972). She also wrote at length to explain the *raison d’être* for a University of Human Unity, in its being very central to the city of unending education the Mother wished for Auroville. Kailas also described the International Cultural Pavilions as an intrinsic part of the University; in this context, it is noteworthy that the Mother had originally conceived the pavilions to be associated with the Sri Aurobindo Ashram International Centre of Education.

Discussing major UNESCO initiatives that could potentially be taken on by Auroville, yet always adapted to the spirit of freedom of the Auroville experiment required by the Mother, was another of Kailas’ commitments. The *conditio sine qua non* for eventual inclusion of a project was the capacity to turn it into an Auroville undertaking. The controversy over the Design for Living project, where the Mother is often quoted by individuals who have no clue as to the context of her statement, is one blatant example of the rift between Kailas’ uncompromising attitude (which was actually very close to that of the Mother), in stark contrast to the often shortsighted, utilitarian approach of the CAA,

Comité Administratif d'Auroville, headed by Navajata, the Secretary of the Sri Aurobindo Society, of which The Mother was the President. The following excerpt from an exchange of correspondence between Kailas and the Mother highlights the difference in their approach compared to the CAA's subservient attitude:

“... in spite of their good points and common objectives, Mother, I feel that our fundamental aims, approach and the basis of work are quite different from theirs and I am a bit apprehensive about unnecessary interference from them if Auroville is offered as a part of their project and experiment. And I feel that if any association must take place, it should be the Design for Living which should become a part of Auroville since our aims and objectives are much vaster and far-reaching than theirs, and the request must come from them or from UNESCO rather than us going after them. ... Auroville embodies in its very ideology, conception and town planning the very objectives envisaged in the Design for Living and goes even further than those objectives to fulfill the larger aims.”

The Mother replied:

“I do not know who told you that – but there is a misunderstanding somewhere because to hand over the management of Auroville to any country or any group however big it may be is an absolute impossibility. If it has been at all taken, it is without my knowledge – because I say to it an emphatic NO.”

An irreducible champion of Auroville's independence, Kailas aptly stood steadfast on behalf of the Mother's will. Despite this when, as part of the celebrations for Sri Aurobindo's Centenary Year, the government of India submitted to UNESCO a somewhat milder resolution than the one Kailas had prepared and kept fighting for, the Mother instructed her to give up the fight and trust Dr. Adisheshia's conciliatory words; this episode is an eloquent example of the Mother's pragmatic *modus operandi*. The latter had written, Kailas reported, that that “he could not insist on the Indian government for my draft, because they wanted unanimity. They also felt that Sri Aurobindo was not so well known even to most of the Indians to propose my draft, and it would unnecessarily complicate the matter.”

Always open to exploring new approaches, when it boiled down to the material realisation of Auroville the Mother used whatever possibility came to hand. Not only did she turn to UNESCO (and indirectly the United Nations) as a channel to reach the world at large, but the Mother also showed the same pragmatic attitude towards governments and any organisation or institution that she felt may be of help. Her endorsement of an Auroville Industrial Corporation to raise the needed capital to build the town in five years – and her subsequent twelve page letter to the Ford Foundation, in 1969, along with the one master plan she approved, with the request to partially sponsor a feasibility study for a town to be built in five years, adopting the systems engineering approach, are significant examples of the Shakti in action, solidly grounded in practical reality.

The following, taken from her signed letter to the Ford Foundation, highlights the importance the Mother assigned to the Auroville project being recommended by UNESCO:

“Auroville is unique – not only is it a city being constructed from scratch but it combines the social, economic and physical aspects of the city in a manner designed to enhance the evolutionary process in man. As such the 14th General Conference of UNESCO held in Oct-Nov 1966 passed a resolution expressing the belief that the project will contribute to international understanding and promotion of peace, and UNESCO commended this project to those interested in UNESCO’s ideals. Again in Oct-Nov 1968 at the 15th General Conference of UNESCO a resolution was passed calling on Members and non-Governmental Organization to participate in development of this project. For reference copies of the resolution and other material relating to the interest of UNESCO are enclosed.

(...)

Enclosures:

1. Auroville in UNESCO – 2 copies.
2. Resolution Number 4.131 Adopted in the 15<sup>th</sup> General Conference of UNESCO on “AUROVILLE” held in Paris, October 1968 – 2 copies”.

As an early Aurovilian commented, Auroville could have not been founded materially, without the endorsement and active support of the

Government of India and UNESCO. This was the scenario, behind the Mother's resolve to secure UNESCO's collaboration even prior Auroville's inception.

Could it have been otherwise? Hadn't Sri Aurobindo withdrawn into his room, where he spent the last twenty-four years of terrestrial existence, having entrusted the organisation of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram to the Mother, who presided over it down to the least detail, material as much as spiritual? After the Ashram, Auroville, her ideal city named after Sri Aurobindo, was the next realization. But a project of such a magnitude demands the help and collaboration of the world at large. Hence the Mother's determination to pursue her dream necessitated her to adapt whatever instruments she discovered or were offered to her on the way. If this aspect of the Mother may appear disconcerting to some people, justification for such an approach can be found in Sri Aurobindo's concluding remarks regarding the Avatar of India:

“There are many who perceive the necessity of the religious and moral regeneration, who are inclined to turn from the prosaic details of politics and commerce and regret that any guide and teacher of the nation should stoop to mingle in them. That is a grievous error. The men who would lead India must be catholic and many-sided. When the Avatar comes, we would like to believe that he will be not only the religious guide, but the political leader, the great educationist, the regenerator of society, the captain of cooperative industry, with the soul of the poet, scholar and artist.”<sup>6</sup>

Another poignant example of the Mother's pragmatic approach is how she turned the original proposal for a World University, launched in 1969 by the United Nations, and subsequently delegated to UNESCO – its educational, scientific and cultural agency – into a major asset of her Auroville project involving all-round, life-long education. Following UNESCO's appeal, Kailas submitted paper after paper on education, the evolution of consciousness and other issues relating to the proposed University. The outcome of Kailas' relentless efforts was that in 1974 UNESCO passed a resolution appealing to all its member-states to contribute to the building of Auroville's International Cultural Pavilions. Unfortunately, all this came to a standstill due to the fight

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<sup>6</sup> SABCL, 2, *Karmayogin*, p. 214.

between the Sri Aurobindo Society and the Auroville residents. With respect to the proposed University and its Pavilions, Kailas told me recently that UNESCO was so enthusiastic about it that, had a feasibility project been submitted, it would have been possible to go ahead with their execution independent of the realisation of the town itself. But nothing was presented... This lapse has profoundly altered the fate of the town-to-be, no less than its material construction using systems engineering, which never happened either, because it was aborted on the spot by a major figure the Mother had appointed for fundraising and management.

For the sake of truth, it should not be forgotten that, at the apex of the struggle with the Sri Aurobindo Society (SAS), the link the Mother had established with UNESCO proved providential. As recorded by Savitra, an early Aurovilian, in *Reflections of an Evolutionary Activist*:

“... This SAS legal battle with the GOI eventually rose through appeals to the Indian Supreme Court where it would be heard as a Constitutional Case defining the distinction between religion and spirituality. For if it could be proven that Sri Aurobindo’s “teachings” and “practices” constituted a religion, then the SAS regains control of Auroville. But if the work of Sri Aurobindo, the Mother and Auroville constitute a free form of secular spirituality whose integral practice is based on the evolution of consciousness, then they lose.” As the trial raised “common questions of constitutional importance”, these “were posted before the Constitution Bench.”” The judgment delivered by the Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court of India on 8 November 1982, upholding the Government’s contention that the teaching of Sri Aurobindo does not constitute a religion, highlights as well the strategic importance of UNESCO’s support.

### **The Mother’s guidance on Auroville’s relationship with UNESCO: about the texts in this book**

In an attempt to come a little closer, at least intellectually, to the Mother’s grand vision, I have put together material that may help enlarge our struggle to come to terms with her wishes for Auroville. This book serves a dual purpose. One is to document how determined the Mother was, applying her force to secure UNESCO’s support and cooperation and,

by its international status, potential world recognition of her Auroville megaproject – while at the same time allowing no interference from UNESCO or any institutional body. At the same time, it provides a poignant documentation that reminds us that being an Aurovilian truly needs to revolve around unending education, emanating from within as well as coming from without, being complementary to the achievement of an effective human unity. This new way of life, which is intended to encompass the whole micro-society of Auroville, is what particularly appealed to UNESCO.

Of particular relevance is UNESCO's endorsement, in 1974, of the Mother's wish for International Cultural Pavilions to be at the very core of the University of Human Unity. The call for such a University, at first, came from the United Nation, of which UNESCO is the educational, scientific and cultural branch. Unending education that encompasses all levels of being and explores all domains of knowledge is an essential ingredient of the international city of Auroville, in both spirit and in deeds. I reproduce the many papers Kailas wrote on the subject, often in reply to the papers she was forwarded by leading personalities in an ongoing discussion, along with the Mother's comments. Such material, focusing on education and the University of Human Unity, constitutes the second part of the book. The documents outlined in this section also call for reflection on the genius and soul of individual nations that, while retaining their essential natures, are destined to evolve into a unity, with the recognition that aiding this process is an essential aim of Auroville and its University.

The archival material I present is taken from *I am with you*, vol. 2, by Kailas Jhaveri. With Kailas' kind permission I reproduce from this book, written in an autobiographical style, only what strictly relates to her interaction with UNESCO and others in position to hasten the material realisation of Auroville, given the magnitude of the task of building this city. The research theme is as vast as UNESCO's fields of interest that are shared with Auroville. The first part of the book documents Kailas sustained efforts to involve and secure the help of the aforementioned organisation, as well as other major national and international agencies, and embassies from all over the world. These initiatives, along with the Mother's handwritten instructions and comments, are recorded in this section. Entries on the United Nations and the Ford Foundation appear

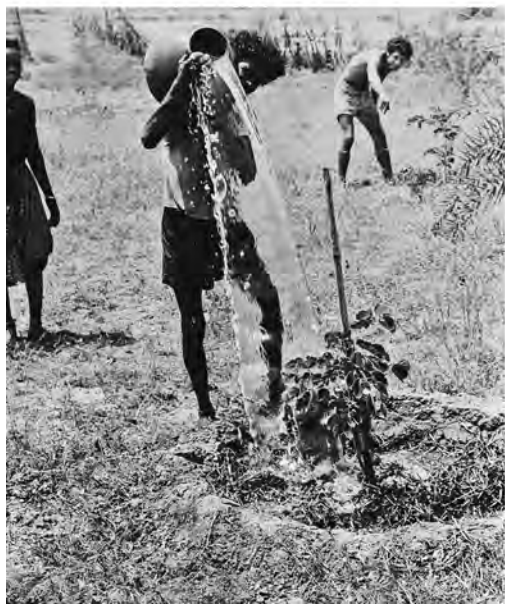
as well. The Mother was greatly appreciative of Kailas' writings, on which she often wrote comments, and encouraged her in every way. In the autobiography is reproduced the facsimile of over hundred handwritten messages and letters Kailas personally received from the Mother; here I have published only those relating to her work for UNESCO. Facsimiles of the messages are reproduced at the end of this book; in the compiled text they are indicated with "F" plus the number. The Mother often scribbled her messages on whatever paper was at hand, eventually recycling it; unfortunately, after over four decades, to ensure quality reproduction of her handwritten messages is not an easy task. The texts, punctuated by the Mother's handwritten messages, are listed in chronological order, so as to present facts and UNESCO-related major events as they unfolded during those early years. Preceding some texts, I have purposely added footnotes and short explanations in italic. I have used bold characters to indicate the Mother's words. The number at the end of each quotation indicates the page number in Kailas' book.

As it emerges from the records in Kailas' autobiography, those disciples around the Mother – beginning with the team she had put in charge, the Administrative Committee of Auroville – did not always grasp her wisdom; at times, they even hampered the realisation of her initiatives. This, too, is part of our history. Using Sri Aurobindo's terminology in *The Human Cycle*, when the infrarational still prevails, and the transition from the objective to the subjective age is far from being fulfilled, there is a long way to go before the Mother's will for Auroville can even commence to be realized. The Latin adage *Natura non facit saltus*, nature makes no leaps, still largely applies. In the meantime it helps to remember that "All life is yoga".

It is not just a city we have to build. The call is for conscious individual souls who, under the guidance of the psychic being, consecrate their lives to the realisation of the ideals of Auroville, eliciting the gradual emergence of the Auroville group-soul. Then the consciousness of the city manifests, effortlessly, and the Mother's vision and will for a universal city of human unity, the Avatar's model town, named after Sri Aurobindo, comes true.

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## UNDER THE MOTHER'S DIRECT GUIDANCE

*[What follows is a succinct chronicle of how Auroville connected to UNESCO during the Mother's lifetime, as recorded by Kailas Jhaveri in her autobiography 'I am with you'. Striking speeches by Dr. Malcolm Adiseshiah, UNESCO Deputy Director, and interviews with him are also reproduced in this section.]*

1965

During this time an offer came from Navajata<sup>1</sup> to work with him for The Mother's project of Auroville. I said: "I will do it only if The Mother wants me to do so. I will ask Her first." He said that he had already asked The Mother and She had told him: "It would be very good, if she is willing. She writes very well." I told The Mother that I would accept the work on condition that I was allowed to work directly with Her. To this She agreed.

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Sat, the name by which The Mother and I called Dr. Adiseshiah<sup>2</sup>, Deputy Director-General of UNESCO, wrote to me that he was coming to Bombay and asked me whether there was any possibility of my meeting him there. He told me that he would of course pay for the expenses involved. I wrote to The Mother about it and said:

"I am enclosing the UNESCO chronicle which outlines their project of Appreciation of Cultures under the East-West Major project to indicate how UNESCO can be helpful once we become an affiliated member. And I feel that my relationship with Sat cannot be simply personal, rather it has a wider significance perhaps for our work." The Mother marked the last sentence and replied on my letter:

**"This seems correct. At any rate you can go to meet him and see what happens. With love and blessings."** F1

1 The Secretary of the Sri Aurobindo Society, of which the Mother was the President.

2 Kailas knew Dr. Adiseshiah since her years in New York, where she worked at the United Nations' information department.

... This was my first meeting with him after I came to the Ashram. He asked me about my Ashram life. For, he felt that I was more suited for New York than for an Ashram life. I explained to him how our Ashram life was radically different from that of the traditional Ashram or religious convent and monastery since it was a spiritual endeavour to transform and reorganise life on the basis of the Truth of Existence. So, our Ashram included many of the activities of life. I explained to him that the Ashram came into existence after six years of The Mother's final arrival and it was a spontaneous creation as The Mother led the disciples towards the evolution of life which, as Sri Aurobindo said, 'would in the final end be moved by a higher spiritual consciousness and embody a greater life of the spirit.' Then, I talked about the concept of Auroville as an international city whose aim was to realise human unity in diversity. After hearing about the Auroville project, he felt that my decision to join the Ashram was perhaps right though difficult. I asked him if UNESCO could help in this project. He suggested that we should approach UNESCO through the government of India. I told him that we would not like the Indian government or UNESCO to interfere in our project. He then suggested that we should associate the Auroville project with UNESCO through the affiliation of the Society as a non-governmental organisation with UNESCO. It was a pleasant and fruitful meeting. When I reported to the Mother about our meeting, She was very pleased and gave me a meditation for about fifteen minutes. She said: *Très bien!* I did my pranams and got up. She gave me the flower of *Divine Grace* and I left. 27-31

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The first [Auroville] plot bought was an old custom office on the earlier border between the states of Pondicherry and Tamilnadu. The Mother gave the name of *Promesse* to this land, where some of the pioneers, inspired by Her vision, came to settle and participate in this work. In the beginning of the materialisation of this project I was sent to New Delhi to contact the important embassies and the ministries of our government. While I was doing this work, a telegram came from Navajata: "Mother approves your going to Bhopal and Lucknow. Sends blessings." Somehow I didn't feel like going to Bhopal and Lucknow,

so I returned. I was asked again by Navajata to go to different States of India – first to Gujarat – to raise funds for Auroville. I wrote to The Mother explaining my position and asked for Her guidance. Keeping the first page of my letter, She answered on the second page:

**“You are quite right – the time for running about is over for you and it is much better that you should remain here quietly. You can use my letter as a reply. With my love and blessings”.** 37-8, F2

## 1966

I was put in charge of the UNESCO Section of Sri Aurobindo Society, but practically, I had no office, no table, no chair, no almirah<sup>1</sup>, no typewriter, no secretary and no money. I learned to use any means available. For instance, I carried out my correspondence, using the Society’s typewriter after the office hours, sometimes working till after midnight and filing my papers at home in my Ashram almirahs. Sometimes I gave my papers for typing to Doreen, Navajata’s excellent secretary. She was faultless and superb in her execution. It seemed that I was given responsibilities, but sometimes I had to find my own means to carry them out. Even to go to Bombay, Madras, Delhi, or to Paris for the UNESCO conference, I had to find the finances or the transport needed. And the Divine provided me with whatever was needed from unexpected sources. Thus, I learned to depend on nothing and nobody except the Divine. This taught me never to worry or agitate but to keep my cool under all circumstances, with complete trust in the Divine Grace, knowing that the Divine is aware of every aspect of my needs, of what is to be done and how it is to be done. 84-5

Besides painting and work with Navajata, I did many compilations during this period. ‘The Reshaping of Humanity’ is one of the early ones which was published in the special issue on Culture, besides another one on ‘Culture, Peace and International Co-operation’ done for UNESCO which also came out in the same issue of *Mother India*<sup>2</sup>, September 1966. Besides, other important compilations on Auroville were: ‘Religion and Spirituality’, ‘On Human Unity,’ ‘The

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1 Cupboard.

2 The monthly cultural review of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

Aim of Auroville,’ ‘Matrimandir’, ‘Auroville and Education’ for the U.N.’s project of World University and Cultural Pavilions, ‘Sri Aurobindo and The Future,’ some of which will be seen later. Most of them were also printed later in the issues of *Mother India*. 90 Regarding the compilation on ‘Culture, Peace and International Co-operation’, which I did for UNESCO, there is an interesting comment of The Mother. Dr. Indrasen-ji had sent me a circular that had come from UNESCO asking affiliated organisations to submit a paper on this subject. I asked The Mother if I could prepare a compilation based on Sri Aurobindo’s and Her writings. She replied: “Leave me out. Sri Aurobindo is enough for UNESCO.” 104

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On the basis of my talk with Dr. Adiseshiah in 1965, I told the Mother that since Auroville was to be an international township, we should work for this project through UNESCO. For this I proposed that the Society should be affiliated with UNESCO as a non-governmental organisation. She appreciated this idea. So when Navajata was going to Delhi, I asked him to meet the President of the Indian National Council for UNESCO for this purpose. He came back and said that it was not possible since UNESCO did not accept affiliation with religious organisations. I said: “We are not a religious organisation but a spiritual one. We should explain them the difference between the two.” He said: “I put you in charge. You do it.” I prepared a paper on ‘Religion and Spirituality,’ pointing out the difference between the two in the light of Sri Aurobindo and stated that our aim covered the whole of life, its relationships and activities on the spiritual basis, the aim of Auroville being the realisation of Human Unity. To begin with we were admitted in 1966 to the ‘C’ category of relationship, which meant an exchange of information of our mutual activities. This was the beginning of a work that was to occupy a major part of my life in the Ashram until 1975.

I was asked to go to Delhi to contact the Embassies about the project of Auroville. In response The Mother sent me a card with the following words: “**Kailas, my love and blessings are with you.**” When I went to Delhi, it occurred to me that I needed some designation to approach

the Embassies. So, I wrote to Navajata. He sent me a telegram saying that the Mother had designated me as **‘Secretary-in-charge, UNESCO section.’** A second telegram arrived, conveying the Mother’s approval to contact the Ford Foundation for funds. F3 & 4

I contacted a few important embassies representing all the six continents. I also met Dr. Prem Kirpal, President of the Indian National Commission for UNESCO. Then, I worked together with Mr. Salah-El-Din Tewfik, UNESCO’s representative in New Delhi. He was from Egypt and we worked out a resolution for Auroville to be proposed by the Government of India for UNESCO’s General Conference in Paris. We offered the project of Auroville as a token of our collaboration with the aims of UNESCO for its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

I also met the director of the Ford Foundation. He responded enthusiastically to the project of Auroville, saying it was a unique one, adding: “Auroville has all the potential to contribute in a living way to peace, unity and international co-operation. But the Foundation cannot give the seed money. The project would have to go a little further in its implementation before it can be considered.”

Later, in 1966, Shree E. Pouschpa Dass from India, who was the Director of the Division of Cultural Development at UNESCO, eloquently presented the resolution which I had prepared with Salah-El-Din Tewfik. Here is the first resolution on Auroville, unanimously passed in November 1966 by the General Conference of UNESCO:

“The General Conference,

Being appraised that, in connection with the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of UNESCO, the Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry, India, a non-governmental organisation affiliated to the Indian National Commission for UNESCO, proposes to set up a cultural township known as ‘Auroville’ where people of different countries will live together in harmony in one community and engage in cultural, educational, scientific and other pursuits,

Noting that the township will have pavilions intended to represent the cultures of the world, not only intellectually but also by presenting different schools of architecture, painting, sculpture, music, etc. as part

of a way of living,

Appreciating that one of the aims of Auroville will be to bring together in close juxtaposition the values and ideals of different civilisations and cultures,

Expresses the belief that the project will contribute to international understanding and promotion of peace and commends it to those interested in UNESCO's ideals.”

Now towards the end of December of 1966, Dr. Adiseshiah gave me a surprise visit at noon from Madras and had lunch with me. He enquired about my life at the Ashram and I said that it suited me perfectly. I informed him about the progress of our new project of the international township of Auroville. 106-7

## 1967

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1967, Dr. Adiseshiah was coming to see me. I wrote to The Mother as follows:

“...Sat is coming here late tomorrow morning. Can I bring him to You in the afternoon? Shall we show him different departments of our activities? I know he would be interested. But is it possible to arrange it? I think he would be leaving the same day. Please advise. With joy in Thee, ever Thy own.”

The Mother answered thus:

**“As there is no time for both, better show him some activities than take him to me. Blessings.”**

So, I wrote again: “... I know that given a choice – rather Your Grace – Sat would like to see You first. And would it not give him a new vision of seeing things, activities and people around here! He is coming at 10:30 a.m. and I will certainly take him to our Centre of Education if Pavitra<sup>1</sup> agrees. For, that's the field he is most interested in. And I will ask him to come again before he leaves for Paris, which he himself would like to do since now he has become one of us, believing in our aim and ways of working. Would the Grace of The Mother permit me to bring him to Her presence? I know he would be grateful. With humility

<sup>1</sup> An early sadhak, whom the Mother had appointed director of the Centre of Education, and also general secretary of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

and love, Ever Thy own.”

The Mother replied:

**“If you come with him this morning at 11 o’clock, I shall see you.”** F5

I took him to The Mother and stood on one side as this was his first meeting with The Mother. A few minutes passed in silence as She concentrated. No words were spoken. But I felt as if the silent vibration of Her Force took the current of Her blessings to the highest and inmost depths of his being. He seemed to become visibly a changed person! She then called me and asked: “Would you take him to our Centre of Education?” I replied: “Certainly, Mother.” She then gave us each a rose and said: “*Au revoir!*” We said: “*Au revoir, Douce Mère!*” too and parted.

I showed him our Centre of Education and explained to him our free system of education, the ratio between the students and teacher being ten to one, at the most. I also told him that the freedom of choice was given with respect to certain subjects and the general emphasis was on the growth of the soul rather than on the academic standard. He was quite impressed with this new approach to education and the method of education which was true to the spirit of educating the best in the individual being. I also asked him if the Society could not be promoted to B category of consultative relationship with UNESCO in view of Auroville having been proposed as a project to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UNESCO in 1966. He said that we should do it through the Indian Delegation to UNESCO before the General Conference in 1968. 108-9

## 1968

On 24<sup>th</sup> January, 1968, I wrote to The Mother as follows:

“... I feel a sort of inner impulsion to see Sat before he leaves for Paris and perhaps bring him closer to You in his consciousness and love so that when he works for Auroville, he works for You. I do not say that I can achieve this by my unaided strength and I rely solely on Your Force which does not depend on this instrument either. But I ask only because I have been feeling this persistent impulsion since a few days. And I am prepared to go only if this is Your Will. Please advise. With loving



surrender, ever *Ta petite.*”

The Mother replied:

**“Your feeling is right. If you can meet him in Madras, go with my help and blessings, and do what you want to do. With love.”** F6

I went to Madras and met him. We discussed the project of Auroville and I informed him about the proposed foundation on the 28<sup>th</sup> February and the details of the ceremony to take place. He was very much impressed by The Mother’s vision and said that his best wishes were with us. Also I mentioned to him the importance of the following day, the 29<sup>th</sup> February, since it was on this day in 1956 that the Supramental Force and Light came down upon the earth. 123-4

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In 1968, we were preparing for the Foundation of Auroville. It was decided that a boy and a girl below twenty-five years of age would come from each country, carrying the soil and ribbons of the colours in the flag of their country. I wrote to The Mother on the twelfth January, 1968:

“...Navajata asked me this morning if I could go to Delhi for about five days and contact the different embassies regarding the participation of the youth of their respective country for the inauguration ceremony of Auroville planned for the 28<sup>th</sup> February. I write this because You told me that the time for running about was over for me. Personally, I feel that we have provided all the facilities and extended our hospitality. So their response has to be spontaneous. In fact some have already responded. Now, do You feel this to be necessary? ...”

The Mother replied:

**“You must go to Delhi only if you feel that you can do the work effectively and usefully. In any case, my blessings are with you.”** F7

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After seeing The Mother and receiving Her blessings, I went to Delhi to do my appointed work. I also invited Mr. Salah-El-Din Tewfik, the

UNESCO representative for India, to come for the inauguration of Auroville and its foundation ceremony. 125-6

... In the afternoon of the 28<sup>th</sup> [*on Auroville Foundation Day*], I took Salah-El-Din Tewfik to The Mother. I had sent The Mother's book of *Prayers and Meditations* to Her to be given to him. When he knelt before Her with joined hands, The Mother gave him this book and looked into his eyes. Then, She gave us the roses. When we returned to my house from the meeting, he confided to me: "I have never bowed to another human being. But when I looked at Her, very spontaneously my heart sang: 'Thou art the One! Thou art great! Thou alone art!'" This sacred salutation I give to no one else but to Allah during my prayer. Thank you for this meeting." He then opened the book and said: "Thank you again. I shall treasure this gift."

After the celebration and a luncheon gathering, the youth were called for a discussion in the afternoon. The most pertinent and interesting question asked was: "If there are no rules and no single authority, who would guide the project?" The Mother's answer is succinct and clear: "The Supreme Lord!" The second question was: "If people are not ruled by laws, how would there be order?" I remember very well that Salah-El-Din Tewfik spontaneously answered: "By obeying the Truth!" "How does one know the Truth?" was the next query. "Well, that is the supreme work that each individual is supposed to do freely, honestly and sincerely and with all the goodwill possible." The meeting ended by passing a resolution prepared by the Youth with the help of Salah-El-Din Tewfik.

In the evening a second general meeting took place where Mr. Tewfik addressed the gathering. He emphasised the aim of Auroville – Human Unity – and outlined its prominent features. He described how UNESCO was trying to achieve peace, unity and co-operation through science, culture and education. Quoting from the charter of UNESCO, he said: "Wars are made in the minds of men and so the defenses of peace must be constructed in the minds of men too." Then he spoke of some of the common objectives before Auroville and UNESCO for which a mutual collaboration was necessary.

Mrs. Satpathy proposed a resolution which I was asked to second. Before doing so, I pointed out that mind was not capable of solving the

problem of war and peace, nor of achieving human unity. What was needed was to ascend to a step higher than the mental consciousness, which even at best, is divisive and half-lit. So the aim of Auroville, as well as that of UNESCO for human unity, could only be realised by a change of consciousness, which is universal in its principle and the law of its action. Hence it was imperative to remember that though Auroville belonged to the whole of humanity, to live in Auroville one had to become “a willing servitor of the Divine Consciousness.” I then seconded the resolution. 129-30

*[Successively, Kailas forwarded to UNESCO a paper based on Sri Aurobindo's writings, “Auroville and the Ideal of Human Unity”. The International Cultural Pavilions project was mentioned for the first time. This paper is reproduced in the chapter “Auroville is education”.]*

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In March, I told The Mother about my idea of going to Delhi to meet Sat for my work for Auroville. She wrote to me on 6<sup>th</sup> March a very personal letter which She asked me not to reveal, giving me Her instructions to guide my action and put the seal of ‘all Her Love and Blessings,’ adding that the idea of going to Delhi for my work with UNESCO was good.

So, I went to Delhi and stayed with Mrs. Nandini Satpathy, then Minister of Information and Broadcasting. I contacted the President of the Indian National Commission for UNESCO, Mr. Prem Kirpal<sup>1</sup> and discussed with him the possibility of promoting the Society to the B category of affiliation, giving it a consultative status with UNESCO. I also worked with Mr. Tewfik for a second resolution on Auroville. Unquestionably, The Mother’s Force and guidance in everything was concretely felt throughout my stay and my work in Delhi.

Mr. Tewfik had invited me to the party he was giving for Dr. Adiseshiah. The car he sent for him picked me up too. There was a big gathering and we were as if divided between two groups: one around Dr. Adiseshiah and the other around me. Mr. Tewfik was moving from one to the other, assisting in the conversation. For the first time the invitees came to know about Auroville as an international township which was being developed

<sup>1</sup> President of the Indian National Commission for UNESCO.

on a spiritual basis. Mrs. Satpathy had also arranged a short talk on Auroville by Dr. Adiseshiah to introduce Auroville on television. He exalted the project beautifully and emphasised its importance both for India and for the world. 137-8

I began to feel that my work with UNESCO would come to an end later with Sat's retirement in 1970, so I wrote the following to be sure of my understanding:

“Mother Divine: Ever since I left the UNESCO work there is a constant pressure on me from all sides, and especially since the letters of X for a Design for Living and to U Thant for the World University, inviting a committee of educationists and our application for B category of relationship with UNESCO, all of which seemed undiplomatic and unnecessary...”

The Mother's reply came in large and bold handwriting:

**“Do not worry. After all it is the Supreme Lord who organises everything in you and in the others – and each one plays his role, convinced that it is the only Truth, while all are true in the Supreme. With love and blessings.” F8**

I wrote to The Mother on 4<sup>th</sup> December, 1968:

“...Your answer is so refreshing and reassuring. For in the depths of my heart I do not worry. I realise more and more how the Lord inspires and guides and moves everything so perfectly. ...”

Here is The Mother's beautiful reply:

**“Each one is meant to represent one aspect of the Truth which realises itself by the perfect union of all the aspects. But each individual has the possibility of becoming, by a conscious union with the Supreme, conscious of His Consciousness, and thus to know at once the part he has to play and the whole of the play. This is the supreme realisation. Blessings.” 145-7, F9**

In December 1968, Dr. Adiseshiah, Deputy Director-General of UNESCO, was invited as chairman of the conference on Adult Education

to be held in Pondicherry. He informed me about it. He planned to have dinner at my house on all the three days. I wrote a note to The Mother as follows:

“... In August Sat had written to me saying that he would be glad if he could see You when he comes to Pondicherry. He will be here for three days – 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> – but I don’t know when he would arrive on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Can he come to You on the 23<sup>rd</sup> or the 24<sup>th</sup>, any time at Your convenience?” The Mother asked Her attendant to mark 24<sup>th</sup> and write: **“At 10 a.m. with you.”** I asked further: “He would like to have dinner with me every evening. What is Your Will?”

The Mother told Her attendant to write: **“C’est bon. (It’s good).”** ...

I took him to The Mother in the morning of the 24<sup>th</sup>. He kneeled before Her after me. She looked into his eyes, concentrated and gave him a red rose and *The Divine’s Grace [flower]*. Then, The Mother gave me a white rose and *Satchidananda [flower]*. During the conference on Adult Education which he addressed as its chairman, he said besides many other things:

“If man’s purpose, as I believe, is to extend the limitless horizons of his mind and soul, to move forward from man the animal to man the divine, then there can be no interregnum, no hiatus in his upward, onward march. That march – slow, steep and tortuous – leads slowly but surely to his destiny.”

It was attended by Pavitra-da and André, The Mother’s son. When they reported on it to The Mother, She remarked:

**“He is very open to my Force. Many good things will come from his contact with Kailas.”**

A symposium on Auroville was to be held at the Theatre after the conference. So I wrote to The Mother, the day before the Symposium:

“... Navajata has asked me to give a ten-minute talk on Auroville and the Ideal of Human Unity for a radio-symposium on UNESCO and Auroville where Sat will be the moderator... I was very hesitant

since these days I feel shy about giving talks, but when he insisted, somehow I accepted it. Now I pray for Your guidance and blessings so that I be only an instrument of Your vision and voice. Ever with love and humility, *Ta petite.*” To this She wrote on the bottom of the letter:

**“It is all right. Love and blessings.”**

This symposium on Auroville was arranged by All India Radio, Pondicherry, on the 28<sup>th</sup> December, 1968. It was held in the Ashram Theatre. Dr. Adiseshiah was invited to chair it. Navajata gave an overall picture of Auroville. Kireet Joshi<sup>1</sup> spoke on Education in Auroville, Mrs. Anjani Dayananda<sup>2</sup> on Administration, Gilbert<sup>3</sup> on the international aspect of Auroville, Gloria<sup>4</sup> spoke on architecture and I spoke on the cultural aspect and human unity in Auroville on the spiritual basis. Dr. Adiseshiah summed up the presentations with these inspired comments:

“...Well my friends, does all this sound too good to be true? Do you feel what I felt when I first read Jules Verne? But Jules Verne has come true today with the successful visit of the three astronauts to the moon and their splash-down in the Pacific yesterday. And so a fiction, the spiritual fiction of Auroville that we have heard today is being built into a reality on this platform, in the audience and outside this audience...

I ask whether we go back with the feeling that this is too good to be true, that this is a vision, that this is an ideal, that this is a dream? Well, apart from what Apollo 8 demonstrated that yesterday’s dream is today’s reality, I want to tell you that one lesson that we are considering in the Conference and the Seminar that many others are attending on Adult Education, is that there is no alternative way we have heard of, if peace, unity, harmony are realisable, because we in UNESCO, and outside Auroville, have tried other ways of living together and we have seen them ending in stark tragedy. We are told that the precision bombing of London during the world war by the German aviators was possible, because the pilots were British Council Fellowship holders studying in Oxford, Cambridge and London, and

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1 At that time, the registrar of the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education.

2 The Chief Secretary of Pondicherry, and a member of the Auroville Administrative Committee.

3 An early Aurovilian, who paid for the early huts settlement in Aspiration.

4 An Aurovilian architect and the wife of Piero Ciconesi, the Italian architect who will be put in charge of the material execution of the Matrimandir.

knew precisely what to bomb, how to bomb and where to bomb.

We know that bringing people together, alas, does not lead to human unity and universal harmony. We also know that international understanding – when people begin really to understand – does not necessarily lead to peace and understanding. It is when Stalin understood what his other allies were after, from 1946 – after Potsdam, – and when the allies – the British, the Americans and the French – understood what Stalin was after, it is when there was a clearer understanding of each other’s motives and thoughts that the cold war was started.

We have tried in UNESCO, and the UNESCO world, which represents the plusses and the minuses of humanity, which represents the world as it is and not the world as it can be or should be, we have tried every way and we have failed.

And so now, we turn to Auroville, and to its foundation, the firm foundation on which its human unity, its universal harmony, is to be built. That foundation is Man, Man in all his glory, in his divinity, in his unfathomable depths which he can reach, and which Auroville will make it possible for man from everywhere... to achieve. It is not surprising therefore that UNESCO has embraced Auroville as a programme which embodies its major and fundamental purposes.

The fifteenth General Conference of UNESCO attended by its 125 member-states, which ended this month and from which I am coming almost directly to you, adopted unanimously the resolution, making Auroville the concern of every one of the member-states of the world and the responsibility of every man, woman and child in these member countries.

And so, on behalf of UNESCO, on behalf of all of you present here, and not present here, I hail Auroville, its conception and realisation as a hope for all of us, and particularly for our children, for our youth, who are disillusioned with the world that we have built for them, and who will find in Auroville as they found at the time of its foundation ceremony, a living symbol, inspiring them to live the life to which they are called.”

It was a significant and a memorable occasion. The Mother was very happy to hear about this event. Dr. Adiseshiah helped in promoting the project of Auroville in many ways, proving the truth of The Mother’s comment about him that many good things

would come out of his visit. The Mother was very particular about my relation with Dr. Adiseshiah, as we shall see later. 147-151

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Later in December of the same year, Dr. Adiseshiah had come to Delhi and I felt consistently that I should go and meet him, though I had no idea of the work to be done. So I wrote what I felt to The Mother and She replied as follows: **“All right. Love and blessings.”**

Well I had no money to fly to Delhi, but a friend, Purnima Hazarat, who was visiting the Ashram from Baroda asked me: “How much do you require?” I said: “At least 3000/-.” She spontaneously gave me the money. So I flew to Delhi and booked a room in the same hotel as Dr. Adiseshiah.

The following morning Nanda, a disciple of The Mother and Sri Aurobindo, who worked in the television section of Doordarshan, came to see me and said: “Kailas, do you know that Mrs. Nandini Satpathy, – then the Minister of Information and Broadcasting –, has arranged tomorrow an interview of Dr. Adiseshiah by Dr. Melville de Mello on Auroville?” I said: “No, but would you do me a favour? I would like to write the questions for this interview. Would you give them to Dr. de Mello?” He asked, laughing: “Do you know that Dr. de Mello is a very famous interviewer who has done many such interviews of diplomats and dignitaries like Nehru and others? I would be considered a fool to take questions to him, prepared by you or anybody else for that matter.” I said: “I know all that. But first of all, if anybody would be considered as a fool, it is I who would be so considered and not you. Would you not do it for The Mother?” He said: “I will do it if you so insist, but I don’t think it would work.” I said: “That’s a different matter. I will give you the questions tomorrow morning.” On this note we parted.

You would not believe, but I had an absolutely silent mind and ten questions came pouring down. I got them typed with two copies. When he came, I gave him the paper, and asked him: “If you would kindly do me another favour, I would be very thankful. Could you ask Dr. de Mello if I could be present at the interview?” He laughed again. Naturally, before these two great men I was nothing and nobody. But he agreed.



Now, when the car came to pick up Dr. Adiseshiah, it picked me up too. And I was sitting with Dr. de Mello across from Dr. Adiseshiah with a glass partition between us. Dr. de Mello asked every question I had put without a change of a single word except adding the word of address to Dr. Adiseshiah. The Mother's Force was concretely felt as he answered the questions, again proving The Mother's incisive perception.

At the end of the interview, I asked Dr. de Mello if I could have a copy of the tape of the interview. He was surprised at my request and said: "But, my dear, we do not let anyone have a copy before it is broadcast." I said: "I know that, but I would play it only before The Mother, I promise." He relented, but said: "We have to edit it. When are you leaving?" I said: "The day after tomorrow." He asked: "Are you coming to Mrs. Satpathy's party tonight? I will see if I can have it edited and bring it there for you." I said: "Yes! Thank you!" And we parted.

He brought the tape and gave it to me. ... Now I wanted to play the tape before The Mother and asked Her for an interview. She significantly called me on Mahasaraswati's day. ... Richard<sup>1</sup> and I went with a taperecorder and played the tape for Her. She listened to it attentively and even smiled as She heard the tape. She held my hands and said with a pleased look in Her eyes: "Kailas, do you know what I felt when I listened to the interview?" I was anxiously waiting to hear what She had to say. The Mother said with great force:

**"A very powerful being came down and tied Auroville to the ground. It was needed and he did it. Now, Auroville will be a reality and the world will see it."**

I could not be happier. I remained there for a few moments. She gave us roses and said: "*Au revoir.*" And we left. This interview was to be broadcast on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1969, the first anniversary of Auroville. It appeared later in the 1970 July issue of *Mother India*. ... 151-4

### **The Interview of Dr. Adiseshiah on Auroville**

*Melville de Mello*: Dr. Adiseshiah, we are very happy to welcome you once again to our studios. As you know, it is always a pleasure to be

<sup>1</sup> The ashramite Richard Pearson, Kailas' spiritual companion.

able to bring your voice, your views and your ideas to listeners in India. Now, at the Auroville-UNESCO Symposium in Pondicherry, you spoke of Auroville as a hope for humanity to come out of its present chaos. Would you like to elaborate on that statement of yours?

*Dr. Adiseshiah:* Yes, but first I want to reciprocate your kind words by greeting you and the people of India and thanking you all for the kindness I have received on this, my annual official visit to my own homeland as the Deputy Director General of UNESCO and to give the Government, the President, the Cabinet and the leaders and people of this country UNESCO's very good wishes for 1969. You have referred to what I said in Pondicherry at a symposium organised by AIR on Auroville, where I characterised Auroville, the plan and programme for an International City to be established on the outskirts of Pondicherry, as the hope for humanity, as a means of deliverance from the present chaos. The political chaos, I think, is evident. One has only to refer to Vietnam, to Biafra, to West Asia and no more to see that. In spite of the hopes of humanity embodied in the United Nations' Charter and the UNESCO Constitution, I don't think that since the end of the last War we have had one single day when the world has been free from war. The confusion in the economic and social realms is also obvious. This great country was host to Unctad, and I believe that Unctad was a demonstration of the economic confusion and the economic chaos in the world, where the curious spectacle of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer daily was demonstrated, and Unctad could do little about it. And so one could go on. And even education, which is the special domain of UNESCO, and deals with men's minds, with men's spirits – even education, as it has so far been practiced has not led to peace, has not led to harmony and understanding. The people who start wars are not the illiterate farmers, are not the ignorant workers in Europe or America, the people who burn buses and trams in our country are not the illiterates, and since the torch-bearer of this confusion is the educated elite, UNESCO's responsibility for seeing what kind of education should be developed is, therefore, an urgent one. And when I spoke of Auroville as being a hope, I had this very much in mind.

*Q.* You also said that by unanimously adopting the resolution on Auroville, the General Conference of UNESCO made the Auroville project the concern and responsibility of every man, woman and child in every one of its hundred and twenty five member-states. Now how

do you think this responsibility can be best fulfilled, and what steps will UNESCO take to stimulate the awareness of this concern in order to fulfill this responsibility?

*Dr. Adiseshiah:* Well, the first task here is for every member-state, and every man, woman, and child in the member-state, to understand Auroville as the international city where the ideals that we have been so long seeking for, of peace and harmony, of human unity, will be realised – realised very concretely, not simply as resolutions, as declarations, as flag-waving, but through the schools, through the colleges, through the workshops, through the factories, through the farms and through the international airports which will bring men and women from all over the world. So the first thing that UNESCO will help member-states to do – and is already doing – is to understand the Auroville programme, and then see what of this programme would be the responsibility of a government, or an organisation, or a university, or an individual.

*Q.* In the light of your experience of the present-day educational system, all over the world, what strikes you as unique in the proposed free-progress Auroville system of education?

*Dr. Adiseshiah:* The Auroville system of education, by the way, is not a paper plan; it is already being worked out in the International Centre of Education which is run by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry. If I am not mistaken, I think it has been run for the last twenty years. There, in that institution, the dream has become a reality, the dream of the pedagogue, the dream of the philosopher for the free development of the human mind, – for the absence of compulsion on the child, for a system of learning not ridden by the fear and the terror of the examination, – for seeking and searching for what a person, a child or an adult wants to know and not what he is forced to learn by a curriculum and syllabus which is out-dated, has no relation to the world we are living in. And the world we are living in is a world which is frighteningly progressive, frighteningly fast-moving. We had last month the splash-down of the three astronauts who have visited the moon; we had last week Zond-6 being sped on its way to Venus, and we had last night the docking of Soyuz-4 and Soyuz-5. Well, that is the kind of world we are living in, and the educational system that Auroville will have, which is now being already developed and perfected, is the system in which every man, woman and child will learn to live, and live to learn, freely and harmoniously.

*Q.* Sir, in view of the fact that UNESCO is intensifying its efforts in educational research and programmes, how do you think UNESCO should, could or would help in the Auroville project of a World University?

*Dr. Adiseshiah:* I must tell you frankly we have not come to that stage yet in UNESCO. We have not yet thought of a way through, of what we will do in the individual projects that constitute Auroville. But I can say that just as the basic pedagogy, the psychology and the spiritual foundation of the educational system of Auroville, which I have just referred to, is that of UNESCO, embodied in UNESCO's Charter which we are striving after, which we have not been able to realise elsewhere, so too is the programme for a World University where men and women at the highest level, the intellectual elite of the world, could be banded together, not to split the atom and produce new bombs, not simply to explore space in complete secrecy, but to explore the heart of man and the minds of men in order to promote knowledge, to build development in our under-developed countries in the third world, and to assure peace.

*Q.* It is said that Auroville, by its very ideology, architecture and aims, would present a spontaneous design of integrated living, the kind that is sought after in the UNESCO resolutions on the Design for Living. How far do you think this will be realised in Auroville?

*Dr. Adiseshiah:* Now you touch on another programme of UNESCO for which we are grateful to this country. It was at the International Symposium held here in 1966 in New Delhi, to commemorate the life and contribution of Jawaharlal Nehru, that this great programme called the 'Design for Living' was initiated. It is a programme, an inter-disciplinary, an international programme for restoring man's lost equilibrium with Nature. Well, we are making a start on this programme and it is our hope that Auroville will be one demonstration of this large programme which will once more restore to man his primacy over the world which he inhabits, and bring him into equilibrium with Nature and with his environment, whether it be the rural countryside or the urban living conditions which characterise so many of our countries.

*Q.* What gives you the hope that Auroville will be a site for material and spiritual researches and of endless progress as its Charter declares?

*Dr. Adiseshiah:* Well, I think it is the Aurovillians whom I met, that are the basis of my hope. They remind me of the astronauts and the cosmonauts, who, as you know, spend years training themselves for

the tremendous task that they have to undertake. The Aurovillians are the cosmonauts and astronauts of this new international city of hope, of development, of prosperity and of charity. And it is their spirit which I have seen for myself, the training which they are undergoing and the concrete pilot-work which they are doing now in actually digging the foundations of this great city, that are for me the basis of what you call my hope for Auroville.

*Q.* If I can project that question a little further, Sir, would you assess the importance of Auroville for India and the world?

*Dr. Adiseshiah:* For India, I believe that we need, as a country, everything that can help us to live together as a people with many different cultural backgrounds, religious backgrounds and social backgrounds. Our programme for national integration is one expression of this, and I believe that in Auroville we shall have yet another start, a start based on the fundamental unity of the human mind and of human consciousness for the flowering of the kind of unity which our country needs so desperately today. And I have no doubt that we will find it. I am not one who is discouraged or is pessimistic about our future in spite of the daily riots and strikes and difficulties – social, economic and political – that we face. I think this is a transitional phase. And in that phase I believe Auroville is one of the pilots that can lead us on to that land of unity where we can all join together in working for the development of our country which is our only and major task. As far as the world is concerned, in addition to development, the need for peace does not require any repeating on my part. I believe it is the peace passing beyond the economic and political arrangements on which the present uneasy truce relies, it is the peace based on the consciousness of men as men, the certainties in our hearts and spirits, on which Auroville and its programme are founded, that will assure the peace we are looking for in the world.

*Q.* Sir, in view of the vast programmes and importance of Auroville as a universal, cultural township, aiming to synthesise the cultures of all nations and paving a way for human unity, don't you think that UNESCO should give Auroville a corresponding importance and emphasis in its budgetary programme, especially when it is destined to play such an important part in the fate of humanity, showing a model way of living together in peace and progressive harmony?

*Dr. Adiseshiah:* Yes. I think what you are getting at is that UNESCO

should take the kind of action we have taken in the last five years in restoring the famous temples of Abu Simbel in Nubia in the United Arab Republic where we brought together over sixty countries which contributed forty million dollars for saving these precious monuments which belong to all mankind. Yes, I believe it will come, but it will come only when the member-states of UNESCO, and the men and women and children behind the member-states and the organisations in the member-states, begin to be conscious of the reality of Auroville. I would not rush an international campaign now for Auroville through UNESCO. It might, in the wrong way, at the wrong moment, provoke difficulties rather than help in the realisation of the ideals; for do not forget that when mankind came to save the Nubian monuments, the famous temples of Abu Simbel, it was at the last moment when they were going to be submerged. When, therefore, we shall reach such a stage, the world will turn towards Auroville, or rather the Aurovilles, because Auroville will have to spread, Auroville will not be confined simply to Pondicherry. If it is, it will fail. It will be a world movement, and when the critical moment comes, I have no doubt that UNESCO will take the kind of campaign leadership, which is implied by what you are asking me.

*Q.* Now what steps would you like the Government of India, as the sponsor of the Resolution, to take in order to fulfill its part in the responsibility?

*Dr. Adishesiah:* I have been talking to the Minister of Education, to members of the Planning Commission here, and I will mention this also to the President whom I am seeing tomorrow. I have talked to the Chief Minister of Madras and the Governor of Pondicherry. The first thing to do is to assign the land on which this International City is going to be built. This is the task for the Madras Government mainly, and the Pondicherry Government. And then, I think that the Government of India will have to come forward with a certain amount of financial contribution, as well as the fourteen State Governments, for erecting their state pavilions and the institutions which would be in the interest of this country. This is not simply charity, just for charity's sake; it will be in the interest of our country – educationally and economically – to develop Auroville.

*Q.* Sir, you said that UNESCO has embraced Auroville as one of its major programmes, which fulfils its fundamental aims and purposes. Now what does this imply as far as UNESCO's involvement in the

fulfillment of the Auroville project is concerned, and how far is UNESCO willing to finance the project or to raise the finances for its fulfillment?

*Dr. Adiseshiah:* I have already, I think, answered this, by the way, when I said I do not believe the financing by UNESCO is appropriate at this moment. We are just completing today one year of the foundation of Auroville, and we are proud of the fact that most of the member-states of UNESCO sent part of their soil, exactly a year ago, for the foundation ceremony. That symbolic action in giving a part of their land – land over which man through the ages has fought, fought bloodily, fought at the cost of the lives of many men and women and children – this free giving of a piece of their own land in the creation of a new city is a hopeful augury of the time when UNESCO and all its member-states would make their contribution – financial, material, and spiritual – for the building of Auroville.

*Melville de Mello:* Dr. Adiseshiah, thank you very much. 155-161

## 1969

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 1969 I wrote a letter to The Mother:

“... My first question is: ‘Is it still necessary for me to continue to do this work? Or has it come to a stage when it would go forward by its own momentum since Sat seems convinced about the merits of Auroville and the teachings of Sri Aurobindo, and has promised UNESCO’s support and cooperation? Can someone else like Jullie Medlock, Jay Smith or Anjani Dayanand take over? Or would my withdrawal affect Your work through Sat?’ (The Mother asked the attendant to underline the three names and write an emphatic *Non! Non!* And added: ‘**It is better if she continues**’). F10

I further asked: “I am asking this because for me to continue this work under the present circumstance by which I am constantly hindered, seems rather precarious and difficult – precarious because of his close relationship with me and difficult and time-consuming because of the distance. I am prepared to withdraw and do whatever work You may have for me with You. For I have only one joy in life: to love You totally and integrally, to serve You with a total self-giving without any reserve whatsoever and with perfect sincerity and surrender. I am absolutely

certain that I want nothing but what the Divine wills for me or His work to be done through me, and I am prepared for anything. (The Mother told Her attendant to put two lines against this paragraph and write: **‘That is why you can do better than others that work.’**)

So now, please tell me:

1. What is my true work – the mission with which I have come upon earth to serve You? (The Mother replied: **‘This is revealed’** – *au fur et à mesure que le travail est fait*– **‘gradually as the work is done’**).

2. What is the place of Sat in the fulfillment of this mission? (To this The Mother replied: **‘For the moment as it is’**).

3. What is my true relationship with Sat? How can I help him to realise his fulfillment and joy in You? (The Mother replied: **‘For the moment as it is’**).

4. How can all this be best realised? (**‘By being steady and quiet’** was The Mother’s comment). ...”

After receiving the replies to my question, I asked Her again: “You said that the truth of my relationship with Sat is ‘as it is for the moment,’ Now, if it is the truth, why for the moment?” Again, She gave me a cryptic reply:

**“You will know it *au fur et à mesure que tu progresses vers la Vérité.*”** (‘Gradually, as you progress towards the Truth’). 162-3

On 18 April, 1969 I wrote an official letter to Sat, informing him about the reply I had received from Mr. Prem Kirpal, President of the Indian Commission for UNESCO in New Delhi in response to my enquiry regarding the category A for the Society in relation to UNESCO:

“Dear Dr. Adiseshiah,

I just received a reply from Mr. Kirpal, excerpts from which I am giving below for your information and possible action: ‘If the request of the Society for category A status is on the agenda of the Board, I shall certainly give all my support and try to steer it successfully.

‘As Adiseshiah may have told you, an organisation has to apply for such status, giving full information and justification; the application is examined by UNESCO secretariat and the Director-General gives his recommendation; in each case the Board decides on the basis of the Director-General’s recommendation and his own views. I assume that in your case Adiseshiah has processed the case in the Secretariat



and formulated a favourable recommendation for the Director-General. If these steps have not been taken and the item is not on the Board's agenda, nothing can be done. As Vice-President of the Board and a member of the Committee of Non-Governmental Organisations, I shall be able to help after the preliminary steps have been taken.'

I hope you have received a copy of my letter to Mr. Kirpal regarding the change of status for the Society. I trust that you have taken all the necessary steps and this item is on the agenda of the Executive Board for its April meeting. A report on the Society's activities was sent to you in May 1968 for this purpose. I am now enclosing my paper on Auroville which was prepared for the last General Conference of UNESCO in November, 1968. I leave it all to your discretion. With best regards." 165-6

### **World University for Human Unity**

On 16<sup>th</sup> October, 1969 I wrote to The Mother:

"... I had a talk with Kireet on the U.N. project of the World University. On the one hand it seems better to work quietly by ourselves without bothering about this project. On the other hand, we felt that perhaps the time has come when we can no longer work in isolation inasmuch as the world around us is fast-moving and we wish to combine both these movements in our experiment. Personally, I feel that this project has come up on this large scale to celebrate the Centenary of Sri Aurobindo and fulfill one of his visions: human unity. I feel sure that He will preside over its execution. However, we realise that we cannot accept the U.N. project *unless we can have the freedom to work it out on our lines*. (The Mother affirmed this sentence by a gesture of nodding, wrote Kireet in the margin). But I see a line of action whereby it seems possible to secure the requisite freedom for our action. It is on the following basis. This being an educational project, the U.N. would undoubtedly consult UNESCO. And most probably Sat will represent UNESCO at the U.N. for this project. Inasmuch as Sat has publicly commended our Centre of Education as the only place where the dream has become a reality and affirmed that its pedagogy, its psychology and its spiritual foundation is that of UNESCO, embodied in its charter and which they are striving after but *they have not been able to realise anywhere else*, I feel that the opening has already been made for us and this project will be given to

us in the interest of the world. (The underlined passage was noted by The Mother).

Since Sat's remarks are based on our Centre of Education, we can demand the requisite freedom of action for the Auroville University only on the grounds that it will be an extension of our experimentation in the Centre of Education which has worked independently on the lines of Sri Aurobindo's teachings without any outside interference. And if they find that our experiment will fulfill the aims that they have in view – as the Deputy Director-General believes it will – they may collaborate in its development. This can be worked out through Sat without any difficulty.

Incidentally, since Sat is not so well-grounded in Sri Aurobindo's teachings and does not have the full picture of the practical side of our education, *I feel it would be best if he is assisted by Kireet*. I suggest Kireet for more than one reason, but also because Kireet and Sat have mutual liking and admiration for each other and they go very well together. Besides, the U.N. requires a person of great dynamism, strong conviction and indefatigable perseverance of will, and I can think of no other person better suited for the job who can handle it with equal keenness of mind and caution.” (The Mother remarked on the passage Kireet had underlined: ‘What does this mean? Does it mean that you have to go? For that is impossible.’ Kireet wrote Her reply in the margin).

Knowing the U.N. and its manner of work, its diplomacy and difficulties, it seems to me to be a crucial issue and I am aware that one would have to handle it with caution, but in spite of all the difficulties I can foresee, I am certain of Your victory. Is this Your Will? Do You feel that it would be good to link up the World University project of the U.N. and accept Auroville University *as an expansion of our Centre of Education?* Would You approve of our working on the lines suggested? I await Your reply and direction with all humility and surrender to Your Will.”

The Mother said:

**“It is not exactly like that. It is not an extension. It is a New Creation. The whole of Auroville is education. It is to teach how to live for the New Tomorrow.”**

### **The Design for Living**

Roger<sup>1</sup> had come to my house to discuss UNESCO's project of the Design for Living and Auroville since a letter was going in this regard to UNESCO. I told him about my views, but said that I would confirm my position only after I had written to The Mother and received Her answer. So, I wrote to Her:

“... Roger came to talk about Auroville and UNESCO. He told me about his talks with Pouschpa Dass<sup>2</sup> and Gilbert's trip to Delhi in that connection. I do not know if You would approve of my writing this, but since the matter came to my attention and Roger wanted me to give my views regarding it, I put before You what I feel impelled from within, not as a criticism, but as a concern. And I pray for Your forgiveness for any error of transgression. I have enquired with Navajata too on the subject and I am told that a decision has been taken to make Auroville a part of the project of Design for Living, sponsored by Ramesh Thaper and a few others, and that we are proposing to offer Auroville for their experiment, because it is believed that the Design for Living will be soon accepted as a Major Project by UNESCO and a huge sum of money is expected to flow to it.

I do not understand why we have to tag ourselves to somebody else's tail for the sake of money. It seems to me quite undignified, undiplomatic and uncalled for. I feel that it implies a lack of faith in the merits of our own project and the strength of Sri Aurobindo's vision and its sure action.

I do not see why Auroville should not be accepted on its merits by UNESCO, fulfilling its aims, when Sat as the Deputy Director-General has publicly expressed his strong convictions and the importance of Auroville, our International Centre of Education and the Ashram for India and the world and extolled them as the only hope for humanity.

Besides, I am told by Roger that in spite of all oppositions and great difficulties, he has been able to get the preliminary sanction of \$3,000 from the Executive Board of UNESCO as a token of their acceptance of Auroville. It seems to me most ironical that we have

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<sup>1</sup> Roger Anger, Mother's architect, whom in 1965 she asked to build her 'ideal town'.

<sup>2</sup> The Director of the Division of Cultural Development at UNESCO.

more faith in the Design for Living than in Auroville in spite of Your Force working with us all the time and that we are ready to make Auroville a part of the Design for Living project, thereby giving it a subsidiary position just for the sake of money! Somehow, I feel that this action is vitiated by our overdue concern for the money.

I have studied the Design for Living project and in spite of their good points and common objectives, Mother, I feel that our fundamental aims, approach and the basis of work are quite different from theirs and I am a bit apprehensive about unnecessary interference from them if Auroville is offered as a part of their project and experiment. And I feel that if any association must take place, it should be the Design for Living which should become a part of Auroville since our aims and objectives are much vaster and far-reaching than theirs, and the request must come from them or from UNESCO rather than us going after them.

This approach of ours at present seems to me quite undiplomatic and unnecessary – perhaps because I feel a strong possibility of UNESCO’s accepting Auroville as a Major project and taking the initiative for its fulfillment if Sat takes it upon himself to pursue and then the funds may be directed to Auroville. Would it not perhaps be wiser to work through the key persons of UNESCO – Sat, Tewfik, Kirpal, Pouschpa Dass – and explain them how Auroville embodies in its very ideology, conception and town planning the very objectives envisaged in the Design for Living and goes even further than those objectives to fulfill the larger aims, rather than running after Ramesh Thaper and asking them to accept Auroville as a part of their project?

But if you have approved of this approach, I must admit that the Design of the All-wise Diplomat still escapes me and I would be grateful for Your enlightenment on this subject.”

The Mother wrote Her reply on my letter:

**“I do not know who told you that – but there is a misunderstanding somewhere because to hand over the management of Auroville to any country or any group however big it may be is an absolute impossibility. If it has been at all taken, it is without my knowledge – because I say to it an emphatic NO.”**

F11

During my work for Auroville, I had to fight many battles for

my initiatives and course of action. For, I was often branded as impractical and a dreamer. I wrote to The Mother another letter, extracts of which are given below and Her enlightening reply: "... Somehow I feel, and Sat has assured me also, that Auroville will be accepted as a major project of UNESCO on its own merit since it embraces its most fundamental aims and purposes and UNESCO can take a campaign leadership for its fulfillment. But for that he said we must first help the Member-States to understand the ideology of Auroville and its programme, and then, UNESCO will make them aware of their concern and responsibility for its fulfillment. However, we have not done anything on those lines and nobody believes that UNESCO will accept Auroville as a major project. But if Sat, who has worked for it ever since its inception, can publicly admit, in spite of being its Deputy Director-General, that 'all other means to achieve peace and unity' have failed, that UNESCO and outside Auroville all have failed, and Auroville is a hope for humanity to come out of its present all-round chaos,' I don't understand the cause of this pessimism. But mine seems to be a cry in the wilderness. People have always accused me of being an immature idealist whose feet are not on the ground and who ignores the reality of the world as it is and whose ideas seem to them impracticable."

The Mother replied in the margin of my letter:

**"Your only preoccupation must be to be and to do only what the Divine wants you to be and to do. What the others think of you has absolutely no importance. With love and blessings."** 168-172, F12

### **U.N. World University proposal**

The most evident expression of Her Grace came in 1969, when the United Nations had asked UNESCO to establish a world university with a view to realise human unity. The latter had sent a circular to all their member-states and affiliated non-governmental organisations with consultative status, asking them to send a project report for this university. The letter was received by Navajata's office and unfortunately it remained on his table for a long time. Then he called a meeting of his committee members for Auroville: Roger Anger,

Yvonne Artaud, André, Norman Dowsett, Anjani Dayanand, Prem Malik, Shyamsundar and two Aurovillians to discuss the project. Prem admitted later in confidence that none of them had really a clue about what such a university should be, but certain ideas were discussed and sent to The Mother.

Two weeks were left before the deadline and Navajata came urgently to me, saying: “Kailas, we have to make a project-report on a World University for human unity in Auroville. Can you do it? It has to be sent to UNESCO within two weeks.” I said: “Bhai-ji (elder brother), I don’t know if I can do it at such a short notice.” So he said: “You need not worry, because you have just to prepare it on the basis of ideas already put forward to The Mother and approved by Her. I will send you all the papers.” I felt reluctant, but Navajata insisted that I do it. So, on the basis of what The Mother had already seen and approved of, a draft was sent as I always did for Her comments before dispatching it to UNESCO. I added that it was urgent. As you will see, I had to learn a great deal of The Mother’s way of working from this incident.

Well, I heard that when The Mother had it read out, She was furious! She threw the papers on the ground, asking: “Who has asked her to prepare such a report?” When I heard this, I was shaken to my bones and shattered to pieces. ...I went to the Samadhi and prayed to Sri Aurobindo to bring me out of this state of *Nihil* – Nothingness or void – and help me. ... I had the experience of absolute calm and confidence as Sri Aurobindo came to my help. My hands touched the appropriate book and I opened it on the page required where I found the material needed for my presentation. Ideas came pouring down and a vision was given to me. I worked without a break and extracts were found that perfectly fitted in. I prepared the whole project as guided by Sri Aurobindo and sent it to The Mother with this letter and a synopsis through Poornaprema (Françoise)<sup>1</sup>. ... [*The synopsis is reproduced in the chapter “World University for Human Unity and International Pavilions”.*] 235-8

This time the Mother, having heard the letter and the synopsis, wanted

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<sup>1</sup> The Mother’s granddaughter, at that time married to Roger Anger, the Mother’s architect.

to listen to the whole paper, keeping the usual Ashram departmental heads like Nolini-da, Counouma, Amrita and Navajata waiting outside. She listened with rapt attention to the whole report on Auroville and Education, which later came out in the *Mother India* issue of July 1970 [also reproduced in the chapter “World University for Human Unity and International Pavilions”]. The Mother was pleased. Pournaprema (Françoise) returned the synopsis and the papers, writing The Mother’s comment as follows:

*Chère Kailas*, about this, The Mother said: “*C’est très, très bien.*” (It is very, very good). F13

The Mother wrote to me separately: “**Kailas, it can be sent. Blessings**” F14

Later, André<sup>1</sup> commented on it in a short note to me: “The two papers, ‘Auroville and its raison d’être and Auroville and Education’ are excellent and it is a very good thing that they are on files at UNESCO and the U.N. Such is the last paragraph on Auroville. The beginning describes what should be any good system of education. Regarding Auroville University, it is a remarkable selection of Sri Aurobindo’s views on Human Unity....” 238-241

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Dr. Faure<sup>2</sup> was invited by UNESCO’s International Commission on Education to prepare a report for the project of the U.N. on World University. This was published in a book, entitled ‘Learning to Be’. It was sent to us and came to my attention. I wrote my comments and reflections on it to Dr. Adiseshia:

“I thought of preparing a commentary on the report with a view to initiate a basis of collaboration between UNESCO and Auroville International University, especially since Dr. Faure himself expressed in his letter to me the concord between the two. However, I believe that the concept of

<sup>1</sup> The Mother’s son, and a member of the Administrative Committee of Auroville.

<sup>2</sup> The former Prime Minister, and the Minister of Education of France at the time of the May 1968 crisis.

Auroville, its thesis and programme are better defined and go beyond the vision of this report. In my view, ‘a critical reflection and overall solution to the problems involved in the development of education in this changing universe’ offered here fall short of my expectations. I would be grateful for your advice in this matter. ... [*The full text is reproduced in the chapter “World University for Human Unity and International Cultural Pavilions”.*] 241-2

I asked The Mother through Kireet regarding Her approval of a letter to be sent to U Thant, the Secretary-General of the United Nations:

“... Kireet told me that You approve of the linking up of the World University Project of the U.N. with Auroville University, provided that we are given the requisite freedom of action to work it out on our own lines. On the other hand, I am told that a letter has been sent with Your approval to U Thant, asking them to accept Auroville University as a World University and to send their committee of experts to draw up with us a plan for Auroville University. I pray for Your forgiveness for any transgression in this note, but I write it because I fail to understand Your intention in this approval inasmuch as to me it seems to be a rather difficult and precarious approach, and may invite unnecessary interference. Besides, our direct action may place us as one among many applicants for the U.N. project. (The Mother asked Kireet to write Her answer as follows: ‘This is horrible. I did not know that Norman was to give the letter. It should be stopped’).

What I had in view when I sent my note with Kireet was to let UNESCO make this proposal to the U.N. in the interest of the world, which I felt could have given our project its due perspective and importance and at the same time would have left our hands free to work out our own plan. (To the suggestion of Kailas that the letter should be sent to Sat – UNESCO – and that he should present it to the U.N. The Mother said: ‘That is better’). ... 247-8

*[The letter that Kailas wrote to Mr. Jagbans Balbir, the head of the UNESCO Dept. of Education in Paris, to accompany her report on Auroville International University, and her answers to the “Questionnaire” are reproduced in the chapter “World University for Human Unity and International Cultural Pavilions”.]*



I received a reply on the 20<sup>th</sup> April, 1970 from Mr. Jagbans Balbir:

“I have the pleasure to inform you that your papers in connection with Education in Auroville and Auroville University have been carefully studied by me here. I appreciate the reflections that have gone into the preparation of these papers and the presentation inspired by great ideals of philosophy and education. These papers are all the more welcome at a time when the United Nations<sup>1</sup> and UNESCO are concerned with the implementation of the terms of the Resolution...

The overall emphasis on the orientation of the human mind to the exigencies of contemporary society both in the developed and developing countries is a valuable point. Auroville, as you point out, can indeed work to be a centre for the study and appreciation of ‘the cultures of the different regions of the world’ and by a select programme of intellectual activity, help individuals to become conscious of the wealth of the nation to which they belong and to surpass the natural frontiers in order to converge towards internationalisation of spirit....

The chapter on the Auroville University appears to me to contain many elements that could be useful for elaborating the concept of the United Nations’ University. The notes on the Integral Yoga and on Education have also retained our attention and would provide for a basis of a comparative reflection on the philosophy of education, if required. Please accept my warm thanks for providing us with all this material and be assured of our continued interest in your activities.” 257

**1970**

### **Change of Status for Sri Aurobindo Society (2)**

On 17<sup>th</sup> March, 1970, I wrote a letter to Prem Kirpal<sup>2</sup> concerning the promotion of the Sri Aurobindo Society in relation with UNESCO to the category A.

“Dear Mr. Kirpal, I have heard that your department of the NGOs’ relations with UNESCO in Paris had complained that there was not

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1 It should be noted that an internationally known renewable energy expert, Chamanlal Gupta, had obtained the Mother’s permission to attend in Stockholm the first United Nations’ conference, together with Roger Anger.

2 President of the Indian National Commission for UNESCO.

much progress in the Society's activities to promote it to the B category. I do not know by what yardstick UNESCO judges our progress, but to me, it seems to be a rather hasty judgement. And I bring it to your attention, because in response to my letter when you were in Hawaii, last year, you had written to me that as a Chairman of this Committee and as Vice-President of the Executive Board of UNESCO, you would do everything possible to put the Society in Category A.

I feel that the ideals and the cause we have in common with UNESCO are strengthened in a concrete way in one of the major activities of the Society<sup>1</sup>, namely Auroville, where an international community is spontaneously growing and a genuine experiment in international living is being carried out with the signal aspiration to manifest human unity in all actions, thoughts and feelings.

This township itself, as you know, is a major educational venture for humanity, involving activities in all fields of life, aiming at the complete transformation and reorganisation of life's activities and relationships at all levels. There is, one could say, a constant all-year round seminar going on with all participating at all levels and the problems of harmony are discussed, experimented upon and resolved at each stage in all fields of action in a most living way.

It seems to me that first of all, one must be aware of the problems and difficulties involved in the realisation of Auroville. On the external plane, if one had seen the arid, barren land that it was, when we launched our project, with no facilities either of roads, transport, electricity, water supply, or housing and observed the apathy and even antipathy as well as antagonistic attitudes in the communities of the villagers who were afraid of any change and were being exploited by their leaders and the politicians, and witnessed other such difficulties slowing down the progress – not to speak of the bureaucracy of the government and the slowness of their response – then, one would perhaps appreciate better whatever has been done in spite of it all.

Secondly, considering the heterogeneous groups of people involved in this work and the extreme contrast of their background – social,

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<sup>1</sup> The First World Conference of the Sri Aurobindo Society (of which the Mother was the President), held in Pondicherry from April 10 to April 14, 1964, attended by over 400 delegates from India and other countries, focused on human unity. The Conference opened with a message from the Mother, who had approved and blessed the entire program. One major decision was to build a town, at Pondicherry's outskirts, for people striving for new ways of life. Some months later the Mother will name this new town Auroville.

cultural, educational, traditional, religious and national – with an additional problem of language and communication, I feel that there is a considerable progress in introspection, experience and understanding on the level of the underlying unity. To me, this inner progress, the discovery of oneness, the appreciation of all cultures and an attempt at their synthesis in a living way seems very important. For, the aim of the Society is to realise a progressive universal harmony through a change of consciousness. ‘All other means have been tried everywhere and they have ended in a stark tragedy,’ as Dr. Adiseshiah explained. So, if the Society’s relationship with UNESCO is important for humanity, it is because the Society has the vision of Sri Aurobindo to guide it and the accumulated experience of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram over fifty years in the implementation of this vision, and the conviction of its success under the Mother’s guidance. The universal township of Auroville is an attempt to offer this opportunity to the whole of humanity and share with it the same experiment and its results on a larger scale for the realisation of human unity in diversity. And it was for this that a closer relationship with UNESCO was felt to be useful.

If, as Dr. Adiseshiah, Deputy Director-General of UNESCO, himself realised and explained, it is understood by all at UNESCO who believe in the glorious future of Man that Auroville is the hope of humanity to come out of its present chaos, I feel it should be deemed to be of mutual interest to have a more effective collaboration, for it will indeed further and fulfill in a true way the fundamental aims and purpose of UNESCO. If UNESCO can see and feel the strength of this vision offered to it and wish to share with us this pioneering labour of realisation in Auroville which gives a new dimension to UNESCO’s activities, we would indeed be most happy to have UNESCO’s constructive collaboration. This effort of the Society for the realisation of human unity, peace and progress of the human race through an endless education concomitant with the evolution aiming at the transcendence of the human consciousness, requires an understanding participation of all concerned. And so, being aware of your interest and concern, I leave it to you as the Vice-President of the executive board of UNESCO and the Chairman of the Committee on the Relations of the NGOs with UNESCO, to do as you see fit.”

In the same year I wrote a letter to Dr. Adiseshiah and also to Dr. Kirpal

since he was the vice-President of the Executive Board of UNESCO the following letter:

“It seems to me that in view of the importance of the project of Auroville for India and the world, UNESCO ought to officially accept Auroville as a Major project, effectively fulfilling its fundamental aims and purposes and initiate a leadership campaign for its development. Since Auroville has been dedicated to the whole of humanity and its aims and ideals are so vast and all-inclusive, it cannot be considered just a city proposed to be built in India. And when they have passed two resolutions on Auroville, expressing their faith, belief and confidence in it for fulfilling the aims of UNESCO, and have invited all the Member-States to participate in its development, I see no reason why such an initiative for some more concrete and active collaboration should not come from UNESCO.

Can they not do something substantial to support the project which will represent all cultures and the civilisations of all ages, and will be a living monument for the whole of humanity inasmuch as its emphasis is on the divine reality in Man and its full manifestation with a new consciousness that will transcend its still narrow and groping mental-ethical consciousness? Can we not put an equal emphasis on the future destiny of Man as we do on the glories of the past? Cannot the Executive Board propose such an initiative in the case of Auroville where its projects offer such an ample scope in which the highest aspirations of humanity and the aims of the U.N. and UNESCO can be fulfilled in a true and effective way?

Can you not convey and convince the Director-General that Auroville itself is a Design of Living which far surpasses what is envisaged in the project of UNESCO – that Auroville itself is a university (universe-city) which far exceeds what is proposed by U Thant in the U.N. project of the World University? For, how can one establish harmony with Nature and Man without first establishing the harmony within?

It is the aim of Auroville to realise progressive universal harmony on all levels of life, its relationships and its manifold activities. It is being built for a life of endless education and constant progress not only on the individual level but on a collective level too.

Auroville in its very conception, ideology and projects continuously presents a Design for Living which will ensure harmony within and

without – harmony between all parts of the being, harmony between Man and Nature, between man and man, between man and his community, between nations, between man and the world and the universe that envelopes, penetrates and influences him at each moment, harmony between Matter and Spirit, between the past, present and the future, between the inner aspirations of man and his external realisations.

Man, we believe, can never be in harmony with Man and Nature, unless he builds harmony within himself, cooperates with the aim of evolutionary Nature and constantly transcends himself. Auroville is therefore a Design for Living based on the change of consciousness. For, ‘to change the conditions without changing the consciousness is a vain chimera.’

Even architecturally, as you know, a free spirit of architectural innovation will be used in the different types of buildings in the four zones of Auroville so that there can be a constant intimacy between Man and Nature, between his work and his environment, between man and his community, between Man and God. For, the architectural conception of Auroville views man as an individual who yearns to commune with the Infinite in its infinite expressions and relations and it will offer an environment in which man can be alone with himself and with all at once in an environment of Beauty.

Could UNESCO see its way to use a substantial part of its funds for its various projects towards the development of Auroville where the aims of those very projects would be better fulfilled in Auroville and thus collaborate for its success, I believe something of a far-reaching consequence towards the fulfillment of the hopes and aspirations of humanity may very well be achieved even in our life-time.

Of course, I do understand the difficulties you mentioned in organisations like UNESCO with its rules and procedures and conventions. But knowing that you can tackle these problems, I feel emboldened to say that one can always question those conventions which impede progress, even if it means shaking the foundation of the old structure.

... In view of the coming Centenary of Sri Aurobindo in 1972, cannot UNESCO accept to undertake the leadership campaign for the development of Auroville as UNESCO’s responsibility in commemoration and as a homage to Sri Aurobindo who combines in his vision, his life and action all cultures, the best of the past, present and the future; who gives decisive answers to the problems of groping

humanity; who will not only deliver us from the present chaos, but lead us if we will with him to that future of Unity and Peace the world is desperately looking for, to the future of Knowledge beyond all conventions and ideologies, to a world of the New Creation and a new world order at the service of the Truth? For Supermind, towards which Sri Aurobindo leads us, is that further step in the evolution of Consciousness. Being the Truth-Consciousness, it harmonises all aspects of the Truth.

I believe Sri Aurobindo is the Future that humanity is secretly seeking to come out of its present chaos, for he gives us the vision and the way to consciously collaborate with the push of evolutionary Nature and thus hasten the advent of the Supermind, which alone can fulfill the highest aspirations of humanity for Freedom, Knowledge, Equality, Unity, endless Progress and invariable Bliss. Would it not be then a sign of mutual recognition of our efforts of goodwill and collaboration for the fulfillment of our common aims if UNESCO undertook its part of the responsibility for the development of Auroville and its various projects as a homage to Sri Aurobindo, who though born in India, represents the soul of humanity in all its glory? I am sure that you will do the needful to bring this to the attention of all concerned at UNESCO.”

Personally, Sat did many things to promote Auroville: printed the model of Auroville on his New Year greeting cards, included Auroville in UNESCO journals, gave television interviews in India and Paris, a radio interview in India, and supported the resolutions on Auroville.” 264-9.

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After Sat left UNESCO, I thought I could leave the work of Auroville in its relation with UNESCO. And I asked the Mother about it. But She did not respond. So, I wrote again:

“... Last evening, Anjani<sup>1</sup> asked me if I would work on drafting the resolution on Auroville for the UNESCO Conference so that Auroville may be accepted as its Major Project as Sat suggested that it could be. I feel that it would be best if we could link it with Sri Aurobindo’s

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<sup>1</sup> Anjani Dayanand, a member of the Administrative Committee of Auroville.

Centenary and it could be taken up by UNESCO as homage to Sri Aurobindo. However, I do not want to proceed on this matter until I know from You directly what is Your Will. I put this before You again because it seems to me that due to my work and study at the U.N. I know the procedures and the ways of their work, their strength and weakness perhaps a little more than anyone else here. And the work keeps coming to me in one form or another. Besides, when I told them about my feelings and approach to UNESCO's programme of 'Design for Living' and the World University, they did not agree with me. But Sat told them the same thing and I felt that perhaps it would save a lot of wasteful efforts on their part if I resumed this work. And while reconsidering the matter during this time, I felt that though the real work would always be within me, I can use the field of work for which I am trained for Your Work. I also remembered what You told me once that if I feel I can do the work effectively, I must do it. And I do feel often that I can do it, because You have given me the capacity to adapt to any situation and difficulties do not matter to me. Besides, I am prepared to do anything, provided it is Your Will. So, in view of Anjani's proposal, I ask again: 'What is Your Will? Is this the work You have chosen for me? Shall I resume the work with UNESCO or do You have something else for me to do? I have just finished the compilation work for the Centenary. I wait for Your reply with all humility and surrender. Ever with love, at Thy feet, *Ta petite.*'

The Mother replied in a corner of my letter:

**“Yes, do the work. It is all right. Do it with care and confidence, it will be what it has to be. Love and blessings.”** F15

She sent back my letter along with two flowers of *Divine's Presence* with Poornaprema (Françoise), saying: “If she asks, one represents the presence of Sri Aurobindo and the other represents mine.” 271-2

### **Preparations for Sri Aurobindo's Centenary in 1969-70**

The Centenary of Sri Aurobindo was approaching and we were preparing for its world-wide celebration through UNESCO. So, I put forward my proposal to The Mother, saying:

“This will include translations of Sri Aurobindo’s works in the major languages of the world, conferences, seminars, radio and television talks, lectures in universities, performances of Sri Aurobindo’s plays, opening of Sri Aurobindo Study Centres etc. A resolution will be put forward for UNESCO’s General Conference in October 1970, by the Government of India. Three months prior to this Conference, an introductory book on Sri Aurobindo’s life and vision will be distributed among the delegates to better acquaint people throughout the world with Sri Aurobindo’s contribution in each field of life’s activities.”

The Mother approved this, but wrote the following against my proposal for writing the details of Sri Aurobindo’s life:

**“Sri Aurobindo belongs to the future and all these details of the past are without interest and I have no time to do it.”** F16

When I asked Her whether this book should be a compilation of articles in Sri Aurobindo’s own words or writers’ introduction and presentation of Sri Aurobindo’s contribution, She replied that it should be a compilation in Sri Aurobindo’s own words. I proposed the following persons for collaboration, which The Mother sanctioned:

Rishabhchand	Integral yoga
Kireet Joshi	Metaphysics
Kailas Jhaveri	Indian Culture
Kishore Gandhi	Social and Political philosophy
K. D. Sethna (Amal Kiran)	Literature
Indra Sen	Psychology
Sisir Kumar Mitra	On India
Arindam Basu	Editor

So, I proposed this to each of the collaborators:

“The date of publication of the book is fixed for 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1970. It would be published by Sri Aurobindo Society in the Ashram Press, which would require one year’s time before publication. The editor would need at least a month and the final typing would take at least two months. So, the deadline for the material to be received would be June 1969. Each section is limited to 30-50 typed sheets. The book is intended to be kept within the limit of 250-300 pages. I hope that you will kindly



collaborate in this collective effort.” Everyone gave the manuscript in time. But in place of Amal, Tehmi undertook the subject of literature.

During this time I wanted to prepare a resolution on the Centenary of Sri Aurobindo. So, I asked The Mother if I could see Her. When She agreed, I prepared this resolution for Sri Aurobindo’s Centenary to be passed by UNESCO and took it to The Mother for Her comments. I told Her that I proposed it to be forwarded by the Indian Government or if possible, it could be presented by UNESCO. I read it out to Her:

“The General Conference of UNESCO,

Noting that 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1972 marks the Birth Centenary of Sri Aurobindo;

Certain of the importance of the vision and the work of Sri Aurobindo for the future of humanity;

Aware that the mental consciousness even at its highest is still a groping consciousness;

Recognising the value of the original contribution of Sri Aurobindo to the study of the evolutionary process and his diagnosis of the present crisis of mankind as an evolutionary crisis, necessitating the mutation of man into the next higher evolutionary species which would possess a new consciousness, the Truth-Consciousness, far exceeding the mental consciousness;

Convinced that mind is not the last summit of evolution and the supramental change is inevitable in the evolution of the earth-consciousness;

Realising that a perfected world cannot be created by men who are themselves imperfect and that to change the conditions without changing the consciousness is a vain chimera;

Believing that the future of humanity depends upon this change of consciousness;

Appreciating that the method proposed by Sri Aurobindo to realise peace, unity and progress is through this further step in the evolution of the mental consciousness into the Supramental Consciousness in which man will be universalised and perfected;

Confident that the integral and integrated education for self-transcendence, self-transformation and self-perfection as proposed by Sri Aurobindo is an indispensable means for fulfilling the highest

aspirations and aims of humanity in a true and effective way;

Certain that the integral, synthetic and unifying vision of Sri Aurobindo and his work for the manifestation of the Supramental Consciousness are decisive steps which will radically transform the earth-consciousness and bring about a new creation, a new world culture, and a new world order at the service of the Truth;

Appreciating Sri Aurobindo's insistence on the necessity of this radical transformation for the glorious future of humanity;

Affirming that Sri Aurobindo presents a new and secure hope to our perplexed and bewildered humanity;

Calls upon all the Member-States, National Commissions, Non-Governmental Organisations, International Agencies, Educational and Research Institutions, Cultural Organisation, Foundations, Mass Communication Agencies and all individuals everywhere to observe the period of 15<sup>th</sup> August 1972 to 15<sup>th</sup> August 1973 as the Sri Aurobindo Centenary Year and to that effect,

Urges them to undertake whichever of the following activities that may come within their scope:

- (i) to organise centres for the study of Sri Aurobindo's writings;
- (ii) to encourage and assist the publication of the major works of Sri Aurobindo in different languages of the world;
- (iii) to devote special issues to the writings of Sri Aurobindo;
- (iv) to organise meetings, talks, seminars, exhibitions, recitations, films and stage plays and any other means of communication to expound the integral and uplifting vision of Sri Aurobindo and its application in life;
- (v) to organise, collaborate and assist in every way possible activities which will implement the vision of Sri Aurobindo;
- (vi) to consciously collaborate with the aim of Nature by presenting and putting into practice the ideal of Sri Aurobindo for self-transcendence, self-transformation and self-perfection and thus to accelerate the manifestation of the new consciousness, the new creation and the new world order;
- (vii) to establish a Sri Aurobindo Memorial Fund for continuously supporting such activities as may be needed in order to prepare the earth for this new creation;
- (viii) to celebrate the Centenary of Sri Aurobindo in any other way befitting his glorious vision and his work for the future of humanity;

Authorises the Director-General to initiate and organise these activities and do whatever may be necessary for their execution, and

Requests the UNESCO Secretariat and all concerned to take every step necessary for the fulfillment of the terms of this resolution in homage to Sri Aurobindo.”

She listened to it carefully, nodded Her approval with a smile and said: “Excellent! It would be a good beginning for Sri Aurobindo’s work. Do you think they would accept it?” I said: “It has not been done up till now. But could not there be a new beginning?” The Mother laughed and said: “Do you mean UNESCO can change their established rules?” I said: “Why not? I intend to write to Sat and point out its value.” The Mother said: “*Bravo! Ma petite.*” Then, we meditated for ten minutes. She gave me a flower of *The New Creation* with a pink lotus, and said: “*Au revoir, ma petite!*”

The Mother had given me a special message for Sri Aurobindo’s Centenary for UNESCO:

**“An Avatar is not a human being although he has accepted to use a human body.”** 274-8, F17

I received a letter from Sat in September, informing me that India had already forwarded a milder resolution on Sri Aurobindo’s Centenary thinking that UNESCO was not ready for the strong one that I had prepared. Reacting strongly, I replied: “I am deeply concerned about the resolution on the Centenary of Sri Aurobindo that I proposed to you and would have liked it to be sponsored without any alteration. ...”

I wrote the following letter to the Director-General of UNESCO, Mr. René Maheu, on 15 October, 1970:

“Dear Director General,

Greetings from Sri Aurobindo Society and the young world!

Since you welcome the suggestions from the young people for the fulfillment of the aims of UNESCO and the future of humanity, I venture to present to you the enclosed resolution prepared and passed by the youth who came to the Foundation Ceremony of Auroville. I am also enclosing another draft resolution for Sri Aurobindo’s Centenary in 1972 along with a copy of the booklet, ‘*Sri Aurobindo and*

*The Future,* with this message of The Mother which might interest you:

**“An Avatar is not a human being although he has accepted to use a human body.”**

The booklet expounds the thesis contained in the introductory paragraphs of the resolution. I sincerely feel that it is the most thorough analysis of the crises of our age and traces the steps of the future terrestrial evolution towards which we are consciously or unconsciously moving. I take this opportunity to present it to you because I sincerely believe that we must realise the next stage of this evolution of consciousness, termed by Sri Aurobindo as the Supramental Consciousness which is the Truth-Consciousness, if we are to fulfill the golden dreams of our childhood and youth. Since in the words of the Deputy Director-General of UNESCO ‘all other means have been tried and have ended in stark tragedy,’ is it not time to try a new way? We trust that UNESCO will see its way clear under your able leadership and give it a chance to initiate a new way as proposed in this resolution. We hope that the enclosed resolution will be unanimously adopted.

With highest regards, sincerely”

I wrote another letter to the Director-General of UNESCO on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 1970, when I was informed about the contents of a draft resolution on the Centenary of Sri Aurobindo submitted by the government of India to UNESCO for inclusion on the agenda of the General Conference of UNESCO, the gist of which is given below:

“This draft resolution is a summary of the original one I had submitted, a copy of which for your information is enclosed once more. The summary was made, I am told, in deference to UNESCO. However, for the clarity of the presentation of the vision and work of Sri Aurobindo and its proper stress in view of its importance for the future of humanity with which Sri Aurobindo was concerned, I would like to submit the original one for your consideration and for that of the member-states of UNESCO. ... For the understanding of the value of Sri Aurobindo’s vision and his contribution I am again enclosing a little booklet, *Sri Aurobindo and the Future* which is a compilation of his writings from *The Life Divine*.

Looking forward to the collaboration from UNESCO under your able guidance and with highest regards...”

This letter and the draft resolution were read to The Mother and approved by Her. Copies of the same had been sent to the important persons connected with the Centenary programmes. My letter was passed on to the department concerned and I received an official letter from Mr. Behrstock, who seemed to be more concerned with their usual procedure in the matter than the merits of my unique proposal.

*[Following this, Kailas wrote two long letters to DR. Adiseshiah, stressing her reasons in support of the draft resolution she had written.]*

Sat replied that he could not help Navajata<sup>1</sup> in this matter since he did not approach him for guidance. And he could not insist on the Indian government for my draft, because they wanted unanimity. They also felt that Sri Aurobindo was not so well known even to most of the Indians to propose my draft, and it would unnecessarily complicate the matter.

I wrote to The Mother about Sat's reply concerning the Centenary of Sri Aurobindo. She replied:

**“Keep quiet and let him do what he thinks best. Blessings.”** 278-86, F18

### **Auroville Work in Paris: 1970**

In November 1970, Prem<sup>2</sup> and Roger were insisting that I should go to Paris for the General Conference of UNESCO before Dr. Adiseshiah retired. I had no such feeling. So, I felt like declining. They asked me to write to The Mother. I wrote on the sixth in French since the letter was to be read by Roger.... *[The English translation is as follows:]*

“... Prem and Roger have asked me to go to Paris, because they feel that it will be very useful if I could establish contacts with UNESCO and foreign delegations with the help of Sat. Besides, they feel that the time to do it is now since Sat leaves UNESCO definitively at the end of this year. ...”

The Mother replied on my letter:

<sup>1</sup> The Secretary of the Sri Aurobindo Society.

<sup>2</sup> Prem Malik, a member of the Administrative Committee of Auroville; he will eventually settle in Auromodel as an Aurovilian.

## **“Go there and do the needful. Love and blessings”.**

... I asked to see Her before I left for Paris. ... The Mother gave me an appointment at nine o'clock. As soon as I entered Her room, She smiled and asked me: “You don't like this state of silence? It is very good. People take years to silence their mind!” “But Mother, I do not know what I can do in this silent state of mind!” She burst out into Her most exquisite laughter and said: “I can work better through you now. It is very good, *ma petite*.” Then, I meditated with Her, after which She gave me flowers of the red lotus (*Avatar—The Supreme Manifested upon Earth in a Body*) and a blessing packet with Sri Aurobindo's photo on it. She said: “It is Sri Aurobindo who will work through you. Be confident. *Au revoir, ma petite!*” I said: “*Merci, Douce Mère. Au revoir!*” And I left. 287-90

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This was my first visit to Paris. ... I met Dr. Adiseshiah at UNESCO and he asked me to explain to him the subject of spirituality and the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo as well as his unique contribution to humanity as to a child. ... I was unexpectedly met by Georges, who worked for a television channel in Paris. He asked me if he could help me in any way. I asked him if he would do an interview with the Deputy Director-General of UNESCO, Dr. Adiseshiah, on Auroville for his channel. He agreed. Georges interviewed Dr. Adiseshiah in French and he answered the questions in French too. Later, I translated his answers in English and sent them to The Mother. She was very pleased with the interview since it carried Sri Aurobindo's Force and the message was conveyed not only to UNESCO but also to the general public. It was later published in the Ashram journal *Mother India*:

### **Excerpts from the interview of Dr. Adiseshiah on Auroville by French Television, Paris, 14<sup>th</sup> December, 1970**

In Auroville, I believe, all the different cultures of the world will be able to live harmoniously and fruitfully in unity. Auroville will give us all the possibility of a high level of life which will produce a new civilisation. The foundation of Auroville is a new kind of spirituality, a new consciousness which we lack in our world today. With this new

consciousness Auroville will have a sure basis for the development of society in all areas of life – social, economic, cultural, political, etc.

The unique importance of Auroville is that it will never cease to evolve. It will always grow towards an ever greater perfection. This will give us the possibility of infinite growth of the human spirit.

We have arrived everywhere in Europe – as in Asia, North America, Africa – at a stage which drives home to us the faith that there is no way forward for us except by a conscious spiritual development.

It is difficult for me to explain clearly all the implications of this new consciousness, but Sri Aurobindo has given in his works a concrete illustration or a crystallisation of the new Man with a new Consciousness. In our world the great error of our thought has been to divide our life between spiritual life and material life. But the great dream of Auroville, based on Sri Aurobindo's life-work, is to unite the two. With this reunion or marriage of Spirit with Matter we shall have truly the possibility of a new world and a new man, a universal and integral man. Auroville is an attempt to realise Sri Aurobindo's philosophy on the terrestrial plane: the integration of a total man.

In our great universities – Oxford, Cambridge, Sorbonne – and also in the Roman Catholic monasteries as well as in the temples of Islam, of Buddhism, etc. – we have tried to develop simultaneously the inner and the outer life but in its application the ideal has not gone deep enough, nor become integral. However, the genius of Auroville, based on Sri Aurobindo's vision, is the concept of a new man with a new consciousness that will unite Spirit and Matter.

I believe that in Auroville we shall have a true democracy that does not exist anywhere in the world; that has never existed before, even in the ancient cities of Greece – from where in the Occident we learned the democratic way of life – because theirs was a life based on slavery. In the great democratic countries also, we have many social problems which constitute a negation of the democratic life. In one third of the world, we have economic problems. Well, I think that true democracy does not yet exist anywhere.

In Auroville, however, all institutions, economic, social, cultural, based on the concept of the Integral Man with a new consciousness, will assure a true democracy where each person will have a special role in the decisions and actions of the township. And thus we shall also have a new form of political life. No person will be excluded from

Auroville because of his sex, age, colour, race, religion or nationality, or any other social or cultural accident. Auroville is open to all and not exclusive. As regards tax – the word which always evokes in me a feeling of compulsion and imposition – I believe that in Auroville, with this new consciousness, there will be no necessity of imposing any taxation. For everyone will naturally and voluntarily contribute to the welfare of all.

Our General Conference of UNESCO has thrice successively declared that the great project of Auroville is a profound expression of the spirit of UNESCO. On that basis, freely and unanimously adopted by 135 member-states of UNESCO, I believe that the moment has come for all the member-states of all the five continents, for all the voluntary organisations and most particularly for all individuals to help in the fulfillment of Auroville.

UNESCO, on its part, will certainly continue to give all the assistance of which this great project has need. I urge all – governments of the member-states, private societies, foundations, non-governmental organisations, specialised agencies – to observe the Sri Aurobindo Centenary Year which commences on August 15, 1972 and help the Sri Aurobindo Society in the development of Auroville in every way possible.

292-7

## 1971

I had written a reply to a letter of Mr. Pouschpa Dass [*the Director of the Division of Cultural Development at UNESCO*] on 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 1971:

“... I am enclosing for your information copies of my letter to Mr. Kirpal concerning our project of the cultural pavilions of all nations as well as a general letter regarding Auroville and UNESCO’s participation which might interest you. I do hope at the same time that you may be able to initiate some action through UNESCO for this project. I feel that India can take the initiative through this cultural project to lead the world towards peace and progressive universal harmony. For, I believe that a true Indian is by temperament and culture a universal being – integral and open-minded in his vision and synthetic in his attitude and action. And it would be truly marvellous if we could work together for these two main projects in Auroville: the International University and Cultural Pavilions.



I have asked Mr. Kirpal to consider a possibility of laying a foundation stone for the pavilions through the International Council for the Future of Cultural Relations, as well as through UNESCO. If this could be done on the 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1972, it will serve a dual purpose: the celebration of the Centenary of Sri Aurobindo and the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of India's Independence.

Since UNESCO has already passed three resolutions and Auroville was dedicated in commemoration of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of UNESCO, would it not be possible for UNESCO to initiate its participation through this project? Could you investigate ways and means of doing it? Can it not be done on governmental as well as non-governmental levels in whatever spontaneous way such participation may be possible? Can UNESCO not write to them on the basis of these resolutions? I do look forward to your frank comments and suggestions and hope to hear from you soon. With best wishes.”

I had also sent the following letter to The Mother:

“... I had a discussion with Sat concerning the Government of India's offer of Rs. 5 crores for a Sri Aurobindo University. It seems we could accept this offer for a university in Auroville. He asked me to discuss the various problems and possibilities in connection with it with Karan Singh<sup>1</sup> and Kothari. Sat will support it. May I try this with Your help and support? What is Your will and advice? Ever with love, *Ta petite*.”

The Mother's answer:

**“You can speak to Counouma<sup>2</sup> or André.”**

Well, neither of them saw the possibility or the necessity of another Sri Aurobindo University in Pondicherry. In spite of all these efforts on my part, neither the Indian Government nor Sri Aurobindo Society saw their way to put my proposed resolution on Sri Aurobindo Centenary through UNESCO's Executive Board or the General Conference and what was passed was a very mild resolution. And the book of compilations for the Centenary of Sri Aurobindo could not be published due to lack of funds. Well, I did my bit of *nishkama karma* (selfless service)! 297-9

<sup>1</sup> Appointed at eighteen as the regent of Jammu and Kashmir state, he later became the youngest-ever member of the Union Cabinet. He graduated with a thesis on Sri Aurobindo, prophet of Indian nationalism, and has served thrice as Chairman of the Auroville Foundation.

<sup>2</sup> A departmental head of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

## **Sri Aurobindo's Action**

Once there was a proposal about my going to Delhi to discuss our project of Cultural Pavilions with Mr. Kirpal with the help of Sat who would be there too. But somehow it could not work out due to a different position taken by one of the committee members.

I, as usual, put this before The Mother for Her guidance:

“... After Your reply concerning my proposed trip to Delhi to see Sat and Mr. Kirpal for our project of Cultural Pavilions, every one of the Committee members agreed that it was not only necessary, but urgent and the money should be provided for it. However, it was necessary to have the consent of X, who too agreed, but gave to Richard a different interpretation which made me uneasy to accept the money. Here is my report on the situation. X said: ‘Forget about Kirpal’s organisation [National Commission for UNESCO]. It does not mean anything for us.’ But Mother, he is not only the President of all the NGOs affiliated with UNESCO; he is also a member of the Executive Board of UNESCO. X continued: ‘But you can flatter him and use him for our work and ask him for a grant of \$35,000 from UNESCO for our Youth Festival.’

Mother, I do not say that there is no truth regarding the objectives X has in view, but my attitude and field of work and the manner and the approach to the person and the work are quite different. I can never say or do a thing unless I feel it to be true to me. Besides, UNESCO does not give cash money. It gives experts in a particular field or equipment needed for an approved project. Then, I was told that if I succeed in doing this, my trip would be worth spending the money. Mother, I can never think and plan in this way. ...

However, irrespective of such personal differences in our attitude, I trust X’s intentions and interest in Auroville. But when Richard asked for money, he was told: ‘What is the hurry?’ He replied: ‘Well, she wants to go early so that she can work with Dr. Adiseshiah and Mr. Kirpal together.’ To this X replied: ‘Tell Kailas that she is not going for Dr. Adiseshiah. He has left UNESCO and he is no longer important. She must keep her personal relationship and the work separate.’ ...

The Mother heard this with concentrated attention and said softly:

**“I have told Kailas not to go against her feelings. Sri Aurobindo is guiding her. She is open to His Force. But do not tell her this again unless she asks. Give her this blessing packet.” ...**

She had sent me back my letter with a blessing packet without writing a reply. But spontaneously, I said: “She did not say anything?” At that very moment, I was told what The Mother had said. 301-4

### **International Conference on Human Unity**

On the first of July [1971] I had sent a letter to Dr. Adiseshiah in relation to the International Conference on Human Unity we had planned for the celebration of Sri Aurobindo’s Centenary. He replied to me on the third of July:

“I have your letter of 1<sup>st</sup> July and the earlier note you sent me on the Sri Aurobindo Centenary Conference. On the Conference I have no suggestions to make, because I do not know enough of Sri Aurobindo’s writings. I have found that it is planned and organised along the right lines. I assume that you will have 200 to 250 delegates at the Conference, so that there could be six committees. Two of today’s crucial questions do not figure in the draft – namely, the question of war and peace and the question of poverty.

With regard to Auroville International University, my advice is that you should see and discuss the whole project with Mr. G. Parthsarthy, Vice-Chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He is also a member of the U.N. Secretary General’s Committee which is working on the World University project. He is also the member of the governing board of UNITAR and the member of UNESCO’s Committee on this project. The other groups with whom you should discuss this project are the Ministry of Education and the National Commission for UNESCO, in New Delhi.

As far as I am concerned, I have now left behind my concentration on Education. As I have explained to you, this promotional role which I took in UNESCO I have completed and therefore I have left that phase behind. I have no contact with UNESCO now. It is for the new team to carry forward its task. The same applies regarding my promotional role for Auroville. I had at no time thought of taking further responsibilities.”

I had prepared a paper on Human Unity for the proposed Conference of Sri Aurobindo Society and gave it to Dr. Adiseshiah for his comments and suggestions. He replied to me on the sixth September, 1971:

“I have read the working paper on the International Conference that you left with me. I find it clear, precise and of high quality. It provides an extremely clear working basis for the Conference and covers all aspects of man. There is probably need for another working paper to be written on Sri Aurobindo’s message on Human Unity in the midst of the crisis that we face in India and the underdeveloped countries. This crisis is more than a lack of harmony and imbalance between technical progress and spiritual resources. Such an imbalance is true of the western technological society. Our crisis in India and the other countries is the crisis of poverty and the accompaniment of unemployment and underdevelopment. What is the message of Sri Aurobindo on Human Unity in relation to this crisis? You might get an economist from the Society to develop such a paper.” 376-7

## 1972

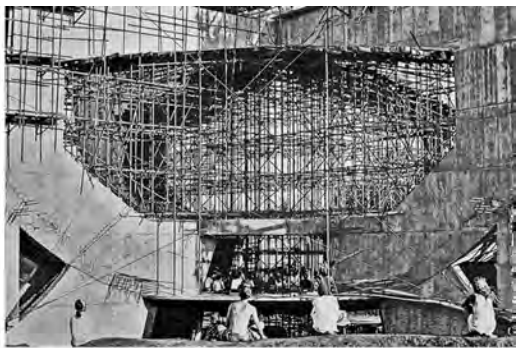
In 1972, I wrote to The Mother about the Resolution, introducing to UNESCO several other projects of Auroville, and The Mother replied:

**“Let Sat do as he feels – it is the best. With love and blessings.”** 382-3, F19

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*...On her forty-sixth birthday, Kailas met the Mother for the last time...*

The Mother softly caressed my head and I looked up to her softly smiling eyes... As I was about to go, She called me again and held my hands tightly. I bowed my head and She gave me a kiss of Her benedictions as if to make me feel Her constant Presence with me throughout my life, as if to see Her Light, guiding my vision for Her work, to sense in my body Her Divine Ananda coursing through my veins! I was in a trance and transfixed as She released my hands. I moved away slowly facing Her in an absolute blissful state without a word of exchange, not knowing that it was to be my last physical contact with Her.



## MESSAGES FROM THE MOTHER TO UNESCO

The task of giving a concrete form to Sri Aurobindo's vision was entrusted to the Mother. The creation of a new world, a new humanity, a new society expressing and embodying the new consciousness is the work she has undertaken. By the very nature of things, it is a collective ideal that calls for a collective effort so that it may be realised in the terms of an integral human perfection.

The Ashram founded and built by the Mother was the first step towards the accomplishment of this goal. The project of Auroville is the next step, more exterior, which seeks to widen the base of this attempt to establish harmony between soul and body, spirit and nature, heaven and earth, in the collective life of mankind.<sup>1</sup>

\*

An Avatar is not a human being although he has accepted to use a human body.<sup>2</sup>

\*

Auroville is meant to hasten the advent of the supramental Reality upon earth.

The help of all those who find the world is not as it ought to be is welcome.

Each one must know if he wants to associate with an old world ready for death, or to work for a new and better world preparing to be born.<sup>3</sup>

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1 MCWCE, XIII, p. 204. Written for a UNESCO committee in 1969. When the Mother reread this text, in 1972, she added "more exterior".

2 Special message for UNESCO in view of the celebrations for Sri Aurobindo's Centenary.

3 MCWCE, XIII, p. 221. Message for UNESCO, 1 February 1972.



## THE WORLD UNIVERSITY FOR HUMAN UNITY

*[After the Auroville Foundation Day Kailas Jhaveri forwarded to UNESCO the following paper, based on Sri Aurobindo's writings. The International Cultural Pavilions project is presented for the first time.]*

### **Auroville and the Ideal of Human Unity**

It has been customary to dwell on the division and difference between all nations and especially between the two sections or divisions of the human family – Orient and Occident – and even oppose them to each other; but in the light of Sri Aurobindo's vision, Auroville wants to insist on oneness and unity rather than on division and difference.

As far back as 1916, Sri Aurobindo wrote: 'In Europe and in India, respectively, the negation of the materialist and the refusal of the ascetic have sought to assert themselves as the sole truth and to dominate the conception of life. In India, if the result has been a great heaping up of the treasures of the spirit... or of some of them... it has also been a great bankruptcy of life. In Europe, the fullness of riches and the triumphant mastery of this world's powers and possessions have progressed towards an equal bankruptcy of the things of the spirit. Nor has the intellect, which sought the solution of all problems in the one term of Matter, found satisfaction in the answer that it has received.

However, East and West, Orient and Occident, have the same human nature, a common human destiny, the same aspiration after a greater perfection, the same seeking after something higher than itself, something towards which inwardly and even outwardly we move. There is a common hope, a common destiny, both spiritual and material, for which both are needed as co-workers. It is no longer towards division and difference that we should turn our minds, but on unity, union, even oneness necessary for the pursuit and realisation of the common ideal, the destined goal.'

Further on, Sri Aurobindo says: '...a one-sided world would be poorer for its uniformity and the monotone of the single culture. We must draw together, and reconcile all highest ways of thinking, feeling and living. Both tendencies therefore, the mental and the vital and the physical



stress of Europe or the Occident and the psychic impulse of India and the Orient are needed for the completeness of the human movement. Therefore the time grows ripe and the tendency of the world moves towards a new and comprehensive affirmation in thought and in inner and outer experience and to its corollary, a new and rich self-fulfillment in an integral human existence for the individual and the race.'

In Sri Aurobindo's view: 'What the modern spirit has sought for is the economic social ultimate – an ideal material organisation or civilisation and comfort, the use of reason and science and education for the generalisation of the utilitarian social being in a perfected economic society where it is hoped that he would subordinate his ego for the sake of the right arrangement of the life of the community. But it has not been found in experience whatever might have once been hoped that this can change man, nor can any amount of social and political adjustments help us to realise the unity of the human race enduringly or fruitfully. For the way humanity deals with an ideal is to be satisfied with it as an aspiration, which is for the most part left only as an aspiration, accepted only as a partial influence. The ideal is not allowed to mould the whole life, but only more or less to colour it.'

What is needed the most is not just a change of mind or heart or attitude, but a change of human consciousness. Unless man transcends himself and comes out of his egoistic and egocentric groove of life and limited consciousness, there is no hope for humanity. The future of the world depends on this change of consciousness. It is evident that this living sense of human oneness and practice of oneness in thought, feeling and action can only be achieved by the inner change or transformation of the egocentric human nature and by man's progression or evolution to a greater consciousness in which he is universalised and perfected. There is in the heart of each human being a deep and irresistible urge for universality and unity. In the welter of forces working in the world today, Auroville proposes to insist on the development of the psychological element as a saving factor so that it may grow much deeper into the roots of our being and become a central or dominant force or a natural spring of all actions.

As Sri Aurobindo says: 'It is only when man becomes aware of others not merely as brothers but as part of himself and he has learned to live in a large universal consciousness' that human unity can be realised.

Each human being is consciously or unconsciously seeking harmony

within himself and with his environment. But unless he realises the harmony within himself, it is impossible to realise or to create the conditions which are externally harmonious. In order to realise this harmony within, it is necessary to be aware of the nature and needs of the various parts and planes of one's being and to train and develop them around the central self. One of the primary aims of the world university of Auroville will be therefore to stress on the integral education of one's being.

Secondly, as the individual becomes conscious of himself and realises his true self as distinct from his egocentric and desire-self, not only the personality of the individual is naturally integrated around his true self, but he also grows in the awareness of himself as one with others and further realises others as part of himself. In this awareness of the essential human unity it is natural for him to harmonise his life with the life of the social aggregate and aid its growth and perfection, by which alone can he truly fulfill himself.

We are told by The Mother: 'Humanity is not the last step in terrestrial creation. Evolution continues and man will be surpassed.' In Auroville, the emphasis therefore will be on this evolutionary urge in each human being to transcend his egocentric and half-lit humanity so that he may grow beyond the faltering mental consciousness and step into the consciousness of the 'blazing sunlight of the Truth.' In this supramental consciousness there is a greater and spontaneous harmony and unity, because it is the Truth-Consciousness with an inherent and self-existent knowledge of everything.

This is the inevitable change of consciousness needed to solve all problems of discord and disharmony between individuals, between societies, and between individuals and the society or the nations. The future of mankind depends on this change of consciousness. The individual as well as the collective effort would be consciously dedicated towards the expediting of this process of evolution. Consequently, a complete reorganisation of life and its activities is envisaged in Auroville on the basis of this change of consciousness.

All the projects of Auroville will be oriented towards bringing about a change of consciousness, the realisation of human unity and the manifestation of progressive universal harmony. In the words of Sri Aurobindo: 'When we find this oneness, the principle of variation is not destroyed, but finds rather its justification. It is not by abolishing

ourselves, our special temperaments and power that we can get at the living oneness but by following out and raising it to its highest freedom and action.’

In conformity with this directive from Sri Aurobindo, the project of international cultural pavilions will bring the cultural heritage and the values of all nations and civilisations into close juxtaposition in order to help individuals to become conscious of the fundamental genius of the soul of the nation to which they belong and at the same time to put them into contact with the modes of living of other nations so that they may know and respect equally the spirit of all countries and realise the unity behind a multifarious diversity.

The first condition set to live in Auroville is to be convinced of the essential unity of mankind and the will to collaborate in the material realisation of that unity. Aspiring to be a centre of evolution and a place of constant progress and to be, in the words of its Charter, ‘a site of material and spiritual researches for the living embodiment of the actual human unity,’ Auroville will be a living symbol of the ideals and values cherished by all cultures and civilisations throughout the ages and hence our true and spontaneously living common cultural heritage.” 130-4

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*[“...Believing that the establishment of an international university, truly international in character, could contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Charter of the United Nations”: this was the object of the resolution that the General Assembly of the United Nations, of which U Thant was the Secretary-General, had passed on December 11, 1970; recalling its resolution of 13 December 1969, and recalling as well the Economic and Social Council resolution of 30 July 1970. Kailas reported, “...the United Nations had asked UNESCO to establish a world university with a view to realise human unity. The latter had sent a circular to all their member-states and affiliated non-governmental organisations with consultative status, asking them to send a project report for this university.” As a first response Kailas wrote a paper, reproduced below, which in 1970 was published in “Mother India”, the Sri Aurobindo Ashram’s cultural review, with the Mother’s approval. In her autobiography only the synopsis is reproduced.]*



## Auroville and Education

(This material, consisting of three parts, is compiled from the following books of Sri Aurobindo: *The Life Divine*, *The Human Cycle*, *The Ideal of Human Unity*, *War and Self Determination* and *The Foundations of Indian Culture*. There are also excerpts from the Mother's writings—her messages to the students and the teachers of the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, as well as other works of hers apropos of education and Auroville, including the Auroville Charter. These excerpts are either woven together with the passages from Sri Aurobindo or stand in a body on their own. Some introductory or connective sentences have been added here and there by the compiler to make the whole a running text appropriate to the theme.)

### *Compiler's Introduction*

Basically, we may say, "Auroville is Education"; for the educational future of the world is bound up with this growing City of Dawn where a new consciousness is to be variously "educated". But, for convenience's sake, we have three sections in the material compiled here. A paper on Auroville and its *raison d'être* precedes that on Auroville University, and one on Education and Research in Auroville succeeds it.

The first paper shows how Auroville with its ideology and the background of cultural pavilions of all nations of the world offers the right and unique conditions for a free search after the Truth and hence serves as a necessary basis for the fulfilment of the aims and objectives of the kind of university envisaged in the second paper.

This paper on Auroville University indicates its lines of researches, the vision behind them and the programme; its ideals and aspirations; its aims and objectives; its own unique contribution and its necessity for humanity. It is an attempt to sketch in brief the crisis of our age, the basic issue, the proposed solutions, the reason of their failures to end war and revolutions and to bring about peace, order and unity by systems of international law and control of armaments, education, ideal of brotherhood, religion, etc.; the true solution of all problems and the unique role of Auroville University, which to state very briefly—adapting some words of Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's—is as follows:

A perfected world cannot be created or composed by men who are themselves imperfect. The conditions under which men live are the results of their state of consciousness. ("Wars are made in the minds of men and it is therefore in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed." We go a step further and call for a change of consciousness which alone, we believe, can transform not only the mind, but all the other members of one's being, including the body itself.) To seek to change conditions without changing the consciousness is a vain chimera. For man is not a machine and cannot be changed by any machinery of laws, social, political, economic, religious, or moral. However, a change of consciousness can only be brought about by a conscious evolutionary process and an attempt at self-finding, self-perfection and self-transformation.

To be or to transcend and become something or to bring something high and noble into our being is the whole labour of the Force of Nature. Knowledge, thought, action, whether social, political, religious, ethical, economic or utilitarian cannot be the essence or object of life. They are activities of the powers of being or the powers of becoming, the dynamis of the Spirit and its means of discovering what it seeks to be. To be and to be fully is Nature's intention and the necessity in Man. To become complete in being, in consciousness of being, in force of being, in delight of being and to live in its integrated completeness is the perfect living. To be fully is to be universally, to be one with all...

All this implies that the function of the university in Auroville will not stop with providing conditions and facilities for the development of all the powers of one's being through the study of arts, humanities and sciences and their researches, which are a necessary part of the disciplines of university education. Through them all and above all, the true function of this university will be to bring forth from the inner potentialities of its students a new creation, the creation of a divine race.

The distinguishing feature of Auroville University will therefore be not only the researches into all that was and even all that exists and their synthesis—synthesis of all knowledge; synthesis of all aspects of the Truth; synthesis of all ideologies; synthesis of all realisations of the Past, Present and Future; synthesis of all cultures; synthesis of all nations, paving a way for the realisation of human unity in diversity, peace, development and progress in all parts of the world;

a bridge between Matter and Spirit or Science and Spirituality; a bridge between man's external realisations and his highest aspirations, etc. The unique contribution of Auroville University will be a new creation with a new culture that will be integral and universal, thus changing the whole life of the earth-consciousness and bringing about a new world order.

The aim of Auroville University will be always to move forward ceaselessly towards greater and greater perfection by an endless education, constant progress and a youth that never ages. We are confident that Auroville will provide the right and necessary conditions to make a full and free enquiry into the glorious future of the human race by a rich and vast synthesis of all our gains on the material and spiritual planes which will fulfill the highest and most noble aspirations of humanity everywhere.

### **Auroville: Its Raison d'Être**

At present mankind is undergoing an evolutionary crisis in which is concealed a choice of its destiny; for a stage has been reached in which the human mind has achieved in certain directions an enormous development while in others it stands arrested and bewildered and can no longer find its way. A structure of the external life has been raised up by man's ever-active mind and life-will, a structure of an unmanageable hugeness and complexity, for the service of his mental, vital, physical claims and urges, a complex political, social, administrative, economic, cultural machinery, an organised collective means for his intellectual, sensational, aesthetic and material satisfaction. Man has created a system of civilisation which has become too big for his limited mental capacity and understanding and his still more limited spiritual and moral capacity to utilise and manage, a too dangerous servant of his blundering ego and its appetites. For no greater seeing mind, no intuitive soul of knowledge has yet come to his surface of consciousness which could make this basic fullness of life a condition for the free growth of something that exceeded it.

This new fullness of the means of life might be, by its power for a release from the incessant unsatisfied stress of his economic and physical needs, an opportunity for the full pursuit of other and greater

aims surpassing the material existence, for the discovery of a higher truth and good and beauty, for the discovery of a greater and diviner spirit which would intervene and use life for a higher perfection of the being, but it is being used instead for the multiplication of new wants and an aggressive expansion of the collective ego.

Science has put at his disposal many potencies of the universal Force and has made the life of humanity materially one; but what uses this universal Force is a little human individual or communal ego with nothing universal in its light of knowledge or its movements, no inner sense or power which would create in this physical drawing together of the human world a true life unity, a mental unity or a spiritual oneness. All that is there is a chaos of clashing mental ideas, urges of individual and-collective physical want and need, vital claims and desires, impulses of an ignorant life-push, hungers and calls for life satisfaction of individuals, classes, nations, a rich fungus of political and social and economic nostrums and notions, a hustling medley of slogans and panaceas for which men are ready to oppress and be oppressed, to kill and be killed, to impose them somehow or other by the immense and too formidable means placed at his disposal, in the belief that this is his way out to something ideal.

The evolution of human mind and life must necessarily lead towards an increasing universality; but on a basis of ego and segmenting and dividing mind this opening to the universal can only create a vast pullulation of unaccorded ideas and impulses, a surge of enormous powers and desires, a chaotic mass of unassimilated and intermixed mental, vital and physical material of a larger existence which, because it is not taken up by a creative harmonising light of the spirit, must welter in a universalised confusion and discord out of which it is impossible to build a greater harmonic life. Man has harmonised life in the past by organised ideation and limitation; he has created societies based on fixed ideas or fixed customs, a fixed cultural system or an organic life-system, each with its own order; the throwing of all these into the melting-pot of a more and more intermingling life and a pouring in of ever new ideas and motives and possibilities call for a new, a greater consciousness to meet and master the increasing potentialities of existence and harmonise them.

Reason and Science can only help by standardising, by fixing everything into an artificially arranged and mechanised unity of



material life. A greater whole-being, whole-knowledge, whole-power is needed to weld all into a greater unity of whole-life. A life of unity, mutuality and harmony born of a deeper and wider truth of our being is the only truth of life that can successfully replace the imperfect mental constructions of the past which were a combination of association and regulated conflict, an accommodation of egos and interests grouped or dovetailed into each other to form a society, a consolidation by common general life-motives, a unification by need and the pressure of struggle with outside forces. It is such a change and such a reshaping of life for which humanity is blindly beginning to seek, now more and more with a sense that its very existence depends upon finding the way. The evolution of mind working upon life has developed an organisation of the activity of mind and use of Matter which can no longer be supported by human capacity without an inner change. An accommodation of the egocentric human individuality separative even in association, to a system of living which demands unity, perfect mutuality, harmony, is imperative. But because the burden which is being laid on mankind is too great for the present littleness of the human personality and its petty mind and small life-instincts, because it cannot operate the needed change, because it is using this new apparatus and organisation to serve the old infraspirtual and infrarational life-self of humanity, the destiny of the race seems to be heading dangerously, as if impatiently and in spite of itself, under the drive of the vital ego seized by colossal forces which are on the same scale as the huge mechanical organisation of life and scientific knowledge which it has evolved, a scale too large for its reason and will to handle, into a prolonged confusion and perilous crisis and darkness of violent shifting incertitude. Even if this turns out to be a passing phase or appearance and a tolerable structural accommodation is found which will enable mankind to proceed less catastrophically on its uncertain journey, this can only be a respite. For the problem is fundamental and in putting it evolutionary Nature in man is confronting herself with a critical choice which must one day be solved in the true sense if the race is to arrive or even to survive. The evolutionary nisis is pushing towards a development of the cosmic Force in terrestrial life which needs a larger mental and vital being to support it, a wider mind, a greater wider more conscious unanimsed Life-Soul, Anima, and that again

needs an unveiling of the supporting Soul and spiritual Self within to maintain it.

A rational and scientific formula of the vitalistic and materialistic human being and his life, a search for a perfected economic society and the democratic cults of the average man are all that the modern mind presents us in this crisis as a light for its solution. Whatever the truth supporting these ideas, this is clearly not enough *to meet the need of a humanity which is missioned to evolve beyond itself* or, at any rate, if it is to live, must evolve far beyond anything that it at present is. A life-instinct in the race and in the average man himself has felt the inadequacy and has been driving towards a reversal of values or a discovery of new values and a transfer of life to a new foundation. This has taken the form of an attempt to find a simple and ready-made basis of unity, mutuality, harmony for the common life, to enforce it by a suppression of the competitive clash of egos and so to arrive at a life of identity for the community in place of a life of difference. But to realise these desirable ends the means adopted have been the forcible and successful materialisation of a few restricted ideas or slogans enthroned to the exclusion of all other thought, the suppression of the mind of the individual, a mechanised compression of the elements of life, a mechanised unity and drive of the life-force, a coercion of man by the State, the substitution of the communal for the individual ego. The communal ego is idealised as the soul of the nation, the race, the community; but this is a colossal and may turn out to be a fatal error. A forced and imposed unanimity of mind, life, action raised to their highest tension under the drive of something which is thought to be greater, the collective soul, the collective life, is the formula found. But this obscure collective being is not the soul or self of the community; it is a life-force that rises from the subconscious and, if denied the light of guidance by the reason, can be driven only by dark massive forces which are powerful but dangerous for the race because they are alien to the conscious evolution of which man is the trustee and bearer. It is not in this direction that evolutionary Nature has pointed mankind; this is a reversion towards something that she had left behind her.

Another solution that is attempted reposes still on the materialistic reason and a unified organisation of the economic life of the race; but the method that is being employed is the same, a forced impression and imposed unanimity of mind and life and a mechanical organisation

of the communal existence. A unanimity of this kind can only be maintained by a compression of all freedom of thought and life, and that must bring about either the efficient stability of a termite civilisation or a drying up of the springs of life and a swift or slow decadence. *It is through the growth of consciousness that the collective soul and its life can become aware of itself and develop*; the free play of mind and life is essential for the growth of consciousness; for mind and life are the soul's only instrumentation until a higher instrumentation develops; they must not be inhibited in their action or rendered rigid, unplastic and unprogressive. The difficulties or disorders engendered by the growth of the individual mind and life cannot be healthily removed by the suppression of the individual; *the true cure can only be achieved by his progression to a greater consciousness in which he is fulfilled and perfected.*

An alternative solution is the development of an enlightened reason and will of the normal man consenting to a new socialised life in which he will subordinate his ego for the sake of the right arrangement of the life of the community. If we inquire how this radical change is to be brought about, two agencies seem to be suggested, the agency of a greater and better mental knowledge, right ideas, right information, right training of the social and civic individual and the agency of a new social machinery which will solve everything by the magic of the social machine cutting humanity into a better pattern. But it has not been found in experience, whatever might have once been hoped, that education and intellectual training by itself can change man; it only provides the human individual and collective ego with better information and a more efficient machinery for its self-affirmation, but leaves it the same unchanged human ego. Nor can human mind and life be cut into perfection,—even into what is thought to be perfection, a constructed substitute,—by any kind of social machinery; matter can be so cut, thought can be so cut, but in our human existence matter and thought are only instruments for the soul and the life-force. Machinery cannot form the soul and life-force into standardised shapes; it can at best coerce them, make soul and mind inert and stationary and regulate the life's outward action; but if this is to be effectively done, coercion and compression of the mind and life are indispensable and that again spells either unprogressive stability or decadence. The reasoning mind with its logical practicality has no other way of getting the better of

Nature's ambiguous and complex movements than a regulation and mechanisation of mind and life. If that is done, the soul of humanity will either have to recover its freedom and growth by a revolt and a destruction of the machine into whose grip it has been cast or escape by a withdrawal into itself and rejection of life. *Man's true way out is to discover his soul and its self-force and instrumentation* and replace by it both the mechanisation of mind and the ignorance and disorder of life-nature. But there would be little room and freedom for such a movement of self-discovery and self-effectuation in a closely regulated and mechanised social existence.

There is the possibility that in the swing back from a mechanistic idea of life and society the human mind may seek refuge in a return to the religious idea and a society governed or sanctioned by religion. But organised religion, though it can provide a means of inner uplift for the individual and preserve in it or behind it a way for his opening to spiritual experience, has not changed human life and society; it could not do so because, in governing society, it had to compromise with the lower parts of life and could not insist on the inner change of the whole being; it could insist only on a credal adherence, a formal acceptance of its ethical standards and a conformity to institution, ceremony and ritual. Religion as conceived can give a religio-ethical colour or surface tinge,—sometimes, if it maintains a strong kernel of inner experience, it can generalise to some extent an incomplete spiritual tendency, but it does not transform the race, it cannot create a new principle of the human existence. *A total spiritual direction given to the whole life and the whole nature can alone lift humanity beyond itself.* Another possible conception akin to the religious solution is the guidance of society by men of spiritual attainment, the brotherhood or unity of all in the faith or in the discipline, the spiritualisation of life and society by the taking up of the old machinery of life into such a unification or inventing a new machinery. This too has been attempted before without success; it was the original founding idea of more than one religion: but the human ego and vital nature were too strong for a religious idea working on the mind and by the mind to overcome its resistance. *It is only the full emergence of the soul, the full descent of the native light and power of the Spirit and the consequent replacement or transformation and uplifting of our insufficient mental and vital nature by a spiritual and supramental supernature that can effect this evolutionary miracle.*

At first sight this insistence on a radical change of nature might seem to put off all the hope of humanity to a distant evolutionary future; for the transcendence of our normal human nature, a transcendence of our mental, vital and physical being, has the appearance of an endeavour too high and difficult and at present, for man as he is, impossible. Even if it were so, it would still remain the sole possibility for the transmutation of life; for to hope for a true change of human life without a change of human nature is an irrational and unspiritual proposition; it is to ask for something unnatural and unreal, an impossible miracle. But what is demanded by this change is not something altogether distant, alien to our existence and radically impossible; for what has to be developed is there in our being and not something outside it: what evolutionary Nature presses for, is *an awakening to the knowledge of self, the discovery of self, the manifestation of the self and spirit within us and the release of its self-knowledge, its self-power, its native self-instrumentation*. It is, besides, a step for which the whole of evolution has been a preparation and which is brought closer at each crisis of human destiny when the mental and vital evolution of the being touches a point where intellect and vital force reach some acme of tension and there is a need either for them to collapse, to sink back into a torpor of defeat or a repose of unprogressive quiescence or to rend their way through the veil against which they are straining. What is necessary is that there should be a turn in humanity felt by some or many toward the vision of this change, a feeling of its imperative need, the sense of its possibility, the will to make it possible in themselves and to find the way. That trend is not absent and it must increase with the tension of the crisis in human world-destiny; the need of an escape or a solution, the feeling that there is no other solution than the spiritual cannot but grow and become more imperative under the urgency of critical circumstance. To that call in the being there must always be some answer in the Divine Reality and in Nature.

The conditions under which men live upon earth are the result of their state of consciousness. To seek to change conditions without changing the consciousness is a vain chimera. All who have had the perception of what could be and should be done to improve the situation, in the different domains of human life, economical, political, social, financial, educational or sanitary are precisely the individuals who have developed their consciousness more or less to an exceptional degree

and put themselves in contact with higher planes of consciousness. But their ideas remained on the whole theoretical; or, if an attempt was ever made to realise them practically, it always failed lamentably in the long or short run: for no human organisation can change radically unless human consciousness itself changes. Prophets of a new humanity have followed one another, religions, spiritual or social, have been created, their beginnings were at times full of promise: but, as humanity was not transformed at heart, the old errors arising from human nature itself have reappeared gradually and after a time it was found that one was left almost at the same spot from where one had started with so much hope and enthusiasm. In this effort, however, to improve human conditions there have always been two tendencies, which although apparently contrary to each other should rather be complementary and together work out the progress. One seeks a collective reorganisation, something that would lead towards an effective unity of mankind: the other declares that all progress is made first by the individual and insists that it is the individual who should be given conditions in which he can progress freely. Both are equally true and necessary, and our effort should be directed along both the lines. Collective progress and individual progress are interdependent. Before the individual can take a leap forward, it is necessary that something of an antecedent progress be achieved in the collective life. A way has therefore to be found whereby the twofold progress can go on simultaneously. It is in answer to this pressing need that the township of "AUROVILLE" is proposed as a Centre of Universal Education and Culture, so that the élite of humanity may be ready who would be able to work for the progressive unification of the race and who at the same time would be prepared to embody the new force descending upon earth to transform it.

The unity of the human race can be achieved neither through uniformity nor through domination and subjection. A synthetic organisation of all nations, each one occupying its own place in accordance with its own genius and the role it has to play in the whole, can alone effect a comprehensive and progressive unification which may have some chance of enduring. And if the synthesis is to be a living thing, the grouping should be done around a central idea as high and wide as possible, and in which all tendencies, even the most contradictory, would find their respective places. That idea is to give man the conditions of life necessary for preparing him to manifest the

new force that will create the race of tomorrow.

All urge of rivalry, all struggle for precedence and domination should disappear giving place to a will for harmonious organisation, for clear-sighted and effective collaboration. To make this possible, children from their very early age must be accustomed not merely to the idea but to its practice. The cultures of the different regions of the earth will be represented here in such a way as to be accessible to all, not merely intellectually, in ideas, theories, principles, and languages, but also vitally in habits and customs, in art under all forms—painting, sculpture, music, architecture, decoration and physically too through natural scenery, dress, games, sports, industries and food.

A kind of world-exhibition has to be organised in which all the countries will be represented in a concrete and living manner; the ideal is that every nation with a very definite culture would have a pavilion representing that culture, built on a model that most displays the habits of the country: it will exhibit the nation's most representative products, natural as well as manufactured, products also that best express its intellectual and artistic genius and its spiritual tendencies. Each nation would thus find a practical and concrete interest in cultural synthesis and collaborate in the work by taking over the charge of the pavilion that represents it. A lodging house also could be attached, large or small according to need, where students of the same nationality would be accommodated; they will thus enjoy the very culture of their own motherland, and at the same time receive at the centre the education which will introduce them as well to other cultures existing upon earth. Thus the international education will not be simply theoretical, on the school bench, but practical in all details of existence.

A general idea of the organisation is only given here: the application in details will be gradually carried out as the Township develops.

The first aim then will be to help individuals to become conscious of the fundamental genius of the nations to which they belong and at the same time to put them in contact with the modes of living of other nations so that they may know and respect equally the true spirit of all the countries upon earth. For all world organisation to be real and to be able to live, must be based upon mutual respect and understanding between nation and nation as well as between individual and individual. It is only in the collective order and organisation, in a collaboration based upon mutual good-will that lies the possibility of man being lifted

out of the painful chaos where he is now. It is with this aim and in this spirit that all human problems will be studied in “AUROVILLE”.

## **Auroville International University**

*I become what I see in myself. All that thought suggests to me, I can do. All that thought reveals in me I can become.*

A university by its very origin and nature is a universal institution, its boundaries conterminous with the boundaries of the universe.

But there are no boundaries to man’s insatiable thirst for Knowledge, his inexhaustible and ceaseless search after the Truth, his deep seeking for Beauty and Love, his secret aspiration to expand and become one with the universe, to touch, to feel, to experience and to enjoy the Infinite, to meet, to clasp and to possess the Eternal.

### **Progress**

#### **Towards the ‘Synthesis of Science and Spirituality**

Progress is the very heart of the significance of human life, for it means our evolution into a greater and richer being, and this our present age, by insisting on it, by forcing us to recognise it as our aim and our necessity, by making impossible hereafter the attempt to subsist in the dullness or gross beatitude of a stationary self-content, has done a precious service to the earth-life.

An unbiased view will regard this age of civilisation as an evolutionary stage, an imperfect but important turn of the human advance, where great gains have been made which are of the utmost value to ultimate perfection, even if they have been made at a great price. There is not only a greater generalisation of knowledge and the more thorough use of the intellectual power and activity in multiple fields; there is not only the advance of science and its application to the conquests of our environment, an immense apparatus of means, vast utilisations, endless minute conveniences, an irresistible machinery, a tireless exploitation of forces; there is, too, a certain development of powerful, if not high-pitched ideals and there is an attempt, however external and therefore imperfect, to bring them to bear upon the working of human society as a whole. Once restored to its true movement, the inner life of man will find that it has gained in materials, in power of plasticity, in a new kind of depth and wideness, a salutary habit of many-sided thoroughness and



a sincere endeavour to shape the outer collective life into an adequate image of our highest ideals.

*We, of the coming day, stand at the head of a new age of development which must lead to a new and a large synthesis of all truths everywhere.* To entrench ourselves within the bounds of any one ideology or system of thought, to adhere to any one theistic religion or social and political creed would be to limit ourselves and to attempt to create our life out of the being, knowledge and nature of others, instead of building it out of our own being and potentialities. A mass of new material is flowing to us from all sides. The luminous secrets of the Past, long lost to the consciousness of mankind, too, are breaking out again from behind the veil. We have not only to assimilate the influences of the great theistic religions of the world and recover their true meaning, their stuff of permanent truth constantly reshaped and developed in the inner thought and spiritual experience of developing humanity so that they may be of a living importance to mankind, but also we must take full account of the potent revelations of modern knowledge and seeking and equip ourselves with the advantages of science and technology.

### **Towards the Synthesis of Past, Present and Future**

*The Past is our foundation, the Present our material, and the Future our summit.* We should be the children of our glorious Past, possessors of the Present, and creators of the Future. We do not belong to the past dawns, but to the noons of the Future. In Auroville University, *it will be our attempt to evaluate the totality of the Past in relation to the potentialities of the Future.* All this points to a new, very rich and vast synthesis. A fresh and widely embracing harmonisation of our gains is therefore both an intellectual and a spiritual necessity of the Future. “Taking advantages of all discoveries from within and without,” Auroville aspires “to boldly spring towards future realisations,” thus building a bridge between outer eternal realisations and the highest inner aspirations.

### **Towards the Synthesis of All Cultures**

The aim of Auroville will be to promote research in order to enrich all cultures, and raise the level of spiritual and material life in all parts of the world and create a climate of understanding and appreciation of the values of all cultures and civilisations. But *Auroville anticipates a new creation with a new culture that will be synthetic and universal*

and will therefore include in its study and research at its University all the latest and future possible achievements and experiments of Science and Technology with an equal importance and emphasis on the revelations of spiritual research. And thus combining the two—Science and Spirituality—it will hew a new path for the Future of Peace, Knowledge, Unity and Progress. *East and West will meet from two opposite sides and merge into each other and found in the life of a unified humanity a common world culture and a common world order, obeying the law of the Truth.*

### **Towards Change and Reconstruction**

It is one of those vast critical moments in the life of the race when all is pressing towards change and reconstitution. The ideals of the Future, especially the ideals of freedom, equality, commonalty, unity, are demanding to be brought from their limited field in the spiritual life or the idealism of the few and to be given some beginning of a true soul of action and bodily shape in the life of the race. But banded against any such fulfilment there are powerful obstacles, and the greatest of them come not from outside but from within. For they are the old continued impulsions and obstinate recalcitrance of mankind's past nature, the almost total subjection of his normal mind to egoistic, vital and material interests and ambitions which make not for union but for strife and discord, the plausibilities of the practical reason which looks at the possibilities of the day and the morrow and shuts its eyes to the consequences of the day after, the habits of pretense and fiction which impel men and nations to pursue and forward their own interests under the camouflage of a specious idealism, a habit made up only partly of the diplomatic hypocrisy of politicians, but much more of a general half-voluntary self-deception and finally, the inrush of blinder unsatisfied forces and crude imperfect idealisms to take advantage of the unrest and dissatisfaction prevalent in such times and lay hold for a while on the life of mankind.

### **Peace**

*War and violent revolution can be eliminated, if we will, though not without immense difficulty, but on the condition that we get rid of the inner causes of war and injustice of which violent revolutions are the natural reactions. The limitations of armies and armaments, is an*

*illusory remedy.*

Even if there could be found an effective international means of control, it would cease to operate as soon as the clash of war actually came. The European conflict has shown that in the course of war, a country can be turned into a huge factory of arms and a nation convert its whole peaceful manhood into an army. The development of international law into an effective force which will restrain the egoism of individuals is another solution which still attracts and seems the most practicable to most when they seek to deal with the difficulties of the future. But not even the construction of a stronger international law with a more effective sanction behind it will be an indubitable or a perfect remedy.

*The real truth, the real cause of the failure is that internationalism is yet, except with some exceptional men, merely an idea; it is not yet a thing near to our vital feelings or otherwise a part of our psychology.*

What the modern spirit has sought for is the economic social ultimate,—an ideal material organisation of civilisation and comfort, the use of reason and science and education for the generalisation of a utilitarian rationality which will make the individual a perfected social being in a perfected economic society... It is hoped that by a radical change brought about through the agency of a greater and better mental knowledge, right ideas, right information, right training of the social and civic individual, he will subordinate his ego for the sake of the right arrangement of the life of the community. But it has not been found in experience, whatever might have once been hoped, that education and intellectual training by itself can change man; it only provides that human individual and collective ego with better information and a more efficient machinery, but leaves it the same unchanged human ego. For *the way that humanity deals with an ideal is to be satisfied with it as an aspiration which is for the most part left only as an aspiration, accepted only as a partial influence. The ideal is not allowed to mould the whole life, but only more or less to colour it...*

The idealist, the thinker, the philosopher, the poet and artist, even the moralist, all those who live much in ideas, when they come to grapple at close quarters with practical life seem to find themselves something at a loss and are constantly defeated in their endeavour to govern life by their ideas. But even the man who is capable of governing his life by ideas, who recognises, that is to say, that it ought to express clearly

conceived truths and principles of his being or of all beings and tries to find out or to know from others what these are, is not often capable of the highest, the free and disinterested use of his rational mind. As others are subjected to the tyranny of their interests, prejudices, instincts or passions, so he is subjected to the tyranny of ideas. Indeed, he turns his ideas into interests, obscures them with his prejudices and passions, and is unable to think freely about them, unable to distinguish their limits or the relation to them of other different and opposite ideas and the equal right of these also to existence. Ideals and idealists are necessary; ideals are the savour and sap of life, idealists the most powerful diviners and assistants of its purposes. But reduce your idea to a system and it at once begins to fail ... the ideas themselves are partial and insufficient; not only have they a very partial triumph, but if their success were complete, it would still disappoint, because they are not the whole truth of life and therefore cannot securely govern and perfect life.

*Life escapes from the formulas and systems which our reason labours to impose on it; it proclaims itself too complex, too full of infinite potentialities to be tyrannised over by the arbitrary intellect of man.*

*So long as war does not become psychologically impossible, it will remain or, if banished for a while, return.*

War itself, it is hoped, will end war; the expense, the horror, the butchery, the disturbance of tranquil life, the whole confused sanguinary madness of the thing has reached or will reach such colossal proportions that the human race will fling the monstrosity behind it in weariness and disgust. But weariness and disgust, horror and pity, even the opening of the eyes to reason by the practical facts of the waste of human life and energy and the harm and extravagance are not permanent factors; they last only while the lesson is fresh. Afterwards, there is forgetfulness; human nature recuperates itself and recovers the instincts that were temporarily dominated. A long peace, even a certain organisation of peace, may conceivably result, but so long as the heart of man remains what it is, the peace will come to an end; the organisation will break down under the stress of human passions.

We of today have not the excuse of ignorance since we have before us perfectly clear ideals and conditions. Freedom and unity, the self-determination of men and nations in the framework of a life drawn together by co-operation, comradeship, brotherhood if it may be, the acceptance of a close interrelation of the common aims and interests of

the race, an increasing oneness of human life in which we cannot deny any longer to others what we claim for ourselves,—are things of which we have formed a definite conception. The acknowledgement of them is there in the human mind, but not as yet any settled will to practise.

The question now put by evolving Nature to mankind is whether its existing international system, if system it can be called, a sort of provisional order maintained with constant evolutionary or revolutionary changes cannot be replaced by a willed and thought out fixed arrangement, *a true system, eventually a real unity—serving all the common interests of the earth's peoples.*

The hopes, the ideals, the aspirations that are abroad in mankind are themselves so many severe and pregnant questions put to us, not merely to our intelligence but to the spirit of our being and action... and the gain they will bring to humanity depends on the spirit which governs us during the time of their execution. For these ideals stand and they represent the greater aims of the spirit in men which through all denials obstacles and imperfections of his present incomplete nature knows always the perfection towards which it moves and the greatness of which it is capable. Circumstances and force and external necessity and past nature may still be too strong for us, but if the light of the ideal is kept burning in its flame of knowledge and its flame of power it will seize even on these things and create out of their evil its greater inevitable good. At present it may seem only an idea and a word unable to become a living reality, but it is the Idea and the Word expressing what was concealed in the Spirit which preside over the creation. The time will come when they will be able to seize on the Force that works and turn it into the instrument of a greater and fairer creation. The nearness or the distance of the time depends on the fidelity of the mind and will of man to the best that he sees and the insistence of his self-knowledge, unobsessed by subjection to the circumstances he suffers and the machinery he uses, to live out its truth within himself so that his environment may accept it and his outward life be shaped in its image.

## **Unity** **Internationalism**

The idea of humanity as a single race of beings with a common life and a common general interest is among the most characteristic and significant products of modern thought. It is founded on a view of

things which looks at man in his manhood only and casts away all those physical and social accidents of birth, rank, class, colour, creed, nationality, which have been erected into so many walls and screens behind which man has hidden himself from his fellowmen...

The height and nobility of the idea is not to be questioned and certainly a mankind which sets its life upon this basis would make a better, purer, more peaceful and enlightened race than anything we can hope to have at present. But as the human being is now made, the pure idea, though always a great power, is also afflicted by a general weakness. For man at present lives more in the outward than in the inward, is governed principally by his vital existence, sensations, feelings and customary mentality rather than by his higher thought-mind, and feels himself in this to be really alive, really to exist and be, while the world of Ideas is to him something remote and abstract and, however powerful and interesting in its way, not a living thing; the pure idea seems, until it is embodied in life, something not quite real; in that abstractness and remoteness lies its weakness... Life accepts it as a partial habit, but not completely, not quite sincerely.

In the crises of life it is the primary vital necessity which tells, while the other and remoter element betrays itself to be a mere idea not yet ready for accomplishment; it can only become powerful when it also becomes either a vital or a psychological necessity. A living sense of human oneness in thought, feeling and life must always remain the injunction of the Spirit within us to human life upon earth. The saving power needed is a new psychological factor which will at once make a united life necessary to humanity and force it to respect the principle of freedom.

### **Possibilities of Unification and their Shortcomings: Ego — the Chief Obstacle**

If we consider the *possibilities of a unification of the human race on political, administrative and economic lines*, we see that a certain sort of unity or first step towards it appears not only to be possible but to be more or less urgently demanded by an underlying spirit and sense of need in the race. This spirit has been created largely by increased mutual knowledge and close communication, partly by the development of wider and freer intellectual ideals and emotional sympathies in the progressive mind of the race...

The real strength of this new tendency is in its intellectual, idealistic and emotional parts. Its economic causes are partly permanent and therefore elements of strength and secure fulfilment, partly artificial and temporary and therefore elements of insecurity and weakness. The political incentives are the baser part in the amalgam; their presence may even vitiate the whole result and lead in the end to a necessary dissolution and reversal of whatever unity may be initially accomplished. *A common, intellectual, and cultural activity and progress may do much, but need not by themselves be sufficient to bring into being the fully powerful psychological factor that would be required.*

Individual and group harmonies of a comparative and qualified completeness are created, a social cohesion is accomplished; but in the mass, the relations formed are constantly marred by imperfect sympathy, imperfect understanding, gross misunderstandings, strife, discord, unhappiness. It cannot be otherwise so long as there is no true union of consciousness founded upon a nature of self-knowledge, inner mutual knowledge, inner realisation of unity, concord of our inner forces of being and inner forces of life. In our social building we labour to establish some approach to unity, mutuality, harmony, because without these things there can be no perfect social living, but what we build is a constructed unity, an association of interests and egos enforced by law and custom and imposing an artificial, constructed order in which the interests of some prevail over the interests of others and only a half-accepted, half-enforced, half-natural, half-artificial accommodation keeps the social whole in being. Between community and community there is still worse accommodation with a constant recurrence of the strife of collective ego with collective ego. This is the best that we can do and all our persistent readjustments of the social order can bring us nothing better than an imperfect structure of life.

### **Brotherhood**

Brotherhood is the real key to the triple gospel of the ideal of humanity—liberty, equality, fraternity. The union of liberty and equality can only be achieved by the power of human brotherhood and it cannot be founded on anything else. But *brotherhood exists only in the soul and by the soul; it can exist by*

*nothing else.* For this brotherhood is not a matter either of physical kinship or of vital association or of intellectual agreement. Only when man has developed not merely a fellow-feeling with all men, but a dominant sense of unity and commonality, *only when he is aware of them not merely as brothers—that is a fragile bond—but as parts of himself,* only when he has learned to live, not in his separate personal and communal ego-sense but in a large universal consciousness, can the phenomenon of war, with whatever weapons, pass out of his life without the possibility of return. Meanwhile that he should struggle even by illusions towards that end is an excellent sign; for it shows that the truth behind the illusion is pressing towards the hour when it may become manifest as reality.

Everything depends, first, upon the truth of our vision, secondly, upon the sincerity with which we apply it, last and especially, on the inwardness of our realisation. *Vain will be the mechanical construction of unity, if unity is not in the heart of the race and if it be made only a means for safeguarding and organising our interests.*

### **Change of Consciousness—the Solution**

No change of ideas or of the intellectual outlook upon life, no belief in God or Avatar or Prophet, no victorious science or liberating philosophy, no social scheme or system, no sort of machinery internal or external, can really bring about the great desire implanted in the race, true though that desire is in itself an the index of the goal to which we are being led. Because man is himself not a machine nor a device, but a being and a most complex one at that, therefore he cannot be saved by machinery; *only by an entire change which shall affect all the members of his being, can he be liberated from his discords and imperfections.* Until man in his heart is ready, a profound change of the world conditions cannot come; or it can only be brought about by force, physical force or else force of circumstances and that leaves all the real work to be done. A frame may have then been made, but the soul will have still to grow into that mechanical body.

### **Inner Perfection**

*The one safety for man lies in learning to live from within outward,*



*not depending on institutions and machinery to perfect him, but out of his growing inner perfection availing to shape a more perfect form and frame of life; for by this inwardness we shall best be able both to see the truth of the high things which we now only speak with our lips and form into outward intellectual constructions, and to apply their truth sincerely to all our outward living. It is through the growth of consciousness that the collective soul and its life can become aware of itself and develop; the free play of mind and life is essential for the growth of consciousness; for mind and life are the soul's only instrumentation until a higher instrumentation develops; they must not be inhibited in their action or rendered rigid, unplastic and unprogressive. The difficulties or disorders engendered by the growth of the individual mind and life cannot be healthily removed by the suppression of the individual; *the true cure can only be achieved by his progression to a greater consciousness in which he is fulfilled and perfected.**

Man's true freedom and perfection will come when the Spirit within bursts through the forms of mind and life and winging above to its own gnostic fiery heights of ether turns upon them from that light and flame to seize them and transform into its own image.

### **Difference between the Methods of Religion and Spirituality**

*Human society itself never seized on the discovery of the soul as a means for the discovery of the law of its own being or on a knowledge of the soul's true nature and need and its fulfilment as the right way of terrestrial perfection.* So far as it saw in religion a means of human salvation and perfection, it laid hands upon it at once to mechanise it, to catch the human soul and bind it on the wheels of socio-religious machinery, to impose on it in the place of spiritual freedom an imperious yoke and an iron prison. It saddled upon the religious life of man a Church, a priesthood and a mass of ceremonies and set over it a pack of watchdogs under the name of creeds and dogmas. *The supreme truths are neither the rigid conclusions of logical reasoning nor the affirmations of credal statements, but fruits of the soul's inner experience.*

So far as we really succeed in living for others, it is done by an inner spiritual force of love and sympathy; but the power and field

of effectuality of this force in us are small, the psychic movement that prompts it is incomplete, its action often ignorant because there is contact of mind and heart but our being does not embrace the being of others as ourselves. An external unity with others must always be an outward joining and association of external lives with a minor inner result; the mind and the heart attach their movements to this common life and the beings whom we meet there but the common external life remains the foundation,— the inward constructed unity, or so much of it as can persist in spite of mutual ignorance and discordant egoism, conflict of mind, conflict of heart, conflict of vital temperaments, conflict of interests, is a partial and insecure superstructure.

The spiritual consciousness, the spiritual life reverses this principle of building; it bases its action in the collective life upon an inner experience and inclusion of others in our own being, an inner sense and reality of oneness. *Spirituality respects the freedom of the human soul, because it is itself fulfilled by freedom; and the deepest meaning of freedom is the power to expand and grow towards perfection by the law of one's nature.*

### **Freedom and Mutuality**

Man does not actually live as an isolated king, nor can he grow by an isolated freedom. He grows by his relations with others and his freedom must exercise itself in a progressive self-harmonising with the freedom of his fellow-beings. *The law of our self-determination has to wed itself to the self-determination of others and to find the way to enact a real union through this mutuality.* But its basis can only be found within and not through any mechanical adjustment. It lies in the discovery within by the being in the course of his self-expansion and self-fulfilment that these things at every turn depend on the self-expansion and self-fulfilment of those around us, because we are secretly one being with them and one life. Each being has his own truth of independent self-realisation and his truth of self-realisation in the life of others and should feel, desire, help, participate more and more, as he grows in largeness and power, in the harmonious and natural growth of all the individual selves and all the collective selves of the one universal being.

That which we are has expressed itself through the individual,

but also through the universality, and though each has to fulfill itself in its own way, neither can succeed independently of the other. The society has no right to crush or efface the individual for its own better development or self-satisfaction; the individual, so long at least as he chooses to live in the world, has no right to disregard for the sake of his own solitary satisfaction and development his fellow-beings and to live at war with them or seek a selfishly isolated good...

For the only things that we can really call our rights are those conditions which are necessary to our free and sound development, and that again is our right because it is necessary to the development of the world and the fulfilment of the destiny of mankind.

The law for the individual is to perfect his individuality by free development from within, but to respect and to aid and be aided by the same free development in others. His law is to harmonise his life with the life of the social aggregate and to pour himself out as a force for growth and perfection on humanity. *The law for humanity is to pursue its upward evolution towards the finding and expression of its highest aspirations and perfection taking full advantage of the free development and the gains of all individuals and nations and groupings of men, to work towards the day when mankind may be really and not only ideally one family.*

The social evolution of the human race is necessarily a development of the relations between three constant factors: individuals, communities of various sorts and mankind. Each seeks its own fulfilment and satisfaction but each is compelled to develop them not independently but in relation to the others. *The perfect society will be that which most entirely favours the perfection of the individual; the perfection of the individual will be incomplete if it does not help towards the perfect state of the social aggregate to which he belongs and eventually to that of the largest possible human aggregate, the whole of a united humanity.*

The object of all society should be, therefore, and must become, as man grows conscious of his real being, nature and destiny and not as now only of a part of it, first to provide the conditions of life and growth by which individual Man,—not isolated men or a class or a privileged race, but all individual men according to their capacity,—and the race through the growth of its individuals may

travel towards this perfection. For civilisation can never be perfect or safe so long as, confining the cultered mentality to a small minority, it nourishes in its bosom a tremendous mass of ignorance, a multitude.

### **Towards World Union**

*Humanity is one, but different peoples are variant soul-forms of the common humanity. When we find the oneness, the principle of variation is not destroyed but finds rather its justification; it is not by abolishing ourselves, our own special temperament and power, that we can get at the living oneness, but by following it out and raising it to its highest possibilities of freedom and action. The nations should therefore become conscious not only of their own but of each other's genius and soul, and learn to respect, to help and to profit, not only economically and intellectually but subjectively and spiritually by each other. For the final end is a common world-culture in which each national culture should be, not merged into or fused with some other culture differing from it in principle or temperament, but evolved to its full power and could then profit to that end by all the others as well as give its gains and influences to them, all serving by their separateness and their interaction the common aim and idea of human perfection.*

The peoples of humanity must be allowed to group themselves according to their free-will and their natural affinities; no constraint or force could be allowed to compel an unwilling nation or distinct grouping of peoples to enter into another system or join itself or remain joined to it for the convenience, aggrandisement or political necessity of another people or even for the general convenience in disregard of its own wishes. *Unity would be the largest principle of life, but freedom would be its foundation-stone.*

Man's communities are formed not so much by the instinctive herding together of a number of individuals of the same genus or species as by local association, community of interests, and community of ideas; and these limits tend always to be overcome in the widening of human thoughts and sympathies brought about by the closer intermingling of the races, nations, interests, ideas, cultures. Still, if overcome in their separatism, they are not abolished in their fact, because they repose on an essential principle of Nature,—diversity in unity. And so, a free world union must in its very nature be a complex unity based on diversity and diversity must be based on self-determination.

*A spiritual oneness which would create a psychological oneness not dependent upon any intellectual or outward uniformity and compel a oneness of life not bound up with its mechanical means of unification, but ready always to enrich its secure unity by a free inner variation and a freely varied outer self-expression, this would be the basis for a higher type of human existence.*

Could such a realisation develop rapidly in mankind, we might then solve the problem of unification in a deeper and truer way from the inner truth to the outer forms. Until then, the attempt to bring it about by mechanical means must proceed. But the higher hope of humanity lies in the growing number of men who will realize this truth and seek to develop it in themselves, so that when the mind of man is ready to escape from its mechanical bent,—perhaps when it finds that its mechanical solutions are all temporary and disappointing,—the truth of the Spirit may step in and lead humanity to the path of its highest possible happiness and perfection.

The indwelling deity who presides over the destiny of the race has raised in men's mind and heart the idea, the hope of a new order which will replace the old unsatisfactory order, and substitute for it conditions of the world's life which will in the end have a reasonable chance of establishing permanent peace and well-being. This would for the first time turn into an assured fact the ideal of human unity which, cherished by a few, seemed for so long a noble chimera; then might be created a firm ground of peace and harmony and even a free room for the realisation of the highest human dreams, for the perfectibility of the race, a perfect society, a higher upward evolution of the human soul and human nature. It is for the men of our day and, at the most, of tomorrow to give the answer.

### **The Central Aim: New Creation A Race of Gnostic Beings—a Race of Gods**

*A perfected human world cannot be created by men or composed of men who are themselves imperfect.* Even if all our actions are scrupulously regulated by education or law or social or political machinery, what will be achieved is a regulated pattern of minds, a fabricated pattern of lives, a cultivated pattern of conduct; but a conformity of this kind cannot change, cannot re-create the man within, it cannot carve or cut out a

perfect soul or a perfect thinking man or a perfect or growing living being. For soul and mind and life are powers of being and can grow but cannot be cut out or made; an outer process or formation can assist or can express soul and mind and life but cannot create or develop it. One can indeed help the being to grow, not by an attempt at manufacture, but by throwing on it stimulating influences or by lending to it one's forces of soul or mind or life; but even so the growth must still come from within it, determining from there what shall be made of these influences and forces, and not from outside. This is the first truth that our creative zeal and aspiration have to learn, otherwise all our human endeavour is foredoomed to turn in a futile circle and can end only in a success that is a specious failure.

### **Self-transcendence and Self-fulfillment**

*To be or become something, to bring something into being is the whole labour of the force of Nature; to know, feel, do are subordinate energies that have a value because they help the being in its partial self-realisation to express what it is and help it too in its urge to express the still more not yet realised that it has to be. But knowledge, thought, action,—whether religious, ethical, political, social, economic, utilitarian or hedonistic, whether a mental, vital or physical form or construction of existence,—cannot be the essence or object of life; they are only activities of the powers of being or the powers of its becoming, dynamic symbols of itself, creations of the embodied spirit, its means of discovering or formulating what it seeks to be. The tendency of man's physical mind is to see otherwise and to turn the true method of things upside down, because it takes as essential or fundamental the surface forces or appearances of Nature; it accepts her creation by a visible or exterior process as the essence of her action and does not see that it is only a secondary appearance and covers a greater secret process.*

*To become ourselves is the one thing to be done; but the true ourselves is that which is within us, and to exceed our outer self of body, life and mind is the condition for this highest being, which is our true and divine being, to become self-revealed and active.*

To be and to be fully is Nature's aim in us; but *to be fully is to be wholly conscious of one's being*: unconsciousness, half consciousness or deficient consciousness is a state of being not in possession of itself; it is existence, but not fullness of being. To be aware wholly and

integrally of oneself and of all the truth of one's being is the necessary condition of true possession of existence. This self-awareness is what is meant by spiritual knowledge: the essence of spiritual knowledge is an intrinsic self-existent consciousness; all its action of knowledge, indeed all its action of any kind, must be that consciousness formulating itself. All other knowledge is consciousness oblivious of itself and striving to return to its own awareness of itself and its contents; it is self-ignorance labouring to transform itself back into self-knowledge.

But also, since consciousness carries in itself the force of existence, *to be fully is to have the intrinsic and integral force of one's being*; it is to come into possession of all one's force of self and of all its use. To be merely, without possessing the force of one's being or with a half-force or deficient force of it, is a mutilated or diminished existence; it is to exist, but it is not fullness of being. ... Power of self is the sign of the divinity of self. Lastly, *to be fully is to have the full delight of being*. Being without delight of being, without an entire delight of itself and all things is something neutral or diminished; it is existence, but it is not fullness of being. This delight too must be intrinsic, self-existent, automatic; it cannot be dependent on things outside itself: whatever it delights in, it makes part of itself, has the joy of it as part of its universality. All undelight, all pain and suffering are a sign of imperfection, of incompleteness; they arise from a division of being, an incompleteness of consciousness of being, an incompleteness of the force of being. To become complete in being, in consciousness of being, in force of being, in delight of being and to live in this integrated completeness is the divine living.

But again, *to be fully is to be universally*. To be in the limitations of a small restricted ego is to exist, but it is an imperfect existence: in its very nature it is to live in an incomplete consciousness, an incomplete force and delight of existence. It is to be less than oneself and it brings an inevitable subjection to ignorance, weakness and suffering: or even if by some divine composition of the nature it could exclude these things, it would be to live in a limited scope of existence, a limited consciousness and power and joy of existence. All being is one and to be fully is to be all that is. *To be in the being of all and to include all in one's being, to be conscious of the consciousness of all, to be integrated in force with the universal force, to carry all action and experience in oneself and feel it as one's own action and experience, to feel all selves*

*as one's own self, to feel all delight of being as one's own delight of being is a necessary condition of the integral divine living.*

But thus to be universally in the fullness and freedom of one's universality, one must be also transcendently. The spiritual fullness of the being is eternity; if one has not the consciousness of timeless eternal being, if one is dependent on body or embodied mind or embodied life, or dependent on this world or that world or on this condition of being or that condition of being, that is not the reality of self, not the fullness of our spiritual existence... But one must transcend not only the individual formula but the formula of the universe, for only so can either the individual or the universal existence find its own true being and a perfect harmonisation... Otherwise the individual may remain subject to the cosmic movement and its reactions and limitations and miss his entire spiritual freedom. He must enter into the supreme divine Reality, feel his oneness with it, live in it, be its self-creation: all his mind, life, physicality must be converted into terms of its Supernature; all his thought, feelings, actions must be determined by it and be it, its self-formation. All this can become complete in him only when he has evolved out of the Ignorance into the Knowledge and through the Knowledge into the supreme delight of existence; but some essentiality of these things and their sufficient instrumentation can come with the first spiritual change and culminate in the life of the gnostic supernature.

### **Adventure of Consciousness and Living**

*Education in Auroville will not be a mere acquisition of knowledge, of inert ideas and information, nor only the knowledge of the why and wherefore of the facts surrounding and pertinent to life, but an art of utilisation of knowledge, a living experience and an art of becoming.* And so, at Auroville University, life will be studied, experienced and experimented upon too, in its multifarious activities and its possibilities of infinite relationships. Auroville will be the place of an unending education, of constant progress and a youth that never ages.

To know, possess and be the divine being in an animal and egoistic consciousness, to convert our twilight or obscure physical mentality into the plenary supramental illumination, to build peace and a self-existent bliss where there is only a stress of transitory satisfactions besieged by physical pain and emotional suffering, to establish an infinite freedom in a world which presents itself as a group of mechanical necessities, to



discover and realise the immortal life in a body subjected to death and constant mutation,—this is offered to us as the manifestation of God in Matter and the goal of Nature in her terrestrial evolution. To the ordinary material intellect which takes its present organisation of consciousness for the limit of its possibilities, the direct contradiction of the unrealised ideals with the realised fact is a final argument against their validity. But if we take a more deliberate view of the world's workings, that direct opposition appears rather as part of Nature's profoundest method and the seal of her completest sanction.

For *all problems of existence are essentially problems of harmony*. They arise from the perception of an unsolved discord and the instinct of an undiscovered agreement or unity. To rest content with an unsolved discord is possible for the practical and more animal part of man, but impossible for his fully awakened mind, and usually, even his practical parts only escape from the general necessity either by shutting out the problem or by accepting a rough, utilitarian and unilluminated compromise. For essentially, all Nature seeks a harmony, life and matter in their own sphere as much as mind in the arrangement of its perceptions. The greater the apparent disorder of the materials offered or the apparent disparateness, even to irreconcilable opposition of the elements that have to be utilised, the stronger is the spur, and it drives towards a more subtle and puissant order than can normally be the result of a less difficult endeavour.

Science itself begins to dream of the physical conquest of death, expresses an insatiable thirst for knowledge, is working out something like a terrestrial omnipotence for humanity. Space and Time are contracting to the vanishing-point in its works, and it strives in a hundred ways to make man the master of circumstance and so lighten the fetters of causality. *The idea of limit, of the impossible begins to grow a little shadowy and it appears instead that whatever man constantly wills, he must in the end be able to do; for the consciousness in the race eventually finds the means.*

*Education is life in pursuit of the Truth in all its manifold aspects and a constant research for the harmonisation of these aspects, however disparate, opposite, contradictory or contrary. And life is an endless adventure of consciousness unto the Unknown, probing into its mysteries to constantly renew and enrich itself.*

*The Unknown is not the Unknowable; it need not remain the*

unknown for us, unless we choose ignorance or persist in our first limitations. For to all things that are not unknowable, all things in the universe, there correspond in that universe faculties which can take cognisance of them, and in man, the microcosm, these faculties are always existent and at a certain stage capable of development. We may choose not to develop them; where they are partially developed, we may discourage and impose on them a kind of atrophy. But, fundamentally, all possible knowledge is knowledge within the power of humanity.

## **Evolution**

### **Supramental Consciousness and New Faculties**

There is an ascending evolution in Nature which goes from the stone to the plant, from the plant to the animal, from the animal to man. Evolution continues and Man will be surpassed. For man is a transitional being living in a mental consciousness, but having the possibility of acquiring a new consciousness, the Truth-consciousness, and capable of living a life perfectly harmonious, good and beautiful, happy and fully conscious.

*One of the most important researches in Auroville will be regarding the principle and the process of evolution, which will be scientifically studied and will be used to expedite the next step of the evolution of the human race, to bring forth the latent faculties of Man and a change of consciousness.* For the future of humanity depends upon this change of consciousness. In this connection, the psychological discipline of the Yoga as developed and perfected by Sri Aurobindo will be studied as one of the primary and essential methods for a conscious evolution and a change of human consciousness, transcending the present limited and divisive, ego-centric mental consciousness of man. The new consciousness, which Sri Aurobindo terms the supramental consciousness or the Truth-consciousness, is consciousness creatrix of the world, a state of Knowledge and Will at once, with a clear vision of the totality and Power to effectuate its vision. It is the unifying consciousness because it views all things in a multiple unity.

To see things steadily and see them as a whole is not possible to the mind, but it is the very nature of the transcendent Supermind. The mind sees only a given time and space and views many possibilities pell-mell as all more or less realisable in that time

and space; the Supermind sees the whole extension of Time and Space and can embrace all the mind's possibilities and many more not visible to the mind, but without any error, groping or confusion; for it perceives each potentiality in its proper force, essential necessity, right relation to the others and the time, place and circumstance, both of its gradual and its ultimate realisation. There is a spontaneous harmony and unity of all knowledge and truths in this consciousness, because it is the Truth-consciousness with an inherent and self-existent Knowledge and Power to realise its vision.

Since the primary aim of Auroville is to establish the supreme harmony everywhere,—within the individual, in his relation with his fellow-beings, and his surroundings, the community, the nation and the world, between all aspects of the Truth, between Man, Nature and God, between the two poles of existence, Spirit and Matter,—and *to bring about a new creation and a new world order with a new culture, changing the whole life of the earth-consciousness*, this study and the possibility of the conscious advent of the new consciousness, its application to all problems of life, and its manifestation in all the activities and the manifold relationships of life, will be the most crucial research and the salient contribution of Auroville University.

## **Education and Research in Auroville**

The education of a child in Auroville will begin with the education of his mother. For the nature of the child depends very much upon the mother, her aspiration and will and upon the material surroundings in which she lives. In order to be able to educate the child, the first thing to do is to educate oneself, to be master of oneself, and to be oneself what one wants the child to be. One must always be very patient, and never be arbitrary, despotic or ill-tempered. The part of education that the mother has to go through is to see that her thoughts are always beautiful and pure, her feelings always noble and fine, her material surroundings as harmonious as possible.

In his formative years, the child in Auroville will grow through all sorts of work in play and play in work in an environment of love, understanding, freedom and flexibility, and through all that may interest him he will

be guided 1) to observe, to concentrate, to question and to experience; 2) to master a few languages which he can speak, read and understand with ease, including classical and international languages; 3) to develop the capacity to learn and to use the documentation. What is most important at this stage is for the child to develop the power of concentration and identification, self-confidence and readiness to learn more and more, the qualities of endurance, self-poise and persistence against difficulties and obstacles, truthfulness and courage, goodwill, generosity and nobility, sensitivity, right attitude and response to the light of the Truth.

He will not be stuffed therefore with academic courses and factual knowledge which he can always acquire later according to his aspiration and needs. As he grows, he will find for himself—or with the assistance of an adult who will be more of a friend than a teacher—what are his natural aptitudes and interests and what are the possibilities of widening the vistas of his knowledge and consciousness. He will develop the ability to reflect, to seek and discover for himself the truths by which he will live, and he will be helped to grow in him a tireless capacity for experimentation and innovation. He will also be aided by spiritually awakened persons who may, more by their example and living than by instructions, awaken him to the existence of the Divine Reality within him, his soul, to whom he can refer for true guidance in dealing with the problems of life. For ultimately, it is the soul which is the true teacher and Guide.

All efforts will therefore be directed to help the individual to become conscious of this true Guide within so that he may learn to follow as he grows an inner discipline proper to the aspirations of his soul, and not the discipline of others imposed on him by the conventions of the ordinary institutes and the society. The only indispensable quality required of a student as well as of a teacher—and of all Aurovilians—is the constant aspiration and the will to learn and to progress endlessly without fatigue towards a greater and greater perfection with a spontaneous joy in the effort for progress, not for obtaining a result, but for the love of the effort. This joy is realised and the energy for such an endless effort is obtained only when the soul is made the leader of the march. For the soul is ever in contact with the inexhaustible energy and the splendours of the Superconscient from which it derives its origin. All that one needs to do is to sincerely aspire and to open oneself to its influence in faith and with sincerity and confidence.

The centre of all education, of all teaching and training, of all learning, is Man, Man in all his glory, in his divinity. It must be the aim of education to make him the master of his destiny and the lord of his universe. All that is vital to the glorious Future of Man, he will learn in Auroville so that he may become Man the god, from Man the animal and Man the thinker.

Each human being has in him something divine, something his own and unique, a chance of perfection and strength in however small a sphere. But it is only when man rises at the summit of his ascent into a spiritual being that he can realise his divine manhood and manifest the Divine in all its glory of Love, Knowledge, Power and Perfection—the highest that he can dream of—whatever be his field of action. So, the fundamental aim of education in Auroville will be to put the individual in contact with his soul and then help him to find, in the light of his soul, his own indispensable place in the orchestra of the whole. Auroville hopes to provide the right conditions and environment as well as the full facilities to help the individual to bring out all that is best in him and to make it perfect for a noble use so that he may fulfill his unique role and his mission on earth.

The primary discipline necessary for this is for the individual to observe and become conscious of himself, conscious of all the instruments of his being—physical, vital, mental, psychic and spiritual—and their workings, to develop, transform and organise them around the divine centre of his being. It is through the psychic presence that the individual comes into contact with the truth of his being. In most cases this presence acts, so to say, from behind the veil, unrecognised and unknown. However, it is only when it comes forward and takes the lead that the individual goes through life with an assurance and a certitude all his own and becomes the master of his destiny. This is the psychological discipline of the integral Yoga, which is absolutely indispensable if one wants to know and express the highest truth of one's being, and if one aspires that all one's actions, thoughts and feelings, even the very sensations and impulses may manifest the supreme beauty and splendours which one so often receives in one's awakened thoughts and visions when one opens oneself to the light of the Superconscious.

The education in Auroville will be therefore integral, aiming at the development, transformation and perfection of all the parts of one's being so as to build an all-round personality which is beautiful, harmonious,

sensitive, supple, luminous and powerful in all its movements of mind, life and body, and selfless, heroic and noble in its actions. For this an individual may be required to go through the study of all arts, aesthetics, humanities and sciences which each can choose according to his capacities and needs of self-perfection, self-expression and self-fulfilment.

It is evident that there will be no fixed courses or curricula, nor tests, degrees and diplomas which have value only if one wants to earn money or a good name and position according to the standard and values set by the conventions of the ordinary world.

In Auroville which aspires to build a new world of the Future, individual value and sincerity of the person would have a greater importance than the worldly cleverness or material wealth and social position. Since Auroville aspires to be the place of eternal youth, of an endless education and constant progress, degrees and diplomas, giving a false sense of satisfaction of having completed one's education will have no value and will be naturally out of place. Education in Auroville will be for the joy of knowledge and for the joy of becoming, for the joy of self-perfection and self transcendence, for the joy of self-fulfillment and world-fulfillment.

The chief aim of education in Auroville will be to help each man to seek for and to manifest the Divine in every way of his being, and to so find it and live in it that no matter how—even in all kinds of ways—he lives and acts, he shall live and act in the Divine, in the Spirit, in the eternal Reality of his being, manifesting its truth and its law; and to discover the truth behind the veil of forces in the universe, to disengage the divine Reality behind everything and to work for its full manifestation.

Some of the programmes and projects of research and education in Auroville will be: to know the secrets of Nature and of life; to know oneself and to be the master of oneself, of life, of Nature; to seek after the Truth and perfection; to surmount within oneself all weaknesses, incapacities and the falsehoods of Ignorance; to conquer the causes of sufferings, illnesses, war and miseries; to vindicate the rights and the dignity of Man by helping him to transcend his half-lit humanity and fumbling mental-ethical consciousness and its conflicting laws; to eradicate Ignorance and the divisions of the egocentric consciousness by a change of Consciousness which is the inevitable further step in human evolution; to enrich the existing faculties and bring forth new

ones; to triumph over one's limitations, narrowness, rigidity of views and prejudices by constantly widening one's horizon of comprehension in the light of the Truth-Consciousness; to harmonise all the parts of one's being, integrate the personality and to be the whole Man of the Future, embodying the new consciousness, which transcends the limited and divisive consciousness of the present Man; to perfect and transform all the instruments of one's being into powers of the spirit so as to manifest the divine Reality within; to perfect and synthetise knowledge in each field and to integrate all fields of knowledge; to perfect each culture and to unify all cultures; to discover the particular genius and the role of each nation in the comity of all nations and to integrate the human race; to develop and use the resources, experiments and benefits of science and technology for the amelioration of mankind; to march unto the Unknown by constantly searching and making new discoveries on the spiritual and material planes so as to find new ways of enriching life; and thus to progress always towards ever more perfection and a more noble and truer life, the higher and vaster life of the Future, the life of Truth, Knowledge and Power, of Love, Unity and Bliss, making the whole life of the earth beautiful, divine.

All of Auroville in its entirety and in its details of all activities and organisation will engage itself in this educational process and will be a laboratory for this experiment, where no problem of life and its manifold relationships on all levels of action will escape the scrutiny and the study of its citizens. Auroville, being dedicated to the whole of humanity, will naturally seek all ways and means for the fulfilment of its highest aspirations, and will be a training institute for the whole of humanity, a fully equipped, intellectually alive and spiritually inspiring home for all men, women and children, who will learn together to live in oneness and who will live together to learn all the time, at each moment of their life.

Education in Auroville being a conscious experiment of living and an adventure of consciousness, the scope of its research being as wide as the universe, its aim being an advent of a new race of gnostic beings, it will naturally embrace the Infinite in its infinite aspects and move towards a progressive universal harmony. The cultural pavilions of all nations of the world will not only provide a right setting for this purpose, but also afford the unique opportunity and the facilities for its manifold researches for a living embodiment of an actual human unity.

*[A digression is necessary in order to introduce in proper historical context – the crucial years that followed the 1968 students’ revolt in the affluent countries – the theme of all-life education, propounded by avant-garde elite appointed by UNESCO to do research on a new cultural paradigm.*

*“The late 1960s were years of striking contrasts: after the destructions and losses caused by the Second World War, the industrial countries had made a surprisingly fast recovery. Social change had accompanied economic growth with an ensuing rise in standards of living. Newly independent countries were attempting their economic take-off and the notion of the contribution of education to development was accepted. In developing and industrialized countries alike, enrolment figures were reaching levels never seen before. Yet, the organization of education systems, their methods and their contents remained substantially the same and the goals of education had not been redefined to match the challenges of the emerging new world. This led to unrest among students, generally referred to as the 1968 education crisis which started in the United States and France, but soon spread to a large number of countries. In 1970, René Maheu,<sup>1</sup> then Director-General of UNESCO, thought that the time was ripe to set up an International Commission on the Development of Education which was to submit its report in 1972. The Commission, chaired by Edgar Faure<sup>2</sup>, former Prime Minister and Minister of Education of France at the time of the 1968 crisis, was composed of six eminent members selected in their personal capacity as high-level educators or scientists, former ministers or international civil servants.”<sup>3</sup>*

*The outcome of the Commission’s studies was ‘Learning to Be’, which refers to the role education ought to play in developing the complete*

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1 René Maheu (1905–1975), a close friend of Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, was a French professor of philosophy and the sixth Director-General of UNESCO, 1962–1974, for two successive mandates.

2 In his youth a radical and a Maquis partisan during the French Resistance to the Nazis, Edgar Faure (1908-88) was a politician, essayist, historian, and memoirist. He was twice the Prime Minister of France during the fifties; in this capacity he was one of the “big four” of the Geneva Conference (with Eisenhower, Bulganin and Eden). He was also Minister of Finance, Foreign Minister, Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Education, Minister of Social Affairs, and President of the National Assembly. Appointed *Minister of Education* after the student rebellion in May–June 1968, in 1972 Faure was appointed Minister of Social Affairs.

3 [www.unesco.org/education/educprog/50y/brochure/maintrus/35.htm](http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/50y/brochure/maintrus/35.htm)



*person in all its dimensions. This UNESCO publication is also known as the 1972 Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on the Development of Education, which Edgar Faure chaired in 1971-72. The Commission's task was to ponder upon overall solutions to the major challenges confronting educationists in a fast changing world. "These ideas, well received by educators, were widely discussed. Their application, however, seems to have been partial and fragmentary. Moreover, it is possible that the future role assigned to education by this Commission might have been considered too ambitious, and that it expected too much of education. Nevertheless, the ideas of lifelong education and of a learning society seem to have remained entirely valid, and can serve as a grid for analysis as well as principles for action. The report remains one of the most complete and boldest attempts to derive the educational implications of societal change and of the impact on society of the on-going scientific revolution."*<sup>1</sup>

*Translated into thirty-three languages, 'Learning to Be' has had a major impact on education policies around the world and is still being reprinted in the third millennium. Such was the chessboard on which Kailas, the Mother's finely attuned instrument, was called to play. Pondering over the Faure report, Kailas wrote to Dr. Adiseshiah:]*

"I thought of preparing a commentary on the report with a view to initiate a basis of collaboration between UNESCO and Auroville International University, especially since Dr. Faure himself expressed in his letter to me the concord between the two. However, I believe that the concept of Auroville, its thesis and programme are better defined and go beyond the vision of this report. In my view, 'a critical reflection and overall solution to the problems involved in the development of education in this changing universe' offered here fall short of my expectations. I would be grateful for your advice in this matter. To give you an idea, the following questions arise in my mind concerning the four assumptions mentioned in the letter of Dr. Faure to the Director-General:

1. 'Humanity is one in its aspirations and the problems and difficulties it faces in the realisation of these aspirations are shared in common. And in spite of all diversities and differences of approach and degrees of development, it moves towards the same destiny.'

Q. What is this destiny? This is extremely important to know, because

1 Ibid.

*our understanding of the true nature of these problems and difficulties as much as the solutions offered will, I believe, depend upon our understanding of the destiny of mankind. It is only in the light of this vision that the problems become clearly defined and the precise and effective solutions can be found.*

2. ‘Belief in democracy, defined as each man’s right to realise his own potential and to share in the building of his own future.’

*Q. This is extremely important. But how is this freedom to be guaranteed? Is it by democratising education through student participation in determining both the content and the method of education? Do they know what they want and how to achieve it? What about the freedom of teachers? What is the role of a planner and an administrator in such a situation?*

3. ‘The aim of development is the complete fulfillment of man in all the richness of his personality and the complexity of the forms of his expression.’

*Q. How is this fullness to be known and educed? What kind of education can develop and bring out this fullness for its complete manifestation? What is the highest and widest possibility of a complete man?*

4. ‘Only a lifelong overall education can produce a complete man. Hence the important point is to learn how to build up a continually evolving body of knowledge all through life – to learn to be.’

*Q. Is knowledge an acquisition or a revelation? If knowledge is a process or means ‘to be’, where is the source of knowledge? If the source is outside of oneself, what is it that relates it to the individual and affects him so that he can learn to be? If the source of knowledge is within oneself, what is the kind of education that can evoke it for manifestation and what will be its method?*

I believe we all agree that ‘the traditional formulas and partial reforms cannot meet the unprecedented demands for education arising out of the new tasks and functions to be fulfilled.’

I have attempted the study of the basic issues in my compilation on ‘Auroville and Education’ while offering Sri Aurobindo’s analysis of the crisis of our age, the proposed solutions, the reason of their failures and the unique role of Auroville. Since you are convinced that Auroville offers a hope for humanity to come out of its present chaos, your help in making this hope a reality will be greatly appreciated. What is your

advice in this matter?"

I received a reply to this letter from Dr. Adishesiah:

"I have your letter concerning the Faure Report and Auroville. Your analysis is in accordance with Sri Aurobindo's philosophy on education. Here are my detailed comments:

1. In planning for education one could either deal with the specific issues faced by the local community or the common issues faced by several countries and communities. Auroville is rightly following the latter alternative. The overall purpose of education is (a) the full development of human personality, (b) preparing to meet the needs of the country and (c) contributing to peace and progress.

2. The democracy embodied in higher education has two aspects. First there is an unwritten contract between the teacher and the taught for a free learning on both sides. Second, there has to be a conscious decision to widen the participation base of higher education so that it is not confined to the economic and intellectual elite.

3. The development of mind in all its fullness has implications for (a) curriculum and syllabus, (b) teaching and learning methods and (c) their application. What is involved is an attitude and technique to be applied to all departments of learning.

4. Knowledge is a continuous process of learning both about oneself and about the external reality. That is why learning must both be self-learning and learning from others and other sources. There is no either/or."

I wrote the following after receiving his answer:

... First, I must admit that Sri Aurobindo's views on education as presented by me are at times my own complex deductions on the basis of his exposition of the constitution and psychology of Man and his analysis of the universal forces at work for the individual and collective perfection. Needless to say, I am in perfect agreement with you. I believe it is a question of emphasis on our different view points, not of dichotomy.

I do understand that a rationalist mind is too arrogant and self-confident to accept my proposition that spiritual education is an inevitable necessity for the full development of man's total personality and might even condemn it all as 'metaphysics, mysticism and moonshine!' Perhaps, behind this refusal to admit the realities of the

Spirit is a lack of vision or a fear of a new adventure unto the Unknown. But once this leap is taken, even the rationalist would be happy to find that this all-embracing and all-comprehensive Reality is immanent in men and the world.

However, I do firmly believe that if we are to achieve our goal of total peace, development and progress, it is necessary to include spiritual education in our curriculum. Does not the situation in India and in the world at large prove that if we are to widen our basis of higher education and make the world safe for true democracy, spiritual education – by which one becomes conscious of the whole world as a part of oneself – is an imperative first step? I believe it is only on the spiritual basis of the Truth that the world can be solidly integrated for a mutual collaboration and fulfilment. I need not write all this to you since it is engraved in the constitution of UNESCO and you know it all too well.

Only, while planning for education it is all too often forgotten that for ‘learning to be,’ man must dive down deep below and soar higher than the mental, vital and physical surface of individual and universal Nature and know the powers that control him and the world. This alone can help him to come out of his present imperfection and impotence.

The distinction of the elite therefore on the basis of economic and intellectual attainment does not seem to be of much value if this spiritual consciousness is missing. Hence again, the primary emphasis on spiritual – as distinct from moral education – so as to preserve our ‘dying race’ and re-create, rather new-create it.

I wish to clarify that for Sri Aurobindo and The Mother there is no ‘either/or’ situation in the totality of their vision except when it comes to a conscious choice between Truth and Falsehood and then it becomes a question of integrity and sincerity or willful perversity in action. I believe all progress depends upon this choice. Hence the inevitable emphasis on spiritual education or the knowledge of the Truth without which total peace and development on a secure foundation do not seem possible, whether it is a question of individual, social, national or international peace and development.

This surely does not imply a negation of education from other individuals and sources. On the contrary, I whole heartedly agree and accept that there is an occasion to learn from others and from other sources. Yet, it seems that the doors of perception and comprehension remain open or closed according to the degree of consciousness and the

effort of the will. I am fascinated by the challenge of evermore learning and I cherish my lessons with deep gratitude, however contrary to all I know when they come from persons of sincerity, integrity and goodwill. Besides, it is so interesting to look at the world from various angles and harmonise all aspects of the Truth.

Regarding your comment (2), I suppose that there is an unwritten contract in any relationship between conscious beings and freedom must be its foundation-stone. But my question was concerning the freedom of teachers and the external authorities since that freedom is missing. Maybe I am a spiritual anarchist, but for me freedom and spontaneity seem to be indispensable laws of life for all conscious beings. Naturally I distinguish freedom from license, but that is the matter of awakening and this is the concern of spiritual education.

If you agree, well, here is the crucial question – will it be possible for you to help in the preparation and the realisation of the prospective plan for this University-to-be so as to finally integrate the possibilities of international research and development on both the material and spiritual planes for an actual embodiment or a living expression of human unity, peace and progress for the whole of humanity?

I ask because the Madras Institute for Development Studies is interested in an action-oriented project and Auroville seems to be the most realistic project with its proposal for an international university and permanent cultural pavilions of all nations fulfilling your objectives of lifelong education, development, employment opportunities, eradication of poverty in Tamilnadu and India and a better life for all. With best wishes.” 242-7

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*[Kailas sent her report on Auroville International University to Mr. Jagbans Balbir, the head of the UNESCO Dept. of Education in Paris, with the following letter:]*

“Dear Mr. Balbir,

This letter is in response to the questionnaire sent to us by UNESCO for the feasibility report on the proposal to establish an International University. Though in principle we agree with the underlined aims and objectives to be realised through this university, we feel that the concept and scope of such a university as well as its method of education would

have to be radically changed if we are to achieve our aim of human unity, peace and development in a true and effective way.

It is difficult for us, therefore, to answer these questions which, in our view, presuppose certain things and do not envisage what to us seems most crucial. However, within the framework given, we put forward the following – with certain reservation, qualification and amendment as our answers, which you may consider in the light of the solution offered by Sri Aurobindo to come out of our present chaos, and its experimentation over the past fifty years in Sri Aurobindo Ashram and the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education.

On our part, we are convinced that ‘a perfected world cannot be created by men who are themselves imperfect.’ For, ‘the conditions under which men live are the result of their consciousness and to change the conditions without changing the consciousness is a vain chimera.’ The basic problem, in our view, is Man himself and the solution of all problems lies within himself. No machinery, however equipped and powerful, therefore, can change Man or solve his problems unless and until he consents to transcend himself and transform his ego-centric consciousness into a universal consciousness where he is perfected and fulfilled.

Secondly, we feel that a remodelled structure on the old foundations of academic university courses – without any provision of the spiritual education that can help man not only to discover and master himself but to change his very psychology – may not adequately answer to the needs and aspirations of humanity which is constantly impelled to push towards the Future. It seems better therefore to have a completely new institution which takes its experience from the past in the light of the future needs though built on the present available material and spiritual resources.

Thirdly, it seems to us that there must be a living relation between the university and society where all that is learned is not just the theories from books written by others, but something that is pertinent to the experience of the individual in relation to his society, and which is enriched by the experiences of others with the possibilities of their own experimentation. This presupposes the concept of a society that is equally growing with the learning and experience of the individuals who compose it and not a closed society with its fixed codes of laws, conventions and rituals of conduct. In other words, it should be a

free world of individual possibilities as well as interdependence and mutuality based on the laws of oneness and on the supreme Truth.

Fourthly, in order to ensure the international character of such a University and to provide the rich material of knowledge and true understanding of the role of each nation for the future of humanity, there should be a free scope for all the nations of the world to blow in the fragrance of their own culture, their own particular genius and unique contribution in the field of ideas and activities. Auroville has proposed a project of permanent cultural pavilions of all nations where each could have its own library, museum or exhibition halls, as well as residential houses for students, teachers and delegates. This project, as you know, has been unanimously accepted by the resolutions of the General Conference of UNESCO and commended for participation by all nations. These pavilions, in our view, could serve as national campuses as well as clearing houses for information and exchanges between the international university and the home universities and research centres.

Besides, this project would ensure an education which would be integral and provide us with the basis for ‘a new and comprehensive affirmation in thought and in inner and outer experience and as its corollary a new and rich self-fulfillment in an integral human existence for the individual and the race.’

Finally, we envisage the possibility of this university having its own satellite communication system which can serve its purpose ideally if it finds an environment which is free from all politics and narrow self-interests, above all prejudices of race, nationalities, ideologies, religions, creeds and all that is contrary to the spirit of the Truth. This may also offer participation by all with all, for all, at the highest level.”

248-50

## **Answers to the Questionnaire on the World University for Human Unity**

### ***From Questions 3, 4.***

“All the objectives mentioned on pages 3 and 4 are good and necessary for an intellectual appraisal and enlightenment. But in our view, mind is not an instrument of knowledge and the possibilities of

an integral approach which can harmonise all aspects of the Truth and which alone can provide the true solution to our problems of opposing ideologies, belong to a new consciousness beyond the ranges of the mental consciousness. The usefulness of these meetings, seminars and conferences will depend upon those who can bring the light of this consciousness to bear upon the problems that confront us and offer a solution that is synthetic and universal.

We propose not just a forum for discussion and responsible confrontation but in addition to it, a ground for a free and sincere experimentation and implementation of the ideals preached, individually and collectively, and on the basis of this experience a conscious search within oneself for the problem and its solution.

***pp.4-5. Possible areas deserving study and research***

All this seems to us to be the symptoms of the problem and not the basic problem which is Man, his nature and his destiny and this alone can constitute a solid basis for study and research along with all the problems of his relationships, activities and organisation on the individual, national and international levels which can be studied with some hope for an answer.

***p.5 (3).***

It seems that everything in this world is interrelated and no problem can be solved in isolation without being related to some other problem of a global nature. Nothing is truly solved till all is solved. Perhaps, many of these problems would not exist if man consented to live a life in accordance with the truth of his being. And so, a priority may be given to the group (IV): a reflection of the means to ensure an active and effective solidarity among peoples and nations and on the problems of the future of mankind.

A partial list of certain fundamental issues in relation to the crisis of our age and some pertinent subjects for programmes and studies of research is separately given for the realisation of the objectives of the proposed international university.

***p.6 (4) Functions.***

We live in a very fast moving world 'where today's knowledge becomes tomorrow's debris.' Besides, nothing can be taught that is not lived and experienced. Degrees and diplomas do not always give



the measure of the person's knowledge, nor his capacity to impart knowledge. But above all, though information can be given, knowledge has to be educed from the substance of the student in relation to his object of study and pertinent to his own life. Much depends on the individual value of the teacher, his own experience and his relation with the student rather than his degree or diploma.

Yes, both types of teaching seem to be possible since whatever may be the degree or the diploma of the teacher, he must in order to be a good teacher always keep learning. 'The teacher teaches what he knows, and what he has discovered and learnt by the action of the student, who adds some new facts and in any case, a new dimension and wider optic to what he already knows.'

***p.6 (5)***

Yes, all the problems plus the issues mentioned in the attached paper can be included in the programme of studies, provided it is kept in mind that the basic problem and the solution is Man himself and what is required is a change of consciousness.

***p.6 (6)***

We feel that it should be an international centre of education for all, irrespective of age, position, class, creed, nationality, sex, vocation, ideology, cultural or any other accidental or preferred background.

If we are to have a solid foundation for the realisation of our objectives, the right type of education must begin at the very beginning, while the child is being formed in the womb of its mother and must continue for the whole life. In other words, in our view a university at post-graduate or even graduate level will not serve the purpose of realising our fundamental aims and objectives. It must be a universal centre of education for the whole of the life of man from his very birth.

Visiting officers and research workers from all walks of life from anywhere can participate at any level in the programme of this international centre of education, provided they are sincere in their will to collaborate with the aims of the university.

***p.6 (7)***

Certificates could be given on the basis of individual performance of the work, skill, competence and achievement as well as on the basis of the value of the person, his sincerity, will and effort towards perfection in his field of study or research. However, degrees, diplomas and certificates

given on the basis of tests and examinations seem to be obsolete.

**p.7 (9)**

The content of education and the programme of study and research in such a centre must be left flexible to include whatever may be pertinent to the realisation of its objectives as well as what may ensure a spontaneous and organic growth and its expansion into the future that constantly invades us with its unexpected possibilities and splendours.

What seems imperative to us is the integration of all knowledge so that ‘a new and comprehensive affirmation in thought and in inner and outer experience and as its corollary, a new and rich self-fulfillment in an integral existence for the individual and for the race, may be secured.’

There must be ‘an integral education which can bring back the legitimate authority of Spirit over Matter fully developed and utilised.’

We must never forget that ‘the object of all development and education is the awakening of Man’, and that this international centre of education must be ‘a site for the development of material and spiritual resources in order to realise the living embodiment of an actual human unity.’

We propose therefore an additional list of projects and research concerning Man, his nature and his destiny which is, in our view, to evolve beyond his half-lit humanity and its divisive mental consciousness. We also propose another list of projects or programmes for research and study as outlined in UNESCO’s publication for the next development decade, *Let My Country Awake*, inasmuch as it stresses the need for integral development and provides a valuable basis, offering guidelines for the implementation of the programme. For, we feel that education, if it is to be effectively useful, must be action-oriented and provide an opportunity for practical experimentation.

**p.8 (10)**

A select or choice staff of dedicated persons, like international civil servants, who would be prepared to go through the experiment to the very end, seems to be ideally desirable. However, we prefer a framework of less rules and enough flexibility to ensure a free, spontaneous and healthy growth so that those who may find this university to be an opportunity to fulfill their common objectives and are sincere in their aspiration and will to collaborate in its programme may be able to participate freely.

**p.8 (11)**

Information and documentation of all kinds could be made available to those who may find it useful for their purpose. The United Nations should have its own liaison office to handle the dissemination of pertinent information. If such a World University could be established in Auroville, it would have an additional advantage of the cultural pavilions of all nations which might serve equally as liaison between the University and the research centres and university institutions at home.

**p.9 (12) Possible Models.**

It seems to us that only projects like Auroville which is designed to be a universal township with associated projects – cultural pavilions of all nations, an airport, an aviation centre, a hospital and associated medical centres, a theatre and an Olympic stadium, agricultural farms and orchards as well as industrial estates, science and technological centres of research for an integral development of material resources for the amelioration of mankind, spiritual centres and research for the integral development of man, his future evolution and transformation, and various other possibilities of research which may help humanity to live as one single family – can adequately answer the needs envisaged in the proposed three models. For, the results of the research made in Auroville will be freely available to all. And if a satellite communication system is placed at its disposal, all will be able to participate in its programmes.

We conceive of the entire township of Auroville as a universal centre of integral education where the cultures of all nations will freely manifest their genius and will be helped to raise to their maximum possibilities their contribution to humanity. It is intended that the nationals of each country will not only become conscious of their own but of each other's unique contribution and learn to respect, to help and to profit economically, intellectually, subjectively and spiritually by each other. For, the final aim of Auroville is a common world culture in which each national culture should be, not merged into or fused with some other culture different from it in principle and temperament, but evolved to its full power and could then profit to that end by all the others and give its gains too, all serving by their separateness and their interaction the common aim and ideal of human perfection. 'Unity would be thus the largest principle of life, but freedom would be its foundation-stone.'

The aim of Auroville being to promote research in order to enrich all cultures, we hope that the cultural pavilions of all nations will serve as national campuses closely associated with each other in a common search for the realisation of unity in diversity, from which may emerge a new Man with a new culture which will be integral. This in turn may bring about a new consciousness and a new world order at the service of the Truth.

Home universities and research centres of all nations may be able to participate through their cultural pavilions in the programme of the International University. We also hope that there will be, as a consequence of this juxtaposition and interchange of cultures, a possibility for students and teachers to visit different countries according to their interest for a wider knowledge and richness of experience. This may spontaneously group all the existing institutions in a spirit of freedom and collaboration.

***p.10 (13)***

It can be called a Universal Centre of Integral Education.

***p.10 (14) Finance***

If this centre of education can effectively serve the aspirations of humanity for human unity and the future of Man on the basis of the Truth, we see no reason why all men of goodwill and sincerity should not support it and since it will ultimately help the governments and all concerned in ensuring stability, peace and development, financial support from the public and governmental sources can be easily envisaged.

***p.10 (15)***

Yes, if we are convinced that its programme can truly and effectively answer the need of humanity for peace, unity and development as well as for the progress towards the future.

***p.11 (16)***

The institution should be completely autonomous, but it can have the relationship of collaborator with the United Nations and UNESCO as well as with other international Specialised Agencies and organisations which might be helpful and interested in its programme.

***p.11 (17)***

As far as Auroville is concerned, we envisage the entire township as a centre of education and the programmes and activities will be

decided by the spontaneous needs and interests of all its participants in consonance with the aims of the township as laid down in its charter. Each national pavilion will decide its own programme and procedure of governance also in accordance with the fundamental aim of the township.

The only condition for the students and the teachers and all other participants in order to belong to this centre of education will be that they are absolutely sincere seekers of the Truth and have the will to collaborate in the realisation of its aims and objectives on the basis of the Truth.

All must serve each other in a spirit of friendship, understanding and cooperation. Everything must be arranged in a spirit of complete freedom, flexibility, sincerity, goodwill and cooperation according to the spontaneous needs of the situation.

Students and teachers alike can decide freely what programmes and activities are pertinent to their life and interests in view of the larger aim of the University for Human Unity to which the international community of Auroville is also dedicated.

Leaders and directors will emerge on the basis of their own interests and essential merits rather than be nominated on the basis of their external and apparent qualifications. The relationship among all will be that of friends and collaborators.

***p.11 (18)***

There must be flexibility in all matters to allow different possibilities which may offer themselves for a free and harmonious growth and the success of the basic objectives in the light of the Truth.” 250-7

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**International Cultural Pavilions: the 1974 Resolution**

*[After the Mother left Her physical body, Kailas continued her work for Auroville. She prepared a resolution for Auroville's Cultural Pavilions, outlining in a booklet the concept in the light of Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's vision. Published by Auropress, one thousand copies were sent to the Indian National Commission for UNESCO to be dispatched to Paris.]*

“There”, writes Kailas, “they were to be distributed to the Member-States and to the National Commissions for UNESCO, to the members of the Executive Board of UNESCO, to the office of the Director-General, to the Departments of Cultural Affairs and the Non-Governmental Organisations.” She continues, ““I had also sent a copy of this brochure to Matagiri in New York State with a letter explaining to them that it had gone to UNESCO with a resolution to be forwarded by the Indian Government. I hoped that the needful would be done for this project though I was not able to go due to financial restraints. They understood my difficulty and they approached Mrs. Montgomery with my brochure, asking if there was any possibility of supporting my going to Paris. She read my brochure and was very enthusiastic about it. She sent me a telegram on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November, 1974: “Foundation has bought your ticket Madras–Paris. Get it from Air India Madras. Write me from Paris immediately. Your brochure brilliant. Love, Eleanore.”” However, the ticket was only one-way, whereas if one wanted to return the Indian government generally requested a two-way ticket. Trusting the Mother, Kailas wrote, “I told them that my return ticket would be arranged in Paris. They did not ask any more questions.”

When Kailas finally arrived in Paris, the General Conference of UNESCO had begun almost two weeks earlier. Mr. Pouschpa Dass (the UNESCO Director of the Department of Culture) knew nothing about the Auroville resolution and, upon enquiry, discovered that this “had gone to the Information Committee instead of coming to the Cultural Committee. And when it was discussed there, nobody from our Indian Delegation was present to answer the doubts expressed by the Swiss Delegation concerning Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy and the viability of the Auroville project” Kailas noted. ““So, I approached G. Parthasarthy, the head of our Delegation and a member of the Executive Board of UNESCO and asked him why nobody from the Delegation was present in the meeting when our resolution was presented. He said that it was very sad and he would enquire. I told him that a proper and befitting reply concerning Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy must be given. He said: “Of course!”” Parthasarthy then rebuked the members of the Cultural Committee and the next day the mistake was corrected.

Kailas continues, ““I took an appointment with the Swiss Delegate and asked him on what basis had he gathered his impression to make such

a statement of doubts about the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo and an allegation about Auroville. He replied that generally it was from the mass media. I asked him whether he always trusted the mass media. He replied that it was not always credible. Then, I asked him: "Why did you then make such a statement?" He said: "I was advised by my government to make it." I said: "There is an important difference between your government and Auroville. In Auroville one is expected to work on the basis of the truth." Then, we talked about Sri Aurobindo's philosophy based on His own spiritual experience and about the project of Auroville, the difficulties of human nature to be changed and the process of self-introspection, the importance of cultural pavilions of all nations and the right conditions for the project to succeed. He said: "I understand." I asked him: "Now that you understand, would you withdraw your adverse remarks or at least let your government know the truth, too?" He said: "Certainly. I am very pleased and apologise for my unjustified remarks."

The final result was that the General Conference of UNESCO unanimously passed the following resolution on the Auroville International Cultural Pavilions, stating:

“Recalling the three Unesco resolutions (4.36, 4.02 and 3.32.1) on Auroville, unanimously adopted by the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth sessions of the General Conference,

Noting the invitation of the Government of India to Member States and the international non-governmental organizations for participation in the development of Auroville as an international cultural township designed to bring together the values of different cultures and civilizations in a harmonious environment with integrated living standards which correspond to man's physical and spiritual needs, (resolution 4.131),

Considering the confidence placed by the General Conference that Auroville with its many interrelated sub-projects will add a new dimension to Unesco's activities for the promotion of international cooperation and understanding and appreciation of cultural and human values, (resolution 4.131),

Considering also that this project of Auroville has been unanimously commended by the General Conference to all those interested in Unesco's ideals, (resolution 4.36).

Appreciating the researches and the gradual all-round progress made by in education, agriculture, health, science, ecology, Auroville

architecture, arts and human sciences,

Reaffirming that the realisation of Auroville will help humanity towards the fulfillment of its aspiration for unity in diversity, peace and an integrated development on the material and spiritual planes,

Convinced that the project of Permanent Cultural Pavilions of all Nations in Auroville will be a practical and comprehensive means of implementing the Unesco's Declaration of the Principles of International cooperation and of achieving its objectives,

Noting that the building of the cultural pavilions of India has already commenced,

Urges all Member States, non-governmental organisations and all concerned to collaborate in establishing their national pavilion by February 1978, to mark the tenth Anniversary of Auroville, and to that effect:

Requests the Director-General to take whatever steps are necessary for the realisation of this significant sub-project of Auroville and to report on the progress made at the next session of the General Conference.”

Kailas writes, “I approached G. Parthasarthy to discuss with him further steps to implement the resolution. He invited me to Delhi and said that there we would talk with different ministries and the National Commission for UNESCO and ask them to send letters to the member-states of UNESCO and national commissions for UNESCO, seeking their collaboration in our project and also write to the cultural departments of our embassies to follow it up. ... I also saw two of the Executive Board members from the USA and from Great Britain with Mr. Parthasarthy. They felt that our concept of Auroville was unique and with the establishment of cultural pavilions on the lines suggested in the brochure, it would achieve an enormous significance. They expressed their support and all good wishes for its success.”

Kailas also contacted Mr. Dayal, the representative in charge of the permanent delegation of India to UNESCO in Paris, who replied that he would personally accompany her to meet “with the various important delegations, representative of all the continents so that I could explain to them our project and solicit their participation.” As Kailas observed,

“In our meetings, I explained the importance of this project since each country had to study the genius of their culture and to manifest it freely.



This went on very well. They were all impressed by our concept and said that they were in favour of our project especially since it was on a permanent basis and the aim put forward was commendable.”

As the new Director-General of UNESCO, Mr. Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, was out of town, Kailas left for him, with a note, two volumes by Sri Aurobindo, “L'Idéal de l'Unité Humaine” and “Le Cycle Humain”. In his acknowledgment letter he thanked her “for this friendly gift which has given me much pleasure.” She also met with Mr. Fobes, the new Deputy Director-General of UNESCO, who had replaced Dr. Adiseshiah. He made a point of canceling his luncheon engagement so that, instead of a few minutes, Kailas had a full hour, she wrote, “to talk about the project dear to my heart. He was very pleased. He said that if we presented our reports on various activities of Auroville, he would consider their inclusion in UNESCO's *Courier*, and could also send representatives to discuss the area and extent of the possibility of UNESCO's collaboration in our project. I warned him that it should be without any unnecessary interference. He agreed to this. Then, I contacted the head of the department of the Non-Governmental Organisations. He too promised to send the resolution with our brochure to all the NGOs and invite them to consider participation in the building of their national pavilions. I also approached various departments of UNESCO to acquaint them with the various projects of Auroville and to invite their collaboration.”

In April Roger Anger, just back in France from Pondicherry, met with Kailas and was happy to hear about the astounding amount of work she had done. He expressed concern, however, about the serious rift taking place between the Sri Aurobindo Society and those living in Auroville. Some time later Kailas met Dr. Adiseshiah, temporarily in Paris because of a UNESCO meeting. The latter arranged for a meeting with Pouschpa Dass, who had asked to be kept informed in order to help the project moving forward.

Invited to go to Great Britain for a few days, with all expenses paid by Auroville International, Kailas took the opportunity to meet with the British National Commission for UNESCO and the British Council of Cultural Relations. She commended, “They were greatly appreciative of the project but said that their genius was commercial and not spiritual.

I said commerce is not excluded from spirituality, provided it was done with honesty and served the spiritual purpose.

Back in Paris, Kailas wrote to Navajata that she had many opportunities “to discuss Auroville and our project of cultural pavilions with different departments of UNESCO, national delegations and individuals”. She suggested that he should “request the Indian Government to write letters to the member-states of UNESCO and at the same time to write to the Department of Cultural Relations in our embassies abroad to get in touch with them as well as with our Auroville Associations abroad”, expressing her hope that the foundation of some of the national pavilions be laid on the occasion of the Mother’s Birth Centenary. She also observed that the Auroville associations in Paris and England had responded well, as did her contacts with devotees in Matagiri and with Mrs. Montgomery, in the USA. Having felt that she had done all that she could, she urged Navajata to send her a return ticket to India.

On her way back Kailas halted in the Netherlands where, she explained, “I addressed a meeting in Amsterdam on Sri Aurobindo, The Mother and Auroville. Also, I expounded the subject of human unity in Their light at the centre in Belgium, under the charge of Willy Perizonius. They were greatly impressed and asked many questions. Willy was so enthusiastic that he proposed to sponsor my trip for an international meeting on Habitat.”

But back in Pondy, Kailas was abruptly made to realize that the separation between Auroville and the Sri Aurobindo Society was unavoidable. This was the end of her dream of “seeing the foundation stone laid of some of the cultural pavilions for The Mother’s Centenary”.



**KAILAS' SECRETARIAT WORK:  
FACSIMILES OF THE MOTHER'S MESSAGES**

**“This seems correct. At any rate you can go to meet him [Dr. M. Adiseshiah, Deputy Director General of UNESCO] and see what happens. With love and blessings”** 30, F1

**“You are right – the time for running about is over for you and it is much better that you should remain here quietly. You can use my letter as a reply. With my love and blessings”** 38, F2

*[Two telegrams:]* “Secretary-in-charge, UNESCO section”, and “Mother approves your contacting Ford Foundation” 106, F3 & 4

**“If you come with him [Dr. M. Adiseshiah] this morning at 11 o'clock, I shall see you”** 108, F5

**“Your feeling is right. If you can meet him [Dr. M. Adiseshiah] in Madras, go with my help and blessings, and do what you want to do. With love”** 123, F6

**“You must go to Delhi only if you feel that you can do the work effectively and usefully. In any case, my blessings are with you”** 126, F7

**“Do not worry. After all it is the Supreme Lord who organises everything in you and in the others – and each one plays his role, convinced that it is the only Truth, while all are true in the Supreme. With love and blessings”** 145, F8

**“Each one is meant to represent one aspect of the Truth which realises itself by the perfect union of all the aspects. But each individual has the possibility of becoming, by a conscious union with the Supreme, conscious of His Consciousness, and thus to know at once the part he has to play and the whole of the play. This is the supreme realisation. Blessings”** 146, F9

To Kailas asking “Can someone else like Jullie Medlock, Jay Smith or Anjani Dayanand take over? Or would my withdrawal affect Your work through Sat? [Dr. M. Adiseshiah]”, the Mother asked the attendant to underline the three names and write an emphatic *Non Non* and added: “**It is better if she continues**” 162, F10

**“I do not know who told you that – but there is a misunderstanding somewhere because to hand over the management of Auroville to any country or any group however big it may be is an absolute impossibility. If it has been at all taken, it is without my knowledge – because I say to it an emphatic NO.”** 170, F11

**“Your only preoccupation must be to be and to do only what the Divine wants you to be and to do. What the others think of you has absolutely no importance. With love and blessings”** 171, F12

**“*C’est très, très bien*” (It is very, very good)** 241, F13

**“Kailas, it can be sent. Blessings”** 241, F14

**“Yes, do the work. It is all right. Do it with care and confidence, it will be what it has to be. Love and blessings”** 272, F15

**“Sri Aurobindo belongs to the future and all these details of the past are without interest & I have no time to do it”** 274, F16

*[Sri Aurobindo’s Birthday Centenary - Message for UNESCO:]*

**“An Avatar is not a human being although he has accepted to use a human body”** 278, F17

**“Keep quiet and let him [Dr. M. Adiseshiah] do what he thinks best. Blessings”** 286, F18

**“Let Sat [Dr. M. Adiseshiah] do as he feels – it is the best. With love and blessings”** 383, F19

this seems correct.  
At any rate you  
can go to meet him  
and see what  
happens -

With love and  
blessings

F1

With love and blessings

you are quite  
right - the time  
for running  
about is over  
for you and it  
is much better  
that you should  
remain here quietly.  
You can use my  
letter as a reply -

F2

X 1610 51 PONDICHERRY 20 21 KAILASH CARE MADHUSOODANJI NAGARSETI

12-63-259

A C111/80 WELLESLEY ROAD NEW DELHI ELEVEN

MOTHERAPPOINTS YOU SECRETARY UNESCC SECTION AND INCHARGE

CONTACTING EMBASSIES = NAVAJATA

MGIPAH

F 3

TO

X 2135 4 APRIL PONDICHERRY 2 17 KAILASH JHAVERI CARE

MADHUSOODANJI NAGARSHETH TF 618170 NEW DELHI ELEVEN -

MOTHER APPROVES YOUR CONTACTING FORD FOUNDATION - NAVAJAT

F 4

If you come with her  
this morning at 11 o'clock  
I shall see you



F 5

Your feeling is  
right - If you  
can meet him  
in Madras, go  
with my help and  
blessings, and  
do what you  
want to do -

With love



F 6



You must go to Delhi  
only if you feel that you  
can do the work effectively  
and usefully.

In any case my  
blessings are with you

F7

Do not worry.

After all it is the  
Supreme Lord who  
organises everything  
in you and in the  
others — and each  
one plays his role, convinced  
that it is the only Truth,  
while all are true in  
the Supreme

With love and blessings

F8

Each one is meant to represent  
one aspect of the Truth which  
realizes itself by the perfect union  
of all the aspects.

But each individual has the  
possibility of becoming, by a conscious  
union with the Supreme, conscious of  
His consciousness, and thus to know at  
once the part he has to play and the  
whole of the play. This is the  
supreme realization.

Blessings J.-

F 9

Is it still necessary for me to continue to do  
this work or has it come to a stage when it will go  
forward by its own momentum since Sat seems convinced  
about the merits of Aureville and the teachings of  
Dr Aureoindo and has promised UNESCO's support and  
co-operation? Can someone else like Julie medlock <sup>non</sup>  
or Jay Smith <sup>or Anjani</sup> take over or would my withdrawal **NON**  
affect your work through Sat?

it is better if she continues.

F 10

Blasphemy

I do not know who told you that - but there is a misunderstanding somewhere because to hand over the management of Burville to any country or any group ~~what~~ however big it may be is an absolute impossibility.

if it has at all been taken, it is without my knowledge - because I say to it an emphatic

NO

F 11

Your only preoccupation must be to be and to do only what the Divine wants you to be and to do. What other  
others think of you has absolutely no importance.  
With love and blessings

F 12

Chère Kailas,  
About this, Mother said:  
- "C'est très, très bien!"

Francine

17.1.70

F 13



1.3.70

Kailas

It can be  
sent.

Blessings

F

F 14

Yes, do the work.

at my feet  
- petite

It is all right.  
Do it with care and confidence, it will  
be what it has to be.

Love and Blessings


The mother saw two flowers of Divine's presence, saying that one represented Sri Anubinda and the other represented the Mother.

F 15

x? Sri Anubhava belongs to  
the future and all these details  
of the past are without interest  
& I have no time to do it

F16

an Avatar  
is not  
a human being  
although he has  
accepted to use  
a human body



F17

Keep quiet

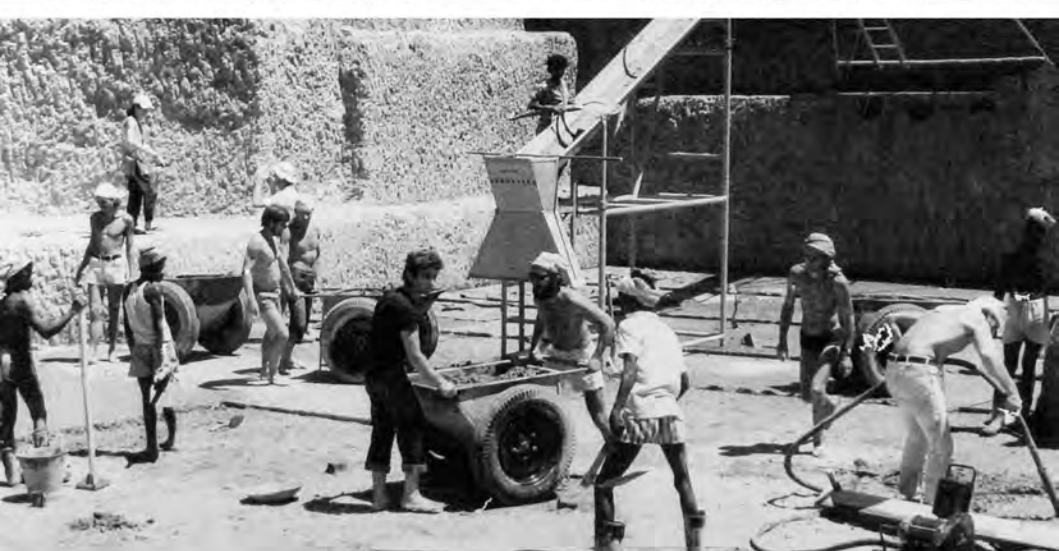
and let him do what he thinks  
best

F 18

Let Sat do as he  
feels — it is the  
best.

with love and  
blessings

F 19



## A SPECIAL INTERLOCUTOR FROM UNESCO

In UNESCO, no one stood for Auroville more poignantly, more valiantly than Dr. M. Adiseshiah, Deputy Director General. Kailas wrote:

“Dr. Adiseshiah was invited from the very inception of UNESCO in 1946 by Julian Huxley, the first Director-General of UNESCO. He was a true karmayogi and had a distinguished career of service to the best of his abilities since he joined UNESCO till he retired in 1970.

He sincerely believed in the vision of the Mother for Auroville, founded on the basis of Sri Aurobindo’s revelation of a glorious future of man & the world.

He began endorsing and promoting the project of Auroville by sending New Year greeting cards printed with the spiral nebula of the conceptual design of the proposed township of Auroville to all his friends in the international community of UNESCO.”<sup>1</sup>

Kailas’ autobiography also highlights the guru-disciple relationship. Beginning in 1965 and prior to any UNESCO involvement, as in the case of the Indo-Pakistani war, Kailas had a life-long exchange of letters with Dr. Adiseshiah, always submitting to the Mother for advice their correspondence, deeply inspiring both at the official and the personal level. One example was their protracted discussion on Mahatma Gandhi, about which the Mother commented:

**“In the effort of humanity to reach the Truth and manifest it, all those who made a discovery however small it may be, have a place, and Gandhi is one of them. But the great mistake has always been to oppose these partial discoveries instead of unifying them in a supreme harmony. That is why humanity is still groping in the dark.**

**Sri Aurobindo has come to reveal that this supreme harmony exists and to show us the way to discover it.**

**Kailas, you can include the above in your answer. Blessings.”**

261-2, F1

<sup>1</sup> “Centenary celebrations of the late Dr. M. S. Adiseshiah, responsible for the promotion and the development of Auroville in the International Arena”, published in the Sri Aurobindo Ashram magazine *Mother India*.



The Mother's written observations on papers such as these, which lie outside any Auroville-UNESCO interaction, show the loving interest, independent from the key-posts Dr. Adiseshiah occupied, which the Mother bestowed upon this true seeker, a Brahmin with a path of his own who had turned into a channel of her force. Having synthesized the best that India and the West had achieved, Dr. Adiseshiah – Sat, as the Mother and Kailas called him – could not be content with just some external formulation regarding an ideal city and society in the making; in answer to his repeated questioning, Kailas wrote at last a detailed explanation, summarizing the path of Integral Yoga.

Kailas kept updating the Mother even after Sat resigned from UNESCO, at the end of 1970; becoming fully involved, instead, in the Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS), mainly dedicated to socio-economic research, which he had founded. Kailas participated on a regular basis in the Institute's monthly seminars, with the Mother's approval. Whenever he came to Pondicherry, she took him to the Mother.

Since the contents concern Kailas' personal life and sadhana, in the present book I have omitted the texts regarding the special affinity binding our two main protagonists, though much relevant to the understanding of Integral Yoga, to focus instead on Kailas' work as the "Secretary-in-charge, UNESCO section" appointed by the Mother. Nevertheless I reproduce below some handwritten messages by the Mother highlighting the care by which she followed the special relationship Kailas had with this eminent personality. The facsimiles of the Mother's messages are reproduced at the end.

From the subchapter *Sri Aurobindo's guidance on human relationship*, pp. 174-80:

**“Why interruption? Is it S. who stopped seeing or writing to you, or you? I do not understand. If you wrote this to me I missed your letter and ask for an explanation.**

**Where is Sat? Are you no more writing to him? Has he stopped writing to you? I would like to know. Love and blessings.”**

178, F2 & 3

**“If you feel like writing to Sat for the work you can do so even if he does not answer. That is all I can tell you – but my love and blessings**

**are with you and will help you to do the needful.”** 179, F4

From the subchapter *The Mother’s Guidance: Sat and I*, pp. 187-212:

**“Send your letters through Françoise who will read them to me and I shall answer. Love and blessings.”** 189, F5

**“Kailas, Do not worry. Keep quiet and calm – It is the only way to know the Truth and to do the proper thing. With love and blessings.”** 193, F6

**“I received your offering and accepted it. But I am sending back the letters to you as I have no place to keep them.**

**There is a stage for human beings when they need to love the Divine through a human being because they are not ready for a direct relation with the Divine. But when the body consciousness progresses and it becomes possible for the cells to enter in constant relation with the Divine without needing the visible presence of another person, the love for another person becomes superfluous and may stop. Keep these letters as a souvenir of the past, if you wish so – but let your love be exclusively for the Divine.**

**Blessings”** 193-4, F7&8

**“Keep your mind silent and quiet.**

**Aspire and wait for the command and you will know what you have to do.**

**Meanwhile remain here peacefully.**

**If something is to be done, I shall let you know.**

**With love and blessings.”** 194, F9

**“My love is always with you and the Grace will fulfill your prayer. I shall call you as soon as it is materially possible.**

**Blessings.”** 196, F10

**“Your position is quite all right. I have no objection at all at your calling Sat here.**

**With my love and blessings.”** 200, F11

In the effort of humanity to reach  
the Truth and manifest it, all  
those who made a discovery <sup>however</sup> ~~small~~  
small it may be, have a place,  
and Gandhi is one of them. But the  
great mistake has always been to  
oppose these partial discoveries instead  
of uniting them in a supreme harmony.  
That is why humanity is still groping  
in the dark.

Sri Aurobindo has come to reveal  
that this supreme harmony exists and  
to show us the way to discover it.

Keilas, you can include the  
above in your answer  
blowing J.

Why in heaven's name? Is it S. who stopped  
or writing to  
leave you or you? I do not  
understand. If you write later to me I mean you  
write out and for an explanation.

F2

Where is S.? are you too  
writing to him? Has he  
stopped writing to you?  
I would like to know,

Love and Blessings  
P. J.

F3

If you feel like writing  
to Set for the work you  
can do or even if he  
does not answer.

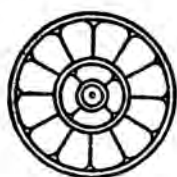
That is all I can tell  
you — but my  
love and blessings are  
with you and will  
help you to do the  
hardful



Send your letter through  
Francise who will read them  
to me and I shall answer

love and blessings

F5



12.4.69

Kailas

Do not worry

Keep quiet and  
calm - It is the  
only way to know  
the Truth and to do

F6

I received your offering and accepted it. But  
I am sending back the letters to you as I have  
no place to keep them.

There is a stage for human beings  
when they need to love the Divine  
through a human being because  
they are not ready for a direct  
relation with the Divine.

But when the body consciousness  
progresses and it becomes possible  
for the cells to enter in direct  
relation with the Divine without  
needing the visible presence of  
another person, the love for another  
person becomes superfluous and  
may stop.

Keep these letters as a souvenir  
of the past, if you wish so - but  
let your love be exclusively for the Divine

Shree

Keep your mind  
tolerant and quiet.

Aspire and wait  
for the command and  
you will know what  
you have to do.

Meanwhile remain  
here peacefully -

If something is to be  
done, I shall let you  
know.

With love and blessings  
/



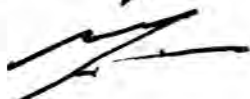
my love is  
always with you  
and the Grace will  
fulfill your prayer  
I shall call you as  
soon as it is materially  
possible. blessings →

F10

Your position is quite alright.  
I have no objection at all at your  
calling Sat here.

With my love and

blessings



F11



## **MAN IN ALL HIS GLORY, IN HIS DIVINITY, IN HIS UNFATHOMABLE DEPTHS<sup>1</sup>**

...We have tried in UNESCO, and the UNESCO world, which represents the plusses and the minuses of humanity, which represents the world as it is and not the world as it can be or should be, we have tried every way and we have failed.

And so now we turn to Auroville, and to its foundation, the firm foundation on which its human unity, its universal harmony, is to be built. That foundation is Man, Man in all his glory, in his divinity, in his unfathomable depths which he can reach, and which Auroville will make it possible for man from everywhere to achieve.

It is not surprising therefore that UNESCO has embraced Auroville as a programme which embodies its major and fundamental purposes. The fifteenth General Conference of UNESCO attended by its 125 member-states, which ended this month and from which I am coming almost directly to you, adopted unanimously the resolution, making Auroville the concern of every one of the member-states of the world and the responsibility of every man, woman and child in these member countries.

And so, on behalf of UNESCO, on behalf of all of you present here, and not present here, I hail Auroville, its conception and realisation as a hope for all of us, and particularly for our children, for our youth, who are disillusioned with the world that we have built for them, and who will find in Auroville as they found at the time of its foundation ceremony, a living symbol, inspiring them to live the life to which they are called. ...

**DR. M. ADISESHIAH**

Deputy Director-General of UNESCO

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<sup>1</sup> Excerpt from the speech delivered on December 28, 1968 at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Theatre. The symposium on Auroville was organised by All India Radio.



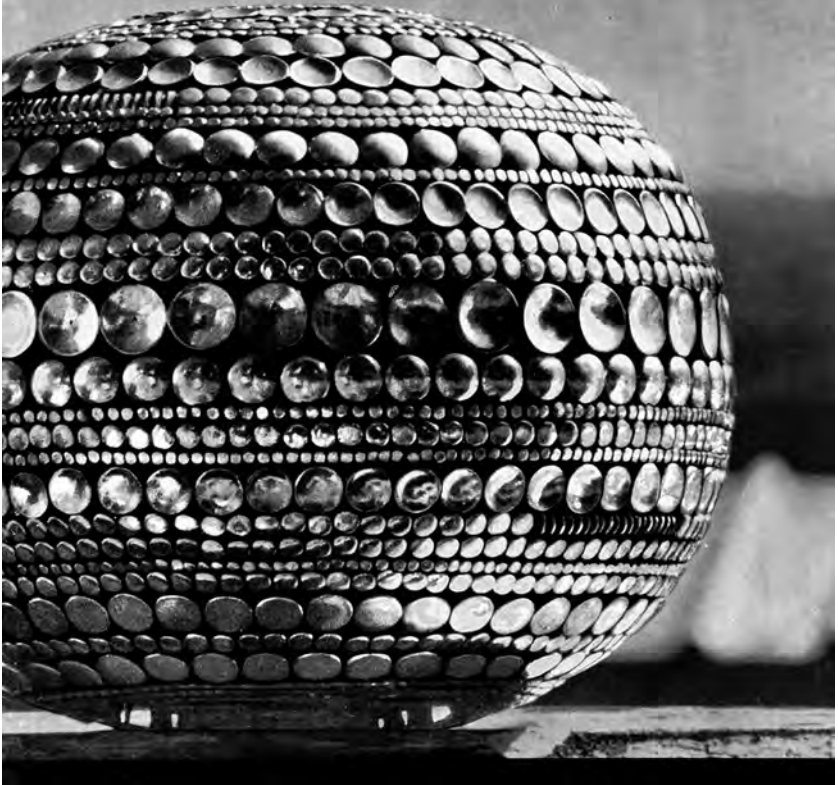


# The Courier

A window open on the world

October 1972 (25th year) - U.K. : 13p - North America : 50 cts - France : 1,70 F

## AUROVILLE AUROBINDO'S CITY OF GLOBAL UNITY



Unesco's General Conference begins its session on October 17 this year. At its last session in 1970 it invited all Unesco member states and non-governmental organizations to participate in this year's centenary of the birth of Sri Aurobindo, the great Indian spiritual leader and philosopher. An exhibition on Sri Aurobindo's life and work will be held at Unesco headquarters in Paris from October 16 to 26. Special ceremonies have taken place and will take place at Pondicherry, south of Madras on the east coast of India and on the nearby site of Auroville, the international city named after Aurobindo. In this issue published in the international spirit of Unesco's General Conference we present articles on the life and teaching of Sri Aurobindo...



This model of Auroville, the cultural township ... a few miles north of Pondicherry in India, shows the city of global unity spread out like a giant nebula with the golden sphere or "Matrimandir" as its focal point. With its four zones—residential, industrial, cultural and international—Auroville will eventually cover an area of 15 square miles with a population not exceeding 50,000. In the cultural zone academies of arts and sciences will welcome artists and scientists from all parts of the world. In the international zone pavilions of all nations will serve as embassies of the culture, art and handicrafts of each country. The city's nebular-shaped layout allows for the integration of the different zones. The foundation stone of Auroville was laid on February 28, 1968, and the city is expected to take 20 years to complete. Unesco has invited its member states and non-governmental organizations to participate in the development of Auroville as an international cultural township "designed to bring together the values of different cultures and civilizations in a harmonious environment", and has been lending its support to the project as a whole.

*The UNESCO Courier*, October 1972



## SRI AUROBINDO IN THE PATH OF A GREAT SAGE

*K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR, Indian educator, author and critic, has made a special study of the life and philosophical works of Sri Aurobindo, to whom he devoted his latest book, "Sri Aurobindo: a Biography and a History", published recently in two volumes at Pondicherry, India. He was formerly head of the English Department at Andhra University (S.E. India) and its Vice-Chancellor before his election in 1969 as Vice-President of the National Academy of Letters in New Delhi. He has published biographies of Rabindranath Tagore, Francois Mauriac, Shakespeare and other writers.*

Was it just a quirk of fate that Sri Aurobindo, the Indian philosopher, poet and patriot whose centenary we celebrate this year, was born 75 years to the day before India achieved independence?

Aurobindo himself regarded the fact that his 75th birthday coincided with the proclamation of an independent India on August 15, 1947, (our "tryst with destiny" as Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru called it) "not as a fortuitous accident but as a sanction and seal of the Divine Power that guides my steps".

Third son of a surgeon, Aurobindo received an English education at Loretto Convent School, Darjeeling, India, and St. Paul's School, London, before reading classics at Cambridge. Returning to India in 1893, he accepted service in the Baroda State in western India, rising to become Vice-Principal and professor at Baroda College and later Principal of the new National College in Calcutta.

But with the Indian sub-continent, which he saw not just as a geographical area but as Bharati the Mother under foreign domination, Aurobindo set little store on the easy security afforded by his teaching career and embarked on a two-pronged programme of revolutionary action. At first he was content to exercise from behind the scenes a long-distance control over a secret, nationwide, revolutionary organization that would be ready when the time came for armed uprising. Then, in 1906, he openly entered the arena of nationalist politics, and as de facto editor of the Calcutta daily



newspaper “Bande Mataram” he preached the nationalist cause with missionary fervour.

Already Sri Aurobindo’s “Bhavani Mandir”, which in the eyes of the alien bureaucracy was an incendiary pamphlet, was in secret circulation among young revolutionaries. Now his open espousal of extremist nationalism made him the most dangerous man in India. Following the killing of the Pringle-Kennedy ladies at Muzzaferpore by two revolutionary hotheads, Sri Aurobindo was arrested and placed in solitary confinement in the Alipur jail on charges of conspiracy. After a prolonged trial he was acquitted and released in May 1909. But during his time in prison Sri Aurobindo underwent a mystic experience which decided him to turn his back on politics and retire to the French settlement at Pondicherry in southern India for the undisturbed pursuit of Yoga and spirituality.

In his “Cave of Tapasya” at Pondicherry, he set about working out the meaning of the spiritual insights he had received while in jail. In collaboration with a French woman, Madame Mira Richard, who was to become known as “The Mother”, he launched the monthly philosophical journal “Arya” and founded the famous Ashram.

Although Madame Richard had to return to France with the outbreak of the First World War, Aurobindo kept the journal going until 1921, publishing in it in serial form a number of philosophical treatises such as “The Life Divine”, “The Human Cycle”, “The Ideal of Human Unity”, “The Synthesis of Yoga”, “The Secret of the Veda”, “Essays on the Gita”, “Foundations of Indian Culture” and “The Future Poetry”.

Sri Aurobindo’s achievement as a lyricist, dramatist and epic poet must rank him among the great creative writers of our time. Yet it is not merely as a writer and poet, but as a thinker and prophet that Sri Aurobindo has made his unique impact upon our age.

In his Independence Day message of August 15, 1947, Sri Aurobindo referred to five world movements with which he had involved himself and whose fulfilment he hoped for — a free and united India, a resurgent Asia, an emerging world union, the overflow of India’s spirituality into Europe and America, and, finally, “a step in evolution

which would raise man to a higher and larger consciousness". The last was the most important and was the theme of "The Life Divine", "The Human Cycle" and "The Ideal of Human Unity".

Sri Aurobindo's diagnosis of the present human predicament is that, while man's mastery over the outside world has been growing at an accelerated pace, his inner development seems to have halted long ago. Our environment is changing fast, but the inner climate has remained the same. So far only the first three stages of evolution have emerged, the development from "matter" to "life" and from "life" to "mind"; but the time has come for the step forward to the "supermind" and the "divinisation" of man and the universe.

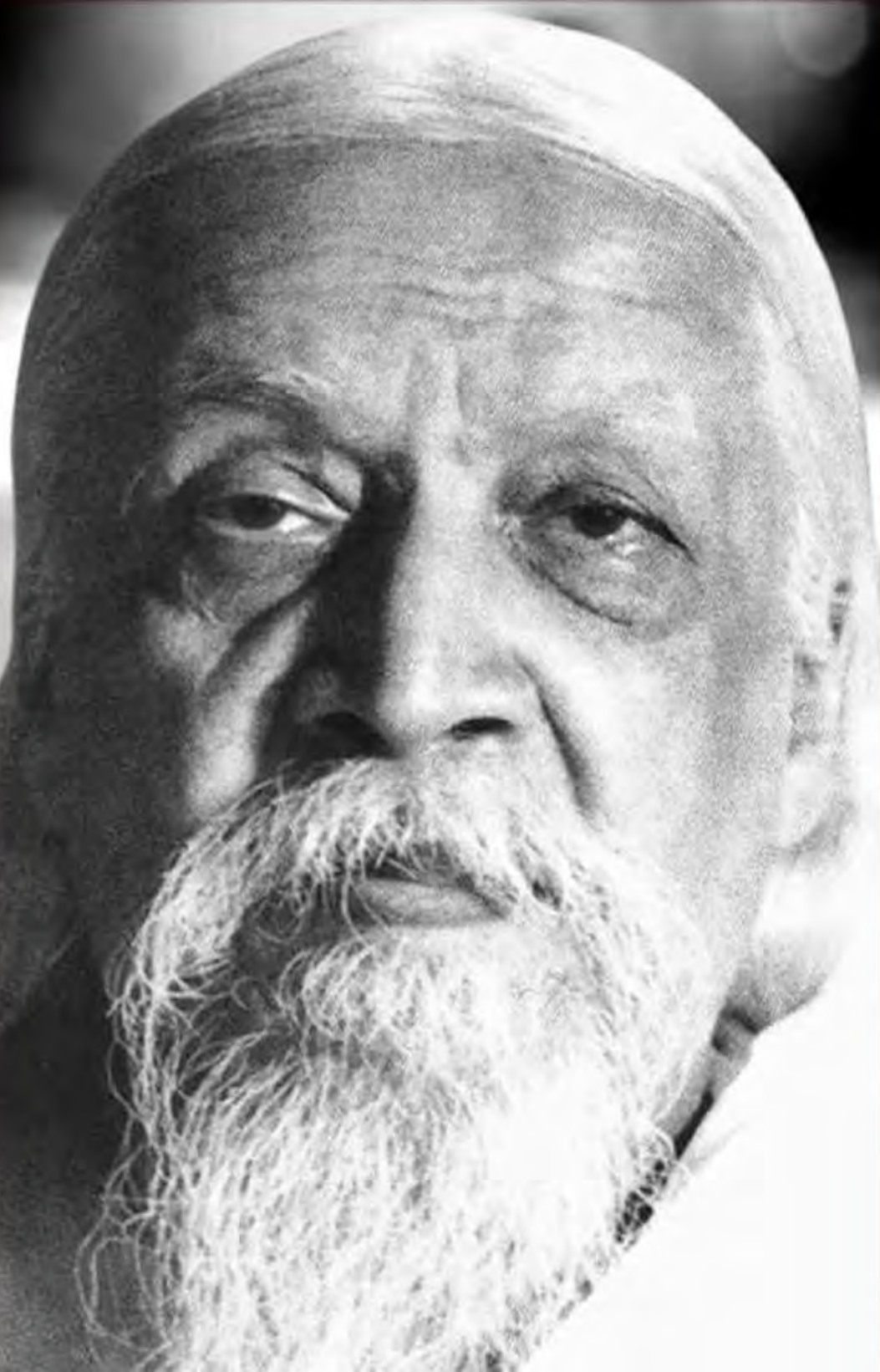
Sri Aurobindo died on December 5, 1950, but his work has been continued by "The Mother". It was in furtherance of his vision of the future that "Auroville", the international "City of Dawn", was inaugurated in February 1968.

Though nearly twenty-two years have passed since the death of Sri Aurobindo, his influence is still keenly felt, particularly so in his centenary year. He was cast in the hallowed mould of India's great sages and Rishis, and it was his destiny to participate in great world movements and help hasten their fulfilment. He saw India bound and willed her free; he saw that man was a creature of infinity in his aspirations, but a maimed thing in reality because of the limitations of egoistic desire, inbuilt incapacity and the certainty of death.

The Ashram at Pondicherry and Auroville represent the dynamic phase of Sri Aurobindo's spiritual philosophy. They are but mini-worlds, spiritual pilot projects in which several hundred men, women and children drawn from most of the nationalities of the world are laying the foundations of the "Deva Sangha" (the Community of Gods) that Sri Aurobindo envisaged.

The Ashram and Auroville are still but the beginning of beginnings; no more than hints and guesses, sketches and opening bars of music. They are, if you will, like promissory notes; but the seal and the signature are Sri Aurobindo's.

K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR  
*The UNESCO Courier*, October 1972



## THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

Poet, critic, scholar and humanist, Sri Aurobindo was a new type of thinker whom the London "Times Literary Supplement" has described as "one who combines in his vision the alacrity of the West with the illumination of the East." In 1914 he launched a monthly philosophical journal, "Arya" in which he expressed his vision of man and history, his destiny, and the progress of human society towards unity and harmony. These treatises, since published as books, were followed by other major works from the pen of Sri Aurobindo, including the epic "Savitri", a spiritual poem of 23,000 lines, and "Mind of Light". The following quotations are from "The Ideal of Human Unity", which first appeared in "Arya" in serial form between 1915 and 1918. This treatise and two other works — "The Human Cycle" and "War and Self Determination" — were recently published under the general title, "Social and Political Thought", as volume 15 in the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry.

Today the ideal of human unity is more or less making its way to the front of our consciousness. The ideal... must certainly be attempted, and is likely to figure largely among the determining forces of the future; for the intellectual and material circumstances of the age have prepared and almost imposed it...

### The State and the individual

We must note one fact in connexion with the claim of the State to suppress the individual in its own interest: that it is quite immaterial to the principle what form the State may assume. The tyranny of the absolute king over all and the tyranny of the majority over the individual... are forms of one and the same tendency. Each when it declares itself to be the State with its absolute "L'Etat, c'est moi," is speaking a profound truth even while it bases that truth upon a falsehood. The truth is that each really is the self-expression of the State in its characteristic attempt to subordinate to itself the free will, the free action, the power, dignity and self-assertion of the individuals constituting it. The falsehood lies in the underlying idea that the State is something greater than the individuals constituting it and can with impunity for itself and

to the highest hope of humanity arrogate this oppressive supremacy.

### **National conscience and individual liberty**

A national culture, a national religion, a national education may still be useful things provided they do not interfere with the growth of human solidarity on the one side and individual freedom of thought and conscience and development on the other.

### **Human aggregation and living organisms**

The administrative, political, economic organization of mankind in aggregates of smaller or greater size is a work which belongs at its basis to the same order of phenomena as the creation of vital organisms in physical Nature. It uses, that is to say, primarily external and physical methods governed by the principles of physical life-energy intent on the creation of living forms.

### **Liberty and justice**

Liberty is insufficient, justice also is necessary and becomes a pressing demand; the cry for equality arises. Certainly, absolute equality is non-existent in this world; but the word was aimed against the unjust and unnecessary inequalities of the old social order. Under a just social order, there must be an equal opportunity, an equal training for all to develop their faculties and to use them.

### **The plague of national egoism**

War can only be abolished if national armies are abolished and even then with difficulty, by the development of some other machinery which humanity does not yet know how to form or, even if formed, will not for some time be able or willing perfectly to utilize. And there is no chance of national armies being abolished; for each nation distrusts all the others too much, has too many ambitions and hungers, needs to remain armed, if for nothing else, to guard its markets and keep down its dominions, colonies, subject peoples.

### **Progress and liberty**

All unnecessary restriction of the few common liberties man has

been able to organize for himself becomes a step backward whatever immediate gain it may bring; and every organization of oppression or repression beyond what the imperfect conditions of human nature and society render inevitable, becomes, no matter where or by whom it is practised, a blow to the progress of the whole race.

### **Diversity and unity**

Freedom is as necessary to life as law and regime: diversity is as necessary as unity to our true completeness. Existence is only one in its essence and totality; in its play it is necessarily multiform. Absolute uniformity would mean the cessation of life, while on the other hand, the vigour of the pulse of life may be measured by the richness of the diversities which it creates. At the same time, while diversity is essential for power and fruitfulness of life, unity is necessary for its order, arrangement and stability.

### **The inner liberty**

Nature does not manufacture, does not impose a pattern or a rule from outside; she impels life to grow from within and to assert its own natural law and development modified only by its commerce with its environment. All liberty, individual, national, religious, social, ethical, takes its ground upon this fundamental principle of our existence.

### **Democracy**

Democracy is by no means a sure preservative of liberty; on-the contrary, we see today the democratic system of government march steadily towards such an organized annihilation of individual liberty as could not have been dreamed of in the old aristocratic and monarchical systems. It may be that from the more violent and brutal forms of despotic oppression, which were associated with those systems, democracy has indeed delivered those nations which have been fortunate enough to achieve liberal forms of government, and that is no doubt a great gain. It revives now only in periods of revolution and of excitement, often in the forms of mob tyranny or a savage revolutionary or reactionary repression. But there is a deprivation of liberty which is more respectable in appearance, more subtle and systematized, more mild in its method because it has a greater force at

its back, but for that very reason more effective and pervading.

### **Language and tongues**

A common language makes for unity and therefore it might be said that the unity of the human race demands unity of language; the advantages of diversity must be foregone for this greater good, however serious the temporary sacrifice. But... language is the sign of the cultural life of a people, the index of its soul in thought and mind that stands behind and enriches its soul in action. Therefore, it is here that the phenomena and utilities of diversity may be most readily seized more than in mere outward things. ... Diversity of language is worth keeping because diversity of cultures and differentiation of soul-groups are worth keeping and because without that diversity life cannot have full play; for in its absence there is a danger, almost an inevitability of decline and stagnation.

### **The inner and the outer**

In laying stress on culture, on the things of the mind and the spirit, there need be no intention of undervaluing the outward material side of life: it is not at all my purpose to belittle that to which Nature always attaches so insistent an importance. On the contrary, the inner and the outer depend upon each other. ... The peace, well-being and settled order of the human world is a thing eminently to be desired as a basis for a great world-culture in which all humanity must be united; but neither of these unities, the outward or inward, ought to be devoid of an element even more important than peace, order and well-being—freedom and vigour of life, which can only be assured by variation and by the freedom of the group and of the individual.

### **The ultimate aim: the spirit**

A *spiritual* religion of humanity is the hope of the future. By this is not meant what is ordinarily called a universal religion, a system, a thing of creed and intellectual belief and dogma and outward rite. Mankind has tried unity by that means; it has failed and deserved to fail, because there can be no universal religious system, one in mental creed and vital form. The inner spirit is indeed one, but more than any other the spiritual life insists on freedom

and variation in its self-expression and means of development. A religion of humanity means the growing realization that there is a secret Spirit, a divine Reality, in which we are all one, that humanity is its highest present vehicle on earth, that the human race and the human being are the means by which it will progressively reveal itself here. It implies a growing attempt to live out this knowledge and bring about a kingdom of this divine Spirit upon earth. By its growth within us oneness with our fellow-men will become the leading principle of all our life, not merely a principle of co-operation, but a deeper brotherhood, a real and an inner sense of unity and equality and a common life.

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The idea of a world-empire imposed by sheer force is in direct opposition, as we have seen, to the new conditions which the progressive nature of things has introduced into the modern world.

\*

Behind the apparent changes of the most radical revolutions we see this unavoidable principle of continuity surviving in the heart of the new order.

\*

The present arrangement of the world has been worked out by economic forces, by political diplomacies, treaties and purchases and by military violence without regard to any moral principle or any general rule of the good of mankind.

\*

The free individual is the conscious progressive: it is only when he is able to impart his own creative and mobile consciousness to the mass that a progressive society becomes possible.

SRI AUROBINDO

*Social and Political Thought*

Excerpts published in *The UNESCO Courier*, October 1972





## THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY

A religion of humanity may be either an intellectual and sentimental ideal, a living dogma with intellectual, psychological and practical effects, or else a spiritual aspiration and rule of living, partly the sign, partly the cause of a change of soul in humanity. The intellectual religion of humanity already to a certain extent exists, partly as a conscious creed in the minds of a few, partly as a potent shadow in the consciousness of the race. It is the shadow of a spirit that is yet unborn, but is preparing for its birth. This material world of ours, besides its fully embodied things of the present, is peopled by such powerful shadows, ghosts of things dead and the spirit of things yet unborn. The ghosts of things dead are very troublesome actualities and they now abound, ghosts of dead religions, dead arts, dead moralities, dead political theories, which still claim either to keep their rotting bodies or to animate partly the existing body of things. Repeating obstinately their sacred formulas of the past, they hypnotise backward-looking minds and daunt even the progressive portion of humanity. But there are too those unborn spirits which are still unable to take a definite body, but are already mind-born and exist as influences of which the human mind is aware and to which it now responds in a desultory and confused fashion. The religion of humanity was mind-born in the eighteenth century, the *manasa putra*<sup>1</sup> of the rationalist thinkers who brought it forward as a substitute for the formal spiritualism of ecclesiastical Christianity. It tried to give itself a body in Positivism, which was an attempt to formulate the dogmas of this religion, but on too heavily and severely rationalistic a basis for acceptance even by an Age of Reason. Humanitarianism has been its most prominent emotional result. Philanthropy, social service and other kindred activities have been its outward expression of good works. Democracy, socialism, pacificism are to a great extent its by-products or at least owe much of their vigour to its inner presence.

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<sup>1</sup> Mind-born child, an idea and expression of Indian Puranic cosmology.

The fundamental idea is that mankind is the godhead to be worshipped and served by man and that the respect, the service, the progress of the human being and human life are the chief duty and the chief aim of the human spirit. No other idol, neither the nation, the State, the family nor anything else ought to take its place; they are only worthy of respect so far as they are images of the human spirit and enshrine its presence and aid its self-manifestation. But where the cult of these idols seeks to usurp the place of the spirit and makes demands inconsistent with its service, they should be put aside. No injunctions of old creeds, religious, political, social or cultural, are valid when they go against its claims. Science even, though it is one of the chief modern idols, must not be allowed to make claims contrary to its ethical temperament and aim, for science is only valuable in so far as it helps and serves by knowledge and progress the religion of humanity. War, capital punishment, the taking of human life, cruelty of all kinds whether committed by the individual, the State or society, not only physical cruelty, but moral cruelty, the degradation of any human being or any class of human beings under whatever specious plea or in whatever interest, the oppression and exploitation of man by man, of class by class, of nation by nation and all those habits of life and institutions of society of a similar kind which religion and ethics formerly tolerated or even favoured in practice, whatever they might do in their ideal rule or creed, are crimes against the religion of humanity, abominable to its ethical mind, forbidden by its primary tenets, to be fought against always, in no degree to be tolerated. Man must be sacred to man regardless of all distinctions of race, creed, colour, nationality, status, political or social advancement. The body of man is to be respected, made immune from violence and outrage, fortified by science against disease and preventable death. The life of man is to be held sacred, preserved, strengthened, ennobled, uplifted. The heart of man is to be held sacred also, given scope, protected from violation, from suppression, from mechanisation, freed from belittling influences. The mind of man is to be released from all bonds, allowed freedom and range and opportunity, given all its means of self-training and self-development and organised in the play of its powers for the service of humanity. And all this too is not to be held as an abstract or pious sentiment, but given full and practical recognition in

the persons of men and nations and mankind. This, speaking largely, is the idea and spirit of the intellectual religion of humanity.

... It accomplished rapidly many things which orthodox religion failed to do effectively, largely because it acted as a constant intellectual and critical solvent, an unsparing assailant of the thing that is and an unflinching champion of the thing to be, faithful always to the future, while orthodox religion allied itself with the powers of the present, even of the past, bound itself by its pact with them and could act only at best as a moderating but not as a reforming force. Moreover, this religion has faith in humanity and its earthly future and can therefore aid its earthly progress, while the orthodox religions looked with eyes of pious sorrow and gloom on the earthly life of man and were very ready to bid him bear peacefully and contentedly, even to welcome its crudities, cruelties, oppressions, tribulations as a means for learning to appreciate and for earning the better life which will be given us hereafter. Faith, even an intellectual faith, must always be a worker of miracles, and this religion of humanity, even without taking bodily shape or a compelling form or a visible means of self-effectuation, was yet able to effect comparatively much of what it set out to do. It to some degree humanised society, humanised law and punishment, humanised the outlook of man on man, abolished legalised torture and the cruder forms of slavery, raised those who were depressed and fallen, gave large hopes to humanity, stimulated philanthropy and charity and the service of mankind, encouraged everywhere the desire of freedom, put a curb on oppression and greatly minimised its more brutal expressions.

... It gave new conceptions of the dignity of the human being and opened new ideas and new vistas of his education, self-development and potentiality. It spread enlightenment; it made man feel more his responsibility for the progress and happiness of the race; it raised the average self-respect and capacity of mankind; it gave hope to the serf, self-assertion to the down-trodden and made the labourer in his manhood the potential equal of the rich and powerful. True, if we compare what is with what should be, the actual achievement with the ideal, all this will seem only a scanty work of preparation. But it was a remarkable record for a century and a half or a little more and

for an unembodied spirit which had to work through what instruments it could find and had as yet no form, habitation or visible engine of its own concentrated workings. But perhaps it was in this that lay its power and advantage, since that saved it from crystallising into a form and getting petrified or at least losing its more free and subtle action.

But still in order to accomplish all its future this idea and religion of humanity has to make itself more explicit, insistent and categorically imperative. For otherwise it can only work with clarity in the minds of the few and with the mass it will be only a modifying influence, but will not be the rule of human life. And so long as that is so, it cannot entirely prevail over its own principal enemy. That enemy, the enemy of all real religion, is human egoism, the egoism of the individual, the egoism of class and nation. These it could for a time soften, modify, force to curb their more arrogant, open and brutal expressions, oblige to adopt better institutions, but not to give place to the love of mankind, not to recognise a real unity between man and man. For that essentially must be the aim of the religion of humanity, as it must be the earthly aim of all human religion, love, mutual recognition of human brotherhood, a living sense of human oneness and practice of human oneness in thought, feeling and life, the ideal which was expressed first some thousands of years ago in the ancient Vedic hymn and must always remain the highest injunction of the Spirit within us to human life upon earth. Till that is brought about, the religion of humanity remains unaccomplished. With that done, the one necessary psychological change will have been effected without which no formal and mechanical, no political and administrative unity can be real and secure. If it is done, that outward unification may not even be indispensable or, if indispensable, it will come about naturally, not, as now it seems likely to be, by catastrophic means, but by the demand of the human mind, and will be held secure by an essential need of our perfected and developed human nature.

But this is the question whether a purely intellectual and sentimental religion of humanity will be sufficient to bring about so great a change in our psychology. The weakness of the intellectual idea, even when it supports itself by an appeal to the sentiments and emotions, is that it does not get at the centre of man's being. The intellect and the feelings

are only instruments of the being and they may be the instruments of either its lower and external form or of the inner and higher man, servants of the ego or channels of the soul. The aim of the religion of humanity was formulated in the eighteenth century by a sort of primal intuition; that aim was and it is still to re-create human society in the image of three kindred ideas, liberty, equality and fraternity. None of these has really been won in spite of all the progress that has been achieved. The liberty that has been so loudly proclaimed as an essential of modern progress is an outward, mechanical and unreal liberty. The equality that has been so much sought after and battled for is equally an outward and mechanical and will turn out to be an unreal equality. Fraternity is not even claimed to be a practicable principle of the ordering of life and what is put forward as its substitute is the outward and mechanical principle of equal association or at the best a comradeship of labour. This is because the idea of humanity has been obliged in an intellectual age to mask its true character of a religion and a thing of the soul and the spirit and to appeal to the vital and physical mind of man rather than his inner being. It has limited his effort to the attempt to revolutionise political and social institutions and to bring about such a modification of the ideas and sentiments of the common mind of mankind as would make these institutions practicable; it has worked at the machinery of human life and on the outer mind much more than upon the soul of the race. It has laboured to establish a political, social and legal liberty, equality and mutual help in an equal association.

But though these aims are of great importance in their own field, they are not the central thing; they can only be secure when founded upon a change of the inner human nature and inner way of living; they are themselves of importance only as means for giving a greater scope and a better field for man's development towards that change and, when it is once achieved, as an outward expression of the larger inward life. Freedom, equality, brotherhood are three godheads of the soul; they cannot be really achieved through the external machinery of society or by man so long as he lives only in the individual and the communal ego. When the ego claims liberty, it arrives at competitive individualism. When it asserts equality, it arrives first at strife, then at an attempt to ignore the variations of Nature, and, as the sole way

of doing that successfully, it constructs an artificial and machine-made society. A society that pursues liberty as its ideal is unable to achieve equality; a society that aims at equality will be obliged to sacrifice liberty. For the ego to speak of fraternity is for it to speak of something contrary to its nature. All that it knows is association for the pursuit of common egoistic ends and the utmost that it can arrive at is a closer organisation for the equal distribution of labour, production, consumption and enjoyment.

Yet is brotherhood the real key to the triple gospel of the idea of humanity. The union of liberty and equality can only be achieved by the power of human brotherhood and it cannot be founded on anything else. But brotherhood exists only in the soul and by the soul; it can exist by nothing else. For this brotherhood is not a matter either of physical kinship or of vital association or of intellectual agreement. When the soul claims freedom, it is the freedom of its self-development, the self-development of the divine in man in all his being. When it claims equality, what it is claiming is that freedom equally for all and the recognition of the same soul, the same godhead in all human beings. When it strives for brotherhood, it is founding that equal freedom of self-development on a common aim, a common life, a unity of mind and feeling founded upon the recognition of this inner spiritual unity. These three things are in fact the nature of the soul; for freedom, equality, unity are the eternal attributes of the Spirit. It is the practical recognition of this truth, it is the awakening of the soul in man and the attempt to get him to live from his soul and not from his ego which is the inner meaning of religion, and it is that to which the religion of humanity also must arrive before it can fulfil itself in the life of the race.

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In other words, — and this is the conclusion at which we arrive, — while it is possible to construct a precarious and quite mechanical unity by political and administrative means, the unity of the human race, even if achieved, can only be secured and can only be made real if the religion of humanity, which is at present the highest active ideal of mankind, spiritualises itself and becomes the general inner law of human life. ...

A spiritual religion of humanity is the hope of the future. ... A religion of humanity means the growing realisation that there is a secret Spirit, a divine Reality, in which we are all one, that humanity is its highest present vehicle on earth, that the human race and the human being are the means by which it will progressively reveal itself here. It implies a growing attempt to live out this knowledge and bring about a kingdom of this divine Spirit upon earth. By its growth within us oneness with our fellow-men will become the leading principle of all our life, not merely a principle of co-operation but a deeper brotherhood, a real and an inner sense of unity and equality and a common life. ...

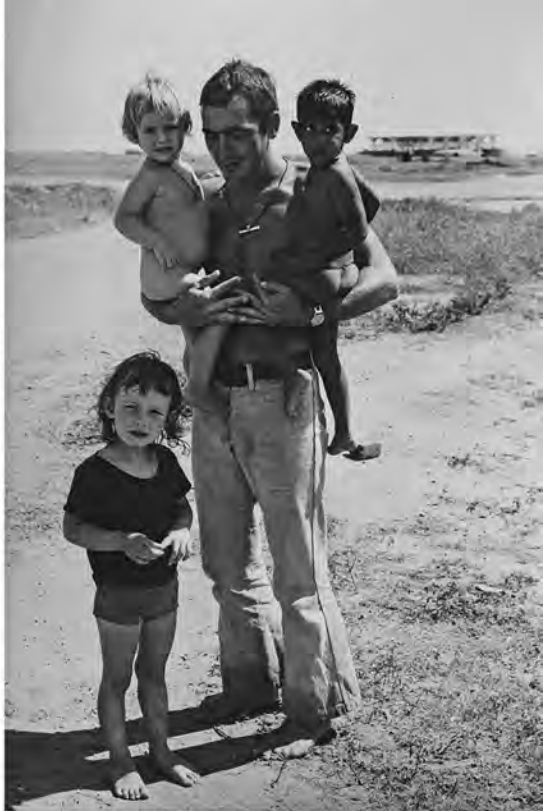
But the higher hope of humanity lies in the growing number of men who will realise this truth and seek to develop it in themselves, so that when the mind of man is ready to escape from its mechanical bent, — perhaps when it finds that its mechanical solutions are all temporary and disappointing, — the truth of the Spirit may step in and lead humanity to the path of its highest possible happiness and perfection.

SRI AUROBINDO

*The Human Cycle*, sixth ed., chapters XXXIV and XXXV,  
pp. 540-555 sparsim

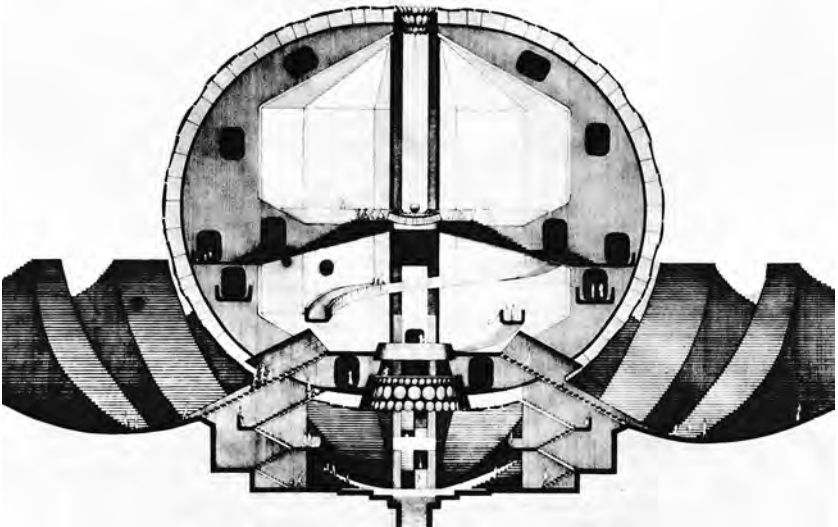








An overall view of the "Matrimandir", showing the huge structure as it will look after completion in a complex of 12 gardens symbolically recalling the open petals of a lotus flower. Its golden discs will move gently in the wind and will cover the concrete walls overlaid with plastic [*the synthetic "skin" – ed.*] Pathways from the gardens pass between walls 30ft. high that will slope down to form a 12-sectioned crater enshrining the golden ball. Cross-section of the structure (below), designed by the French architect, Roger Anger, shows stairways leading to a lower room from which ramps give access to a 12-sided hall of meditation in this structure of spiritual unity. At its centre a luminous ball [*suspended in a magnetic field – ed.*] will diffuse light into both rooms from the top of the structure, which is pierced vertically down its axis. [*The UNESCO Courier 1972*]





## **RESOLUTIONS ON AUROVILLE PASSED BY UNESCO**

*[The General Assembly of UNESCO, held annually in Paris in October-November, unanimously passed resolutions of support to Auroville in 1966, 1968, 1970 and 1983:]*

### **1st UNESCO RESOLUTION, 1966:**

The General Conference,

Being apprised that in connection with the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of UNESCO, the Sri Aurobindo Society, Puducherry, India, a non-governmental organisation affiliated to the Indian National Commission for UNESCO, proposes to set up a cultural township known as “Auroville” where people of different countries will live together in harmony in one community and engage in cultural, educational, scientific and other pursuits,

Noting that the township will have pavilions intended to represent the cultures of the world, not only intellectually but also by presenting different schools of architecture, painting, sculpture, music, etc, as part of a way of living,

Appreciating that one of the aims of “Auroville” will be to bring together in close juxtaposition the values and ideals of different civilizations and cultures,

Expresses the belief that the project will contribute to international understanding and promotion of peace and commends it to those interested in UNESCO’s ideals.

### **2nd UNESCO RESOLUTION, 1968:**

The General Conference,

Recalling that in connection with commemoration of the 20th anniversary of UNESCO, the Sri Aurobindo Society, Puducherry, India, had taken steps to establish an international cultural township known as Auroville where people of different countries will live together in one community and engage in cultural, educational and other pursuits, and that this project has been commended to all those interested in

UNESCO's ideals in resolution 4.36 passed at the fourteenth session of the General Conference.

Considering that Member States, believing in the pursuit of truth and the free exchange of ideas and knowledge, have agreed and determined to develop and to increase the means of communication between their peoples,

Considering also that, despite the technical advance which facilitates the development and dissemination of knowledge and ideas, ignorance of the way of life and customs of people still presents an obstacle to friendship among the nations, to peaceful cooperation, and to the progress of mankind,

Taking account of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideas of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples and the Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Cooperation,

Noting that the foundation-stone of Auroville has been laid on 28th February 1968 and that the youth of many nations participated in this solemn ceremony symbolizing the coming together of nations in a spirit of human unity,

Confident that Auroville with its many interrelated sub-projects will add a new dimension to UNESCO's activities for the promotion of international co-operation and understanding and appreciation of cultural and human values,

Invites Member States and international non-governmental organizations to participate in the development of Auroville as an international cultural township designed to bring together the values of different cultures and civilisations in a harmonious environment with integrated living standard which correspond to man's physical and spiritual needs.

### **3rd UNESCO RESOLUTION, 1970:**

The General Conference,

Recalling resolutions 4.36 and 4.131 concerning Auroville which were adopted by the fourteenth and fifteenth sessions of the General Conference,

Noting that the Charter of Auroville aims inter alia at establishing "a

place of unending education, of constant progress, of youth that never ages”, and “living embodiment of an actual human unity,”

Recognizing the progress made in Auroville since the foundation stone was laid on 28th February 1968,

Conscious of the new responsibilities cast on UNESCO in the wake of growing unrest among youth from almost every part of the world; and which has taken the form of an open dispute with the universities and society,

Aware of the urgent need to welcome the “newly vocal young as allies in the search for a better world”, and in keeping up with the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for the promotion among youth of ideas of peace, mutual respect and understanding between peoples, and in conformity with the Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Co-operation,

Noting further that towards this end Auroville is already preparing and creating an instrument of education capable of meeting the formidable demands of our age, linking East and West in a new relationship,

Considering that UNESCO’s Major Project on the Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values gave a pioneering start, and recognizing that Auroville can be an effective and integrated follow-up of this Project,

Requests the Director-General to take such steps as may be feasible within the budgetary provisions to promote the development of Auroville as an important international cultural programme.

#### **4th UNESCO RESOLUTION, 1983:**

The General Conference,

Recalling the foundation of an international township, Auroville in South India in February 1968, when the youth of 124 Member States participated in the ceremony by depositing the soil of their countries in the foundation urn to symbolise the coming together of the nations of the world,

Noting that the Charter of Auroville, announced at the Foundation Ceremony, declared that Auroville belongs to nobody in particular but to humanity as a whole and enunciated the aims of unending education and youth that never ages, as also material and spiritual research for the living embodiment of an actual human unity,

Recognising that Auroville seeks to ensure international understanding, peace, innovative education, a learning society and all round material and spiritual development for harmonious individual and collective growth and that such aims contribute to the advancement of the objectives of UNESCO,

Recognising that during the last fourteen years, Auroville has been growing steadily and that the resident members of Auroville, including 125 children represent twenty-four countries,

Noting that Auroville International Centres have been established in different parts of the world to work for the growth, development and promotion of the aims and objectives of Auroville,

Noting that the Government of India has taken an active interest in Auroville and has fully supported its ideals of international understanding and the unity of mankind,

Welcoming the fact that an International Advisory Council has been set up to advise the Government of India on ensuring the promotion of the ideals for which Auroville was established,

Noting that the work at Auroville aims at restoring the ecological balance of a severely deforested, eroded land by an extensive programme of afforestation, erosion control and soil conservation, and also by initiating a new approach to integrated rural and educational development,

Appreciating the experimentation in Auroville in alternative sources of energy and in new methods of economic development permitting the free pooling of resources and cooperative activities,

Recalling that in 1970 the General Conference adopted a resolution inviting Member States and international non-governmental organisations to participate in the development of Auroville as an International Cultural Township, and inviting the Director-General to take such steps as might be feasible, within the budgetary provisions, to promote the development of Auroville as an important international cultural programme,

Invites the Director-General to extend all possible support for the development of Auroville and to participate in its activities within the framework of the Programme and Budget for 1984 -1985.

## **5th UNESCO RESOLUTION, 2017:**

The General Conference,

Recalling the foundation of an international township, Auroville, in South India on February 28, 1968, when the youth of 124 Member States participated in the ceremony by depositing the soil of their countries in the foundation urn to symbolize the coming together of the nations of the world,

Noting that the General Conference of UNESCO unanimously adopted resolutions of support to Auroville in 1966, 1968, 1970 and 1983, inviting Member States and international non-governmental organizations to participate in the development of Auroville as an international cultural township designed to bring together the values of different cultures and civilizations in a harmonious environment with integrated living standards which correspond to man's physical and spiritual needs,

Recognizing that the aims of Auroville are to promote international understanding, peace, innovative education, a learning society and all-round material and spiritual development for harmonious individual and collective growth, and that such aims contribute to the advancement of the objectives of UNESCO, especially dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions, cultural diversity and culture as a factor for development,

Appreciating that the Government of India passed, in 1988, the Auroville Foundation Act for the purpose of protecting and encouraging the development of Auroville,

Also appreciating that Auroville International Centres have been established in many countries of the world, which are engaged in bringing youth from their countries into contact with the aims and ideals of Auroville and in facilitating internships, volunteer stays and academic research programmes,

Also recognizing that Auroville has developed into a centre of expertise in a wide range of fields, benefiting India and noting its



success in sharing its experience and helping the development of its neighboring rural population,

Acknowledging that Auroville is inviting all nations of the world to participate in its development, especially of its International Zone, which is designated as an educational campus hosting cultural pavilions of all nations or groups of nations, expressing the genius of each culture,

Also noting that 28 February 2018 will mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of Auroville,

Further recognizing that Auroville is a successful and unique model project, proving the capacity of an international community, after almost 50 years of existence, to continue to live up to its initial founding ideas of peace and international harmony and which are also UNESCO's own values and principles, as well as some of its major priorities,

Invites the Director-General to reinforce the association of UNESCO with Auroville and organize commemorative activities for its 50th anniversary, and to re-invite the Member States on the special occasion of Auroville's 50th anniversary to participate in Auroville's further development.





