

Aspiring for Perfection

A History of Matrimandir the “Soul of Auroville”

Volume 1: 1965-1973

This compilation focuses on the history of Auroville’s central area and on its relationship with the rest of the town. It includes all known words of The Mother on the subject. Photos, plans and documents written by others have been added in an attempt to describe the context of these words.

1st Edition 11th November 2002

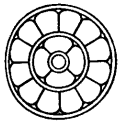
Compiled by Gilles Guigan – Samasti, Auroville

मातृमन्दिर

Matri mandir

L'oratoire de la Mère

The Mother's Shrine



*Le Matrimandir veut être
le symbole de la réponse du Divin
à l'aspiration humaine
vers la perfection .*

*L'union avec le Divin
se manifestant dans
une unité humaine progressive .*

**Matrimandir wants to be
the symbol of the Divine's answer
to man's aspiration
for perfection.
Union with the Divine
manifesting in
a progressive human unity.**

About this Document

This document has been compiled at a time when crucial decisions need to be taken about Matrimandir's gardens and lake. As these decisions will in effect define the relationship between the town and its soul, the community of Auroville needs to reflect on it.

Reflecting on this relationship implies – among other things – informing oneself about the history – especially at the time when Mother was still in Her body – of the centre of Auroville (Matrimandir with its gardens and lake) and about the relationship between this central area and the rest of the town. It is in answer to this need of information that this compilation has been put together and that its scope includes Auroville's evolving Master Plan.

This document is however not solely focused on this soul-body relationship; it is also meant for all those who are keen to know what Mother actually said about Matrimandir and Auroville's central area and in which context She said it.

This is the 4th version of this document as 3 different drafts were already circulated for feedback. It is now in its final form and thus from "Draft" it has become the "1st edition". Our own aspiration for perfection with regard to this compilation is however not over and we request again everyone to bring to our notice any remaining mistakes, omissions and/or additional information, which we will include in further editions. Please, do contact me, either by phone at home (26 23 499) or by e-mail: gillou@auroville.org.in

Our 3rd Draft included also documents (mostly exchanges of letters) written by various people after Mother left Her body. These are not included anymore in this "1st edition"; they will have to be part of other volumes, which I have no intention of working on - at least not in the foreseeable future. Other compilers are thus warmly invited to put together the subsequent volumes of this History of Matrimandir.

As Udar's drawings are presented here for the first time, we include in an annexure our "Study of Udar's drawings showing the original layout and dimensions of Matrimandir's Inner Chamber" with the hope that it will bring some more clarity to an old debate.

This document is now on Auroville's Intranet and an original printout will remain at CSR's Photocopy Office for all those interested in having a hard copy of it (please call 26 22 277). We also intend to make it available on CD from CSR.

Those who would wish to publish all or part of this document; will need to address the question of copyrights of texts and photos. Until such time, it will have to remain a reference document for internal use only. Whenever we could, we mentioned the names of the authors of documents and photos. This compiler does not claim any copyright on his work; his contribution does not even need to be acknowledged.

Let us all join hands to complete Matrimandir at the earliest and as per Mother's wishes.

Auroville, November 11th 2002

Gilles G. – Samasti

About the Texts

This compilation consists of 8 Year Books and 13 Annexures.

Italics

In the Year Books, Mother's words are in normal character; the words of all other persons as well as those of the compiler are in *italics*. In the Annexures it is the opposite because Mother is seldom quoted.

Bold

In previous drafts the compiler had used bold characters to highlight some points (i.e., those pertaining to the Lake and Gardens) and hopefully help the reader to find easily the most important points. Because of the obvious subjectivity of such an attempt, highlighting in bold has now been removed.

Footnotes

All footnotes are the compiler's except when otherwise mentioned.

Pagination and footnote numbers

Pagination and footnote numbers start from 1 in each Year Book and each Annexure. This is to facilitate the making of any changes or the inclusion of additional texts or documents.

Compiler's introduction notes

These are always in brackets [...] and are in the present tense ("Mother answers Huta") in order to be consistent with Satprem's comments in "Mother's Agenda" (i.e.: "Mother starts to draw").

Sources of the Documents

AMW	Auroville in Mother's Words. Published by Bill Sullivan and others in 1990.
CWM	Collected Words of the Mother Volume XIII. Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram.
MoA	Mother on Auroville. Published by Auropublications in 1973.
Mother's Agenda	13 Volumes. Published by "Institute of Evolutionary Research".
Matrimandir	Published by Auropublications published in 1977.
MMTL	Matrimandir – Mother's Truth and Love. Published by Huta in 1974.
The Spirit of Auroville	Published by Huta in 2002.
GMLA	"A Glimpse of The Mother's Love and Action". Published by the SAS in 1987.
Auroville, the First Six Years	By Savitra. Published by Auropublications in 1974.
The Dawning of Auroville	Published by Bill Sullivan in 1994.

Other documents originate from Auroville's "Archives" and the "Laboratory of Evolution", Roger's personal archives, Piero's personal archives, various publications, etc.

Summary

Year Books	Year Books and Annexures	Number of printed pages¹
Title Page		1
Matrimandir in Mother's Handwriting		1
Message of the Mother		1
About the Texts – Summary, etc.		3
Comments by the Compiler		
Year Books		
Year 1965		18
Year 1966		5
Year 1967		3
Year 1968		9
Year 1969		14
Year 1970		47
Year 1971		26
Year 1972		33
Year 1973		16
Annexure		
1. Presentation of the "Rectangular" Model		2
2. Presentation of the "Nebula" Model		6
3. Presentation of the "Macrostructure" Model		12
4. Presentation of Studies for the "Galaxy" Model		2
5. Presentation of the "Galaxy" Model		6
6. Presentation of the Model of the "Central Area of the Galaxy"		2
7. Richard Pearson's work with Mother on the flowers of Matrimandir Gardens		
8. Study of Udar's Plans		
9. "Small" Matrimandir Brochure		3
10. Interview of Roger Anger in the JIIA		6
11. Set of Drawings of Matrimandir, dated September 1971		5
12. "Big" Matrimandir Brochure		
13. Comparison between Udar's Plans, Roger's drawings (1971) and what has been realised		
Total number of pages		

Auroville, November 11th 2002

¹ Including the unnumbered introducing pages as well as the title page for each Year Book or Annexure.

1965

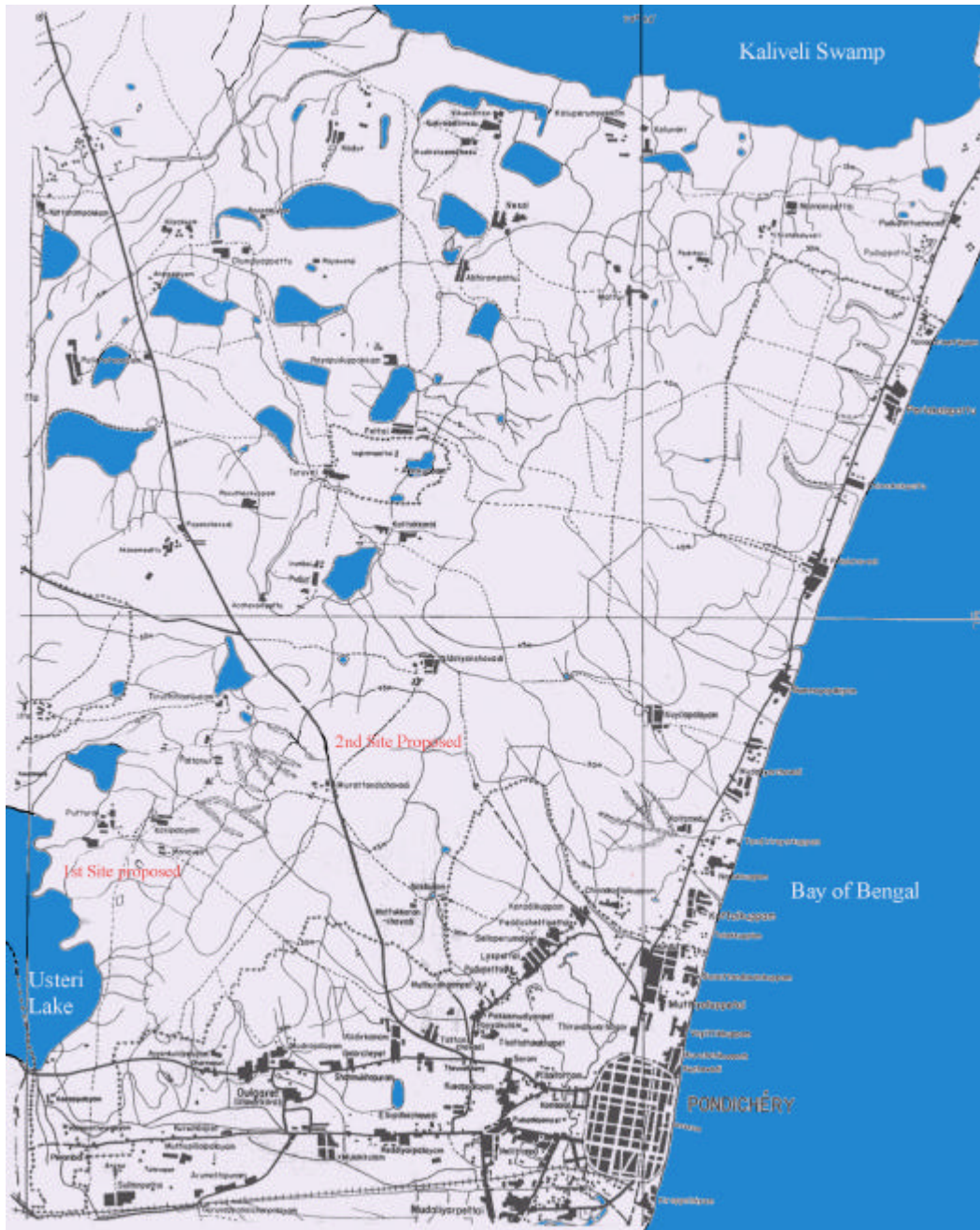
First Year of Phase 1

Visions and Ideas

Early 1965

Sources: Huta and Compiler

[Mother names the new town “Auroville” and its centre is shifted from the vicinity of Usteri Lake to the top of the hill near the future Auroville settlement “Promesse”.]



1st and 2nd site of the Auroville Project

* * *

Probably early 1965

*[Mother writes to Roger to tell him that she has a city to build¹ – if he is interested.
Roger answers positively.]*



* * *

30 March 1965

Letter

Original language: French

Sources: Roger's personal archives – not yet communicated

[Mother writes to Roger to tell him how happy she is that he has accepted to be the architect of her project. She adds that she always thought he was the right person for this work.]

* * *

¹ Roger doesn't have this letter. He now thinks Mother may have sent it through Purna Prema (then his wife) and that it may still be with her.

It is very unfortunate that we are not able to read this letter because, though we know what Mother told two of her confidants (Satprem and Huta), it would be far more interesting to know what she told the architect to whom she had entrusted the work of designing Auroville. From Roger's first report on the future town, dated September 1965, it is clear that She had informed him at least about the centre of Auroville being near the main highway (Pondicherry-Tindivanam) and about the presence there of the Pavilion of the Mother in the Park of Unity.

28 May 1965

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: MMTL, Frontispiece

[Mother writes to Huta:]

My dear little child of mine,

You can be absolutely sure that the Lord is always doing the very best for the Truth.

LOVE

* * *

10 June 1965

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile in The Spirit of Auroville, p. 5; MMTL. p. 3; AMW, p. 33

[Mother answers Huta who had again asked about her house in Auroville:]

My dear little child,

Quite willing to give you your house in Auroville, but it must be built first.

You must keep the amount of which you spoke for that purpose.

LOVE.

* * *

18 June 1965

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile in The Spirit of Auroville, p. 6

[Mother writes to Huta:]

Dear little child of mine,

[...]

For the house in Auroville, I had from the beginning said to Nava that your house must be in a pretty and quiet place and that if any of your family want houses in Auroville it must be at the other end of the town. So it will be all right.

On the 25th we shall have a nice, quiet time.

With all my love

* * *

20 June 1965

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile in MMTL, p. 4 and in The Spirit of Auroville, p. 7; AMW, p. 36

[Mother answers Huta who had a vision on the night of 19th, which she had expressed in detail in a letter² addressed to Mother:]

Huta, my dear little child,

You have indeed a very sweet soul who makes very sweet projects and beautiful dreams – all that is passed on directly to the Lord who will show us clearly what is His decision. Meanwhile it is not to Nava that I shall show the letter but to the architect of Auroville when he arrives and see with him the way of giving a concrete realization to the beautiful plans. But I must warn you to be patient because all that may take more time than you expect. However there is also a joy in waiting, the joy of expectation.

With all my love.

* * *

21 June 1965

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile in MMTL, p. 5 and in The Spirit of Auroville, p. 8; AMW, p. 37

[Mother answers Huta who had written again to express her childhood dream³:]

My dearest little child Huta,

With your Rs. 500/- of today, I have started a purse on which is written: “Huta-Auroville”.

So, little by little the money will collect.

In your yesterday's letter you spoke of a dream of your childhood, ‘the most beautiful spot of the world’.

This was also a dream of my own childhood – So our dreams have met for realization.

Now it is only to be worked out. When we know how to wait, we put Time on our side.

LOVE.

* * *

² Huta tells her readers that she wrote in this letter that Mother should have a house in Auroville, “because without the Spirit of Auroville, the whole town would be lifeless”.

On 23rd June 1965, Mother told Satprem: Huta “wants a house where she would be all alone, and next to it a house where I would be all alone.” And also: “Huta wants to be in peace, silence, far from the world”.

It is unfortunate that Huta did not share this letter with her readers because it would have enabled them to understand better the similarities and differences between Mother's vision and her own vision. It would have also helped them to understand what Mother was responding to when she made her the guardian of Matrimandir.

³ For the same reasons, it is again unfortunate that Huta does not share this 2nd letter with us.

23 June 1965

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile in *The Spirit of Auroville*, p. 10; MMTL, p. 6

[According to Huta, Mother had told Nolini, Counouma, Dyuman, André, Amrita, Champaklal, Vasudha, Navajata and others that she had received the correct vision. Learning about it, she felt understood and encouraged and could not resist pouring out her heart's joy and happiness through another letter – to which Mother replies:]

My dearest little child,

Your letter is very nice. On the 25th, I shall show you my plan of Auroville.

* * *

23 June 1965

Taped conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Mother's Agenda⁴, pp. 139-147; MoA, p. 57, CWM, XIII, p. 257, AMW, p. 37

[Excerpt from a conversation with Satprem:]

Have you heard of Auroville?...

For a long time, I had had a plan of the "ideal city," but that was during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime, with Sri Aurobindo living at its centre. Afterwards ... I was no longer interested.

Then, we took up the idea of Auroville again (I was the one who called it "Auroville"), but from the other end: instead of the formation having to find the place, it was the place (near the [*Usteri*] Lake⁵) that caused the formation to be born; and up to now I took a very secondary interest⁶ in it because I hadn't received anything direct.

Then that little Huta took it into her head to have a house there, and have a house for me next to hers to offer me. And she wrote to me all her dreams; one or two sentences suddenly awakened an old, old memory of something that had tried to manifest – a creation – when I was very small (I don't remember what age), and that had again tried to manifest at the very beginning of the century when I was with Théon. Then I had forgotten all about it.

And it came back with that letter: suddenly I had my plan of Auroville. Now I have my general plan; I am waiting for Roger to make the detailed plans because since the beginning I have said, "Roger will be the architect", and I have written to Roger.

[...]

My plan is very simple.

It takes place up there, on the way to Madras, on top of the hill.⁷

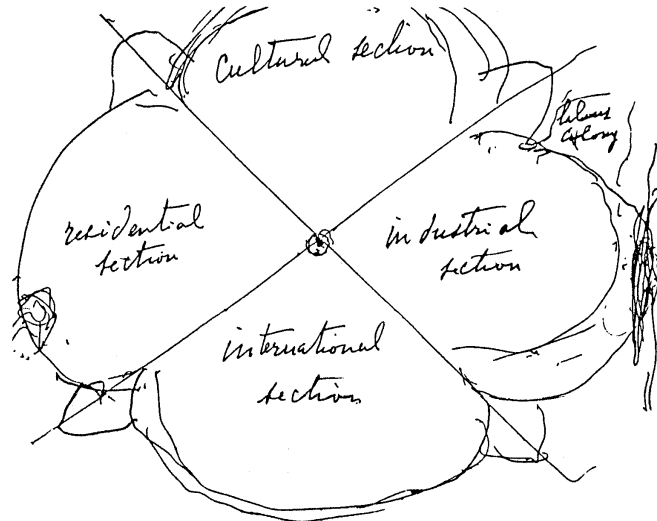
⁴ As the Agenda's transcription is not always accurate, at times the compiler felt the need to transcribe literally what Mother can be heard saying in the tapes of these conversations.

⁵ By the time this conversation took place, the centre of the town had been shifted to the "*Promesse*" area.

⁶ Mother was however sufficiently interested in Auroville to write to Roger and ask him to come and build her town.

⁷ *Ça se passe là haut, en route pour Madras, sur le haut de la coline.*

[Mother takes a piece of paper and starts drawing:]



Mother's sketch of the Auroville township⁸

Here we have (naturally in Nature it's not like this: we'll have to adapt – it's like this up there, in the ideal), here, a central point. This central point is a park I had seen when I was a little girl (perhaps the most beautiful thing in the world with regard to physical, material Nature), a park with water and trees like all parks, and flowers, but not too many (flowers in the form of creepers), palm trees and ferns (all species of palm trees), water (if possible, running water – it must be running water) and, if possible, a small waterfall – running water. From a practical point of view, it would be very good: at the edge, outside the park, we could build reservoirs that would provide water to the residents.

So in that park I had seen the "Pavilion of Love" (but I don't like to use that word because men have turned it into something ludicrous); I am referring to the principle of divine Love. But it has been changed: it will be the "Pavilion of the Mother"; but not this [Mother points to herself]: the Mother, the true Mother, the principle of the Mother. (I say "Mother" because Sri Aurobindo used the word, otherwise I would have put something else – I would have put "creative principle" or "realizing principle" or ... something of that sort.) And it will be a small building, not a big one, with just a meditation room downstairs, with columns and probably a circular shape (I say "probably" because I am leaving it for Roger to decide). Upstairs, the top floor will be a room, and the roof will be a covered terrace. Do you know the old Indian Mogul miniatures with palaces in which there are terraces and small roofs supported by columns? Do you know those old miniatures? I've had hundreds of them in my hands.... But this pavilion is very, very lovely: a small pavilion like this, with a roof over a terrace, and low walls against which there will be divans where people can sit and meditate in the open air in the evening or at night. And downstairs, at the very bottom, on the ground floor, simply a meditation room – a place with nothing in it. There would probably be, at the far end, something that would be a living light (perhaps the symbol made of living light), a constant light. Otherwise, a very calm, very silent place.

⁸ The origin of this sketch is unknown. We copied it from the report submitted years later by Vernon Newcombe (UNDP consultant). It seems to be the sketch drawn by Mother in front of Satprem. Note the sea at the extremity of the industrial section and Usteri Lake at the edge of the residential section.

Adjoining it would be a small dwelling (well, a dwelling that would still have three floors), but not of large dimensions, and it would be the house of Huta, who would act as guardian – she would be the guardian of the pavilion (she wrote me a very nice letter, but she didn't understand all this, of course).

This is the centre. All around, there is a circular road, which isolates it from the rest. There would probably be an entrance gate (there has to be one) into the park. An entrance gate or there would be a guardian of the gate. The guardian of the gate is a new girl who has come from Africa who is Huta's cousin (to whom I gave the name Vidyota) and has written me a letter saying she wanted to be the "guardian of Auroville" to let in only the "servants of the Truth".... [Laughing] It's a very nice plan (!) So I will probably put her as guardian of the park, with a little house on the road, at the entrance.

[...]

Satprem: And you will be there, in the centre?

Huta hopes so! [Mother laughs] I didn't say either yes or no to her, I told her, "The Lord will decide." It depends on my "health." Moving from here – no: I am here because of the Samadhi, I remain here, that's quite certain; but I can go there on a visit (it's not so far away, it takes five minutes by car). Only, Huta wants to be in peace, silence, far from the world, and it's quite possible in her park with a road around it and someone to stop people from entering – one can be really in peace – but if I am there, that's an end to it! There will be collective meditations and so on. So if I have signs (physical signs, first), then the inner command to go out, I will go there in a car and spend an hour in the afternoon – I can do it from time to time... We still have time, because it will take years before everything is ready.

Satprem: You mean the disciples will remain here?

Ah! The Ashram stays here – the Ashram stays here, I stay here, that's quite clear: Auroville is...

Satprem: A satellite.

Yes, it's the contact with the outside world. The centre in my drawing is a symbolic centre. But that's Huta's hope: she wants a house where she would be all alone, and next to it a house where I would be all alone – the second part is a dream because for me to be "all alone" ... you just have to see what goes on! It's a fact, isn't it, so it doesn't go well with the "all alone." Solitude must be found within, it's the only way. But on the level of life, I will certainly not go and live there, because the Samadhi is here; but I can go there on a visit. For instance, I can go for an opening or certain ceremonies – we'll have to see, it won't be for years. It's going to take years to be realized.

[...]

In the old formation I had made, there had to be a hill and a river. A hill was necessary because Sri Aurobindo's house was on top of the hill. But Sri Aurobindo was there, in the centre. It was arranged according to the plan of my symbol, that is to say, a central point with Sri Aurobindo and all that concerns Sri Aurobindo's life...

[...]

I nearly had the land: it was at the time of Sir Akbar (you remember?) of Hyderabad. They sent me photographs of Hyderabad State, and there, among those photos, I found my ideal place: an isolated hill (a rather large hill), below which a big river flowed.

[...]

As regards the construction, it will depend on Roger's plasticity...

I am not concerned about the details at all, there is only that pavilion that I would like to be very pretty – I see it. Because I saw it, I had a vision of it, so I'll try to make him understand what I saw. The park, too, I saw – those are old visions I had repeatedly. But that's not difficult.

The biggest difficulty is water, because there is no nearby river up there; but they are already trying to harness rivers. There is even a project to divert water from the Himalayas and bring it across the whole of India⁹ (Louis had made a plan and discussed it in Delhi; of course, they objected that it would be a little costly!).

But anyway, without going into such grandiose things, something has to be done to bring water; that will be the biggest difficulty, that's what will take the longest time. As for the rest – light, power – it will be made on the spot in the industrial section – but you can't manufacture water! The Americans have given serious thought to a way of using seawater, because the earth no longer has enough drinking water for people (the water they call "fresh"... it's ironical); the amount of water is insufficient for people's use, so they have already started chemical experiments on a big scale to transform seawater and make it usable – obviously that would be the solution to the problem.

Satprem: But it already exists.

It exists, but not in a sufficient proportion.

Satprem: Yes, in Israel.

They do it in Israel? They use seawater? Obviously, that would be the solution¹⁰ – the sea is there.

It has to be studied.

Then the water would have to be sent uphill.

* * *

⁹ This project is not as extravagant as it seems because the Government of India is presently (2002) considering a project that would bring water from the rivers of the north to the south.

¹⁰ Desalination is one of the options that is presently being investigated.

25 June 1965

Notes taken after a conversation

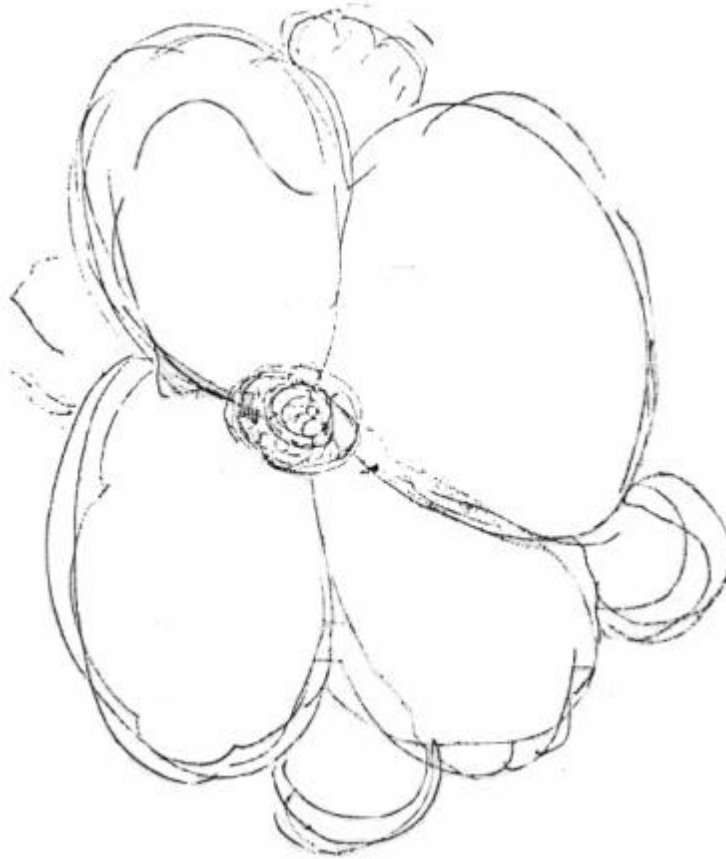
Original language: English

Sources: MMTL, pp. 6-7; The Spirit of Auroville, pp. 12-15; AMW, p. 47

[Excerpt from a conversation with Huta:¹¹]

The town will be divided into four parts. 1. Pavilions of all countries, 2. Cultural Pavilion, 3. Residential area, 4. Small industries.

On the seaside there will be many big industries. And further towards Madras the land will be extended – covering some 50 miles¹² or so.



Plan of the township, drawn by Mother in front of Huta¹³

¹¹ We reproduce here only what Huta wrote in her first book (MMTL) of what Mother told her on the township; in “The Spirit of Auroville”, she reported much more.

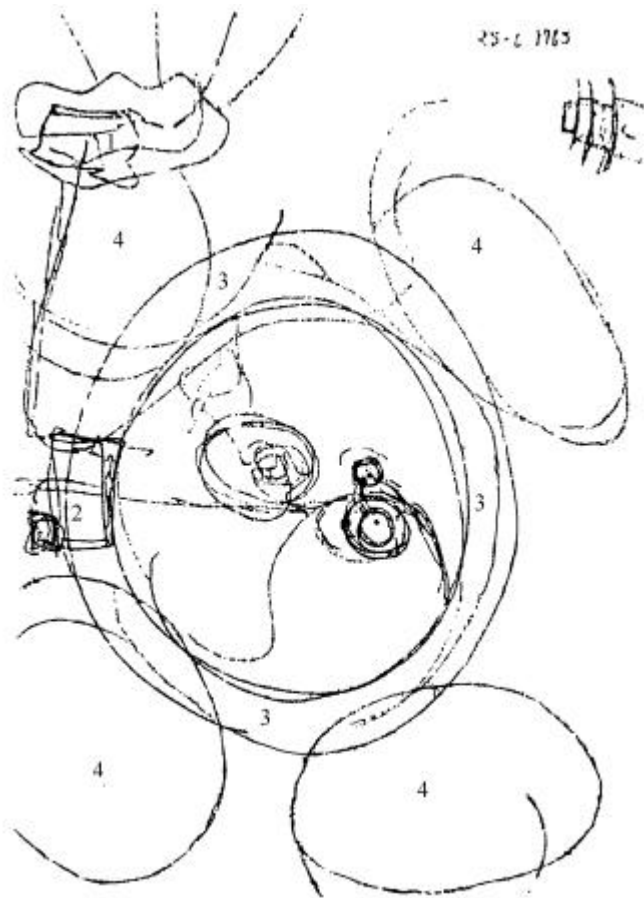
¹² Huta is most probably mistaken because all other documents mention fifteen square miles and not fifty.

¹³ Comments on this sketch:

?? Most of the elements represented in the sketch presented on the following page are represented here also.

?? There is no indication of the orientation. This is interesting because Mother drew this sketch just two days after drawing a similar one for Satprem, which gives a cardinal orientation for each zone. Now, the cardinal orientation does not seem to matter any more.

?? The North is not shown here. However, sometime later Mother said that access to the Park of Unity and the Pavilion of the Mother will be from the West. (Here the road passes between 2 Sections).



*Sketch of the Park of Unity with the Mother's Pavilion,
drawn by Mother in front of Huta¹⁴*

¹⁴ The original of this sketch is badly damaged because it and the previous one were drawn on the opposite sides of one thin sheet of paper and, along the years, the ink has migrated through the paper... This is a "cleaned" version of the original. The reference numbers on this sketch are copied from those mentioned on a similar sketch sent by Narad to Roger on 17th December 1977 (See appendix). In his accompanying letter, Narad explained to Roger what the different parts of the sketch represent according to him. As Narad was a good friend of Huta, it seems likely that Huta explained to him what Mother wanted to have in each of the areas defined here.

- ?? The pagoda-shaped sketch (top right) seems to describe the "*Pavilion of the Mother*" which at that time was supposed to look like the Golden Temple in Kyoto – except for the shape of the roof (Mother's talk to Huta on 1st September 1965).
- ?? The two very large circles at the centre represent the lake. (ref. 3)
- ?? Mother's Pavilion is on the eastern part (left) of the island. A point and two concentric circles represent it (the two concentric circles may represent a smaller lake around it).
- ?? Huta's house is just next to it (to its north) – represented by one circle.
- ?? The other lines on the island may represent gardens, water bodies, cascades, pathways, etc.
- ?? One has access to the island by one bridge located at the west (ref. 2). The small rectangle at the bottom left angle of the larger rectangle represents the house of the "Guardian of the Gate" (as explained to Satprem two days earlier).
- ?? The four large circular areas (ref. 4) in the four corners represent areas planted with "*huge trees*". According to Huta's transcription, in *The Spirit of Auroville* of her conversation with Mother on the same day, each of these parks represents one of the four Powers of The Mother.
- ?? The "*mountain with the fir-trees*" (top left, ref. 1) is represented at the top left (North West), outside the lake.

[Huta gives two different versions¹⁵ of the second part of the conversation:]

“Matrimandir, Mother’s Truth and Love”

(Published in 1974, pp. 6-7)

Ah! Now the Mother’s Pavilion – it will be surrounded by a lake, tall trees, various kinds of flowers.

I especially want the creepers of Hibiscus - **Java – red flowers – Power** – upon the outer dome of the Mother’s Pavilion.

There will be rockeries, in Japanese style, with varieties of cactus, small waterfalls, small pools with lilies, marble statues, marble fountains and pavements decorated with precious stones.



*Mother’s sketch of the
Flame of Aspiration*

This Pavilion will be in white marble and will have three storeys.

The ground floor will be a huge marble Hall. Nothing material is to be kept in it except an arrangement by which there will be a perpetual flame representing the Immortal Flame-**the white flame** of the Supreme Truth.

This flame will burn in a lotus built in the centre of Sri Aurobindo’s symbol and my symbol combined in a design made of pure gold. The Supreme Truth will be invoked in it.

For the second floor, I do not know yet, but on the third floor there will be a terrace garden and from this top floor the whole of Auroville will be seen.

Also on this terrace I would like to have carved marble seats – you know they carve

“The Spirit of Auroville”

(Published in 2002, pp. 12-15)

Ah! Now, the Mother’s Pavilion. **This will be a separate island** surrounded by a lake, tall trees, gardens with various kind of flowers.

I especially want the creepers of red hibiscus (Power) upon the outer dome of the Mother’s Pavilion. They will look like living jewels against the white marble.

There will be rockeries in Japanese style, varieties of cactus, small waterfalls, small pools with lilies, **lotuses, small bridges**, various kinds of fountains and marble statues – one of them will be Shiva in deep trance. From his matted hair flows the water like a fountain...

There will be only one entrance. I want precious, semi-precious and **artificial stones to be paved from the gate to the Mother’s Pavilion in gradations, because they are full of meaning.**

The Pavilion will be in white marble and will have three storeys.

The ground floor will be a huge marble hall. Nothing material is to be kept in it except an arrangement by which there will be a perpetual flame representing the Immortal Flame of the Supreme Truth.

This flame will burn in a lotus built in the centre of Sri Aurobindo’s symbol and my symbol combined in a design made of pure gold. The Supreme Truth will be invoked in it.

For the second floor, I do not know yet, but on the third floor there will be a terrace garden and from this top floor the whole of Auroville will be seen.

On the terrace, I would like to have carved marble seats with satin cushions – you know

¹⁵ Differences between the 2 versions are shown in **bold** by the compiler.

As Huta writes that she “kept a record of all Her conversations – corrected by Her”. (MMTL p. 9), it is a bit odd that she gives us two different versions of the same conversation.

carved marble seats – you know they carve peacocks and things like that in marble.

This Shrine¹⁶ must have a vast area - not like this (*Mother takes her handkerchief in her palm and closes her hand*), so small. Also there must be a silent zone. No vehicles should move in this area, there should be no noise of any kind.

The Park of Unity will be divided into twelve gardens, which will represent the Twelve Attributes of the Supreme Mother.

In these gardens I would like to have various kinds of flowers – especially the different types of Hibiscus – the Divine Consciousness.

On the other side, towards the boundary of the gardens, I wish to have huge trees like palms, varieties of ferns, neem, Indian cork-trees, eucalyptus and many other beautiful big trees. They all represent Unity and Aspiration.

The whole area will be surrounded by a lake so that the Mother's Shrine may be on an island.

When the lake will be dug, all the soil will be collected on one side in order to make it look like a mountain where there will be fir trees. You see, in the future there will be snow...

And you will be the guardian of the Mother's Shrine. Your tiny house in the shape of a lotus bud will be on the island very close to my house...

Look! All these letters of yours have started the Mother's Shrine. I will explain to you more when I have spoken to the architect [Roger], who will be coming in September...

marble seats – you know, they carve peacocks, **flowers** and things like that in marble.

The Shrine must have a vast area – not like this (*Mother takes her handkerchief in her palm and closes her hand*), so small. Also there must be a silent zone. No vehicles should move in this area, there should be no noise of any kind.

The Park of Unity will be divided into twelve gardens, which will represent the Twelve Attributes of the Supreme Mother **and her Four Powers.**

In these gardens, I would like to have varieties of flowers – especially the different kinds of hibiscus - the Divine Consciousness.

On the other side, towards the boundary of the gardens, I wish to have **a lake**, huge trees like palms, **pin**es, various types of ferns, neem, Indian cork trees, eucalyptus and many other beautiful big trees. They all represent Unity and Aspiration.

When the lake will be dug, all the soil will be collected on one side in order to make it look like a small mountain where there will be fir trees. You see, in future there will be snow.

Beneath each tall tree around the Mother's Pavilion there would be small carved marble seats. People will meditate in the open and be one with the vastness of Mother Nature – the Mother of the multitude and Her Creation.

And you will be the guardian of the Mother's Shrine. Your tiny house in the shape of a lotus bud will be built on the island very close to my house.

Look! All these letters of yours have started the Mother's Shrine. I will explain to you more when I have spoken to the architect [Roger], who will come in September.

* * *

¹⁶ This is the first time in this compilation that Mother uses the word "Shrine" and the "Mother's Shrine".

17 July 1965

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile in *The Spirit of Auroville*, p. 16; MMTL, p. 8

[Mother answers Huta who had asked if the dream of Auroville would turn out to be true:]

Huta, dear little child of mine

The happy dream will turn out to be true.

LOVE

* * *

24 July 1965

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile in *The Spirit of Auroville*, p. 27

[Mother answers Huta who had reported to Her that people had started telling certain things about Auroville:]

My dear little child,

What you have just written is news to me – I know nothing about it.

I told you already that I am waiting for the architect of Auroville who is coming at the beginning of September and we shall do together the plan of the town. I shall explain to him what I want and things will be done accordingly.

Nobody else has any saying in the matter. If sincerely you want the Truth, you must first abstain from believing all the stories that people tell you, not always with a very harmonious intention.

Love.

* * *

9 August 1965

Letter

Original language: English.

Sources: facsimile in *The Spirit of Auroville*, p. 18; MMTL pp. 8-9; AMW, p. 50

[Mother answers Huta, who the previous day, had written: “My dearest Mother, Since we have some nice animals like deer and rabbits in the garden, why can’t we have lions near the Mother’s Shrine?”]

Huta, my dear little child,

Lions are indeed very nice. I have always at least one lion with me, but not physically, because people are too frightened and their fear makes a mess... Soon the architect is coming and at once we shall see what can be done.

LOVE

* * *

1 September 1965

Reported after a conversation

Original language: English.

Sources: MMTL p. 9; The Spirit of Auroville, p. 21; AMW, p. .50

[Excerpt from a conversation with Huta in which she shows Mother a picture of the Golden Temple in Kyoto:]



*Golden Temple in winter*¹⁸

* * *

Child, this is exactly what we shall have except for the shape of the roof – it must be a terrace and a dome, but the surroundings will be the same – lake, flowers, trees, rockeries, small waterfalls and so on.

Ah! you know, I saw this golden temple at Kyoto when I was in Japan. It is beautiful.

The Mother's Shrine will be like that.¹⁷

Gardening is a wonder-ful thing – especially in Japan.

7 September 1965

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile in The Spirit of Auroville, p. 25; MMTL, pp. 9-10; AMW, p. .51

[Mother writes to Huta:]

My dear little child Huta,

Roger has just arrived yesterday. I am seeing him this morning to explain to him the plan of Auroville. The central park will be the park of Unity containing the Pavilion and its “annexe” [Huta’s house] as formerly decided.

LOVE

*

¹⁷ Huta does not mention this sentence anymore in her second book.

¹⁸ This is probably not the photo shown by Mother to Huta on that day.

Report with Mother's hand-written comments on it
Original language: French
Sources: facsimile at AV Archives; translated by Gilles G.

[Roger arrived from Paris the previous day; on the 7th he presents Mother with his first report (in French) on the township. In the point reproduced below, Roger answers specifically the fact that, in June 1965, Mother had told Satprem – and probably also Roger – that “It takes place up there, on the way to Madras, on top of the hill”¹⁹.]

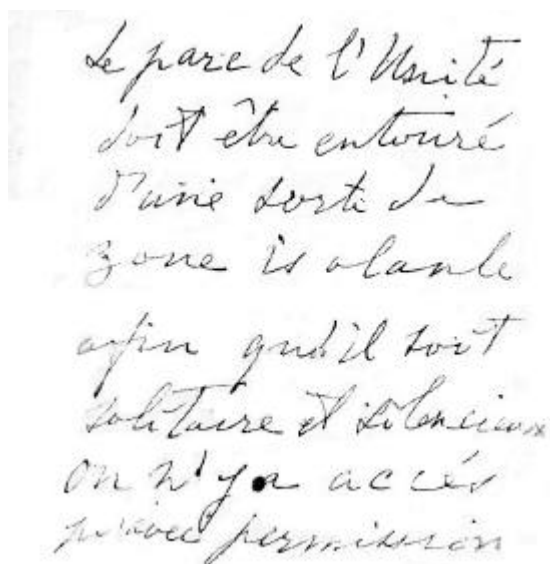
CONSIDERATIONS AND GENERAL DATA TO LOCATE AUROVILLE ON THE PROPOSED LANDS

Guiding principles:

- 2) The best geographical location for Auroville would be along a new road connecting the two main Madras-Pondicherry roads, in order to avoid them while at the same time benefiting from them. Why? Because in the near future the traffic on these roads will become heavy and Auroville's development will unavoidably accelerate this process.

It is therefore almost impossible to envisage that a highway passes through the heart of a new town, because of the noise, of the dangers, of the problems of crossing of this highway by secondary roads, of the presence of undesirable visitors, of the considerable number of cars, which will be difficult to control and will require huge parking spaces at the centre of the town, which create important expenditures and constant problems. Moreover, in the particular case of Auroville the centre should be located as far as possible from the main highways because of the presence of the Pavilion of the Mother in the Park of Unity.²⁰

[Mother appreciates fully Roger's point and writes on a notepad the following note²¹:]



Le parc de l'Unité
doit être entouré
d'une sorte de
zone isolante
afin qu'il soit
solitaire et silencieux
on n'y a accès
qu'avec permission

The park of Unity
must be surrounded
by a kind of
isolating zone
so that it is
solitary and silent.
One has access to it
only with permission.

* * *

¹⁹ That is near “Promesse”.

²⁰ This shows that Roger had already been told about the *Park of Unity* and the *Pavilion of the Mother*.

²¹ We will see that she will soon get the centre shifted away from the main road to its present location.

10 October 1965

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile in *The Spirit of Auroville*, p. 28

[Mother writes to Huta:]

My dear little child Huta,

It is Roger who will lay the first stone of the Pavilion, in front of a few people (one of each country) and you will be there.

Roger will come back in February or March of next year 1966; so the ceremony cannot take place before that. According to your wish, the money you gave me will be used for that purpose.

Once more, I warn you not to, listen to what people tell you, whoever they are, about Auroville, because nobody except me knows the exact thing. If you want to know something about Auroville, ask me, and nobody else and about the Pavilion I will certainly let you informed of all happenings.

With all my love.

* * *

28 November 1965

Notes taken after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: MMTL, p. 10; *The Spirit of Auroville*, p. 26

[Excerpt from a conversation with Huta. Mother offers her a flower of Kadamba:]

Here, take it. This is Supramental Sun. It is the traditional flower of Krishna...

Huta: Mother, then we must grow this tree in the area of the Mother's Shrine. For Krishna will come there.

Yes, you see, when I used to walk meditatively to and fro near Sri Aurobindo's room, Krishna too walked with me....

Huta: All the Gods, even the Supreme Lord, will come to the Mother's Shrine...

* * *

24 December 1965

Notes taken after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: MMTL, pp. 10-11; The Spirit of Auroville, p. 29

[Excerpt from a conversation with Huta in which Mother says that the Mother's Pavilion – and with it the centre of the town – have been shifted for the second time:]

The place for the Mother's shrine is chosen. It is really a very nice place.

Huta: The Truth must win.

If there is anything certain, then it is the Truth and that must win and it shall win.

Huta: Mother, first the Truth must have its place in Auroville and the rest will follow.

My child, the Lord is arranging everything. Look, while we are talking, He is right here and smiling at us.

Huta: Mother, what then are we waiting for? Please ask Him to do the needful for the Truth soon...

Soon! Well, we must wait and see...

Huta: Mother what about the money? Oh, if I had sufficient money, I would give it straight away for the purpose, but...

All will be done.

* * *

1966

Second Year of Phase 1

Visions and Ideas

6 February 1966

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile in MMTL, p. 11 and The Spirit of Auroville, p. 34

[Answer to Huta who had written to Mother that quite a few people were not convinced about The Mother's Vision – about the New World:]

Truth does not depend on any exterior form, and will manifest in spite of all bad will and opposition.

* * *

20 February 1966

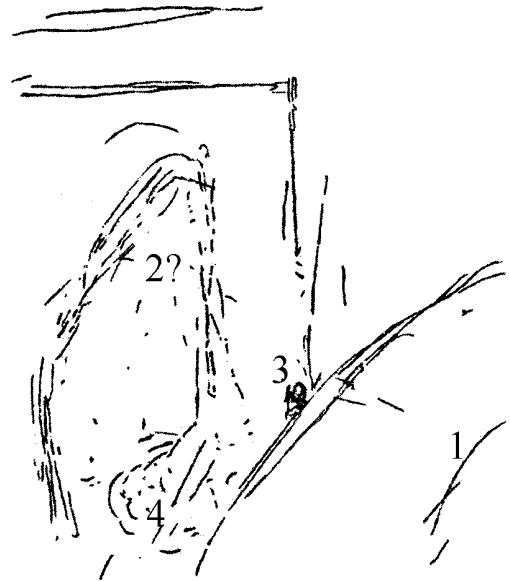
Report written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: MMTL, p. 11, drawing only in The Spirit of Auroville, p. 37

[Mother draws a sketch¹ of the entrance of the Mother's Pavilion and explains it to Huta:]

- 1) Entrance to the Shrine.
- 2) Small bridge connecting the Shrine and Huta's house².
- 3) Box-room where the cleaning equipment for the Shrine would be kept.
- 4) Fountain at which people would wash their feet before entering the Shrine.



* * *

1 March 1966

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile in MMTL, p. 12 and The Spirit of Auroville, p. 40; AMW, p. 58

[Answer to Huta who had asked what virtue one should possess in order to be worthy of being a guardian of Mother's Shrine:]

Very dear little child Huta

The pure love from your heart and soul is all that is required to make you worthy of being the guardian of the Truth Pavilion.

LOVE

* * *

¹ The sketch published in "the Spirit of Auroville" does not have numbers and is thus of little use. The reference numbers shown here come from a copy of the same sketch given by Huta to AV Archives.

² This means that, in this particular instance, Mother did not locate the *Pavilion of the Mother* and Huta's house on the same island.

4 March 1966

Reported after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: MMTL, p. 13, The Spirit of Auroville, p. 41

[Excerpt from a conversation with Huta:]

Child, Roger is coming on the 7th and I am going to see him on the 8th. I shall tell you all about the plan when you come on the 10th.

* * *

7 March 1966

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile in MMTL, p. 14 and in The Spirit of Auroville, p. 42; AMW, p. 58

[Answer to Huta who had written to ask again the same question as on 4th March:]

My dear little child Huta,

I have left everything to the Lord. It is He who decides and will always decide for this body – As yet, for this matter, he has not let me know His will – That is why I have not answered.

With all my love.

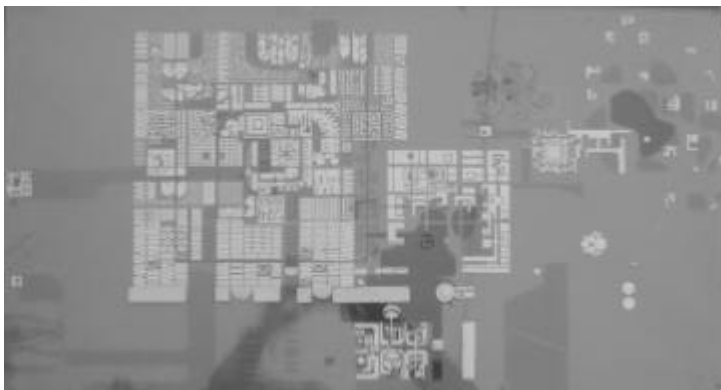
* * *

9 March 1966

Sources: AV Archives

[Roger presented to Mother the two following proposals for Auroville's Master Plan. She rejected the "Rectangular" model as it was not based on her own town-plan, but accepted wholeheartedly the "Nebula" Model, which Roger and team had based on Her symbol.

These two models are presented in greater detail in Annexures 1 & 2:]



"Rectangular" Model
Rejected by Mother



"Nebula" Model
Approved by Mother

* * *

10 March 1966

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile in MMTL, p. 15; and in *The Spirit of Auroville*, p. 43; AMW, p. 58

[Letter to Huta:]

My dear little child Huta,

I have said nothing about Auroville this morning, because I had not yet had a talk with Roger. Yesterday, I saw only the plans and models of the town that are simply wonderful, just as I wanted them to be. They will be exhibited in the Auroville office in front of the Ashram. You can see them there, and I am sure that you will be happy as the Truth Pavilion is a kind of island in the centre of an artificial round lake and looks like an immense lotus opened towards heaven.

I talked with Roger only this afternoon and he told me all his plans of action and work which are excellent. He says the foundation stone must be laid only when the work of construction will start; and naturally things are not yet ready for that. It will take some time more, which is quite right and wise.

You see, that is why the Lord did not give his answer to your prayer because the time is not yet come for it.

With all my love.

* * *

12 March 1966

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile in MMTL, p. 17 and in *The Spirit of Auroville*, p. 52; AMW, p. 59

[Answer to Huta who had written that some people did not like the idea of her being the Guardian of the Truth Pavilion:]

My very dear little child Huta,

Fear not. The Lord is not influenced by what people say or desire.

You will be the guardian of the Pavilion as decided.

LOVE.

* * *

19 March 1966

Opening of the 1st Exhibition on Auroville

Original language: French

Sources: Bulletin, April 1966 p. 100

[Excerpt from "Report on the Quarter", in the Bulletin:]

Auroville Exhibition:

M. Roger Anger the architect of the Auroville project arrived on the 7th March from Paris with plans and photographs of the Project, which will form the Master Plan. An exhibition was arranged to show this to a large number of people both from the Ashram and outside who found it of much interest.

The original plan³ has now been replaced with the new scheme which arose originally from a dream of a nebula⁴ and developed quite unwittingly into the form of the Mother's Symbol representing the four Aspects of the Mother. The magnitude and vast range of the project could be seen in its true perspective.

* * *

23 April 1966

Taped conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Mother's Agenda, pp. 91-92; AMW, p. 62

[Excerpt from a conversation with Satprem; Mother hands him a brochure on Auroville which shows the Nebula model:]

The photos are very pretty. One is quite like a nebula.

It's sure to work, I know it exists – the city is already there (it has been for many, many years). Interestingly, my creation was with Sri Aurobindo in the centre, then when Sri Aurobindo left, I let it all rest, I didn't budge anymore. Then it suddenly started coming again, as if to say, "Now is the time, it must be done." Very well. The Muslims would say, "It's fated." It's fated, it's sure to exist. I don't know how much time it will take, but it seems to be going fast.

The city already exists.

And the remarkable thing is that I simply told Roger the broad outlines, asking him if he was interested. Then he went back to France and he received my formation (my old formation, which I myself had left asleep); he received it there. I found that very interesting. He received it, he said to me, "It came all at once, I seemed to be possessed by something, and in one night the whole thing was done."

* * *

14 December 1966

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: MMTL, p. 21; The Spirit of Auroville, pp. 60-61; AMW, p. 79

[Answer to Huta who had heard a radio program on the project of Auroville:]

Just a word to tell you that there is no question of laying any first stone of Auroville for the moment.

When the question will arise, certainly the first stone must be that of the Truth pavilion or whatever it will be called and I shall remember your offering.

* * *

³ We do not know whether the "original plan" was Mother's sketch or some other plan.

⁴ The French word "nébuleuse" is translated "nebula" in the Bulletin and "nebula" in Mother's Agenda.

1967

Third Year of Phase 1

Visions and Ideas

24 February 1967

Notes written after an interview
Original language: English
Sources: AV Archives

[Excerpt from notes written by Shri Aravind Shankar Baan, ICS, after an interview he and his family had with Mother:]

Mother said that there would be a plant for making fresh water out of sea water in Auroville, and this would solve the water problem in the whole of South India.

* * *

7 September 1967

Letter
Original language: English
Sources: MMTL, p. 22; AMW, p. 91

[Excerpt from a conversation with Huta:]

Child, now I am collecting the money you are giving me. I am collecting it in the leather bag which you have given me.

We are planning for 1968. We haven't yet decided who will lay the foundation stone, but it will be interesting to find who it will be. I am now waiting for an order.

* * *

11 September 1967

Report after a conversation
Original language: English
Sources: MMTL, p. 23; the sketch is only found in The Spirit of Auroville, p. 64; AMW, p. 91

[Excerpt from a conversation with Huta:]

Ah! Now I am telling you how it will be. We want young people – teenagers – young in body and in mind.

Here we have 600 children. They will invite the children of the world. They will come with the soil of their countries. This soil will be collected in an urn of a special kind, and the urn will be sealed up.

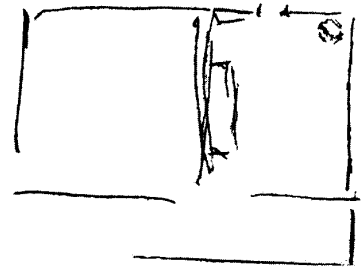
The Truth Pavilion and your tiny house will be very close to each other – your house will stand between the Banyan tree and the Truth Pavilion. All these will be on an island – surrounded by water, trees and the Gardens of Unity.

It will take five years if we have sufficient money. Yes... otherwise.... But I want the whole town to be built within ten years' time...

[Mother then draws Huta's house and explains her sketch:]

Everything must be built-in – so that the rooms look big and empty of many things.

Everything must be simple: sitting-cum-office room, sleeping room, bathroom and small kitchenette.



* * *

15 November 1967

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile in MMTL, p. 25; and in The Spirit of Auroville, p. 66; AMW, p. 100

[Mother comments on a suggestion from Huta to have Her precious things arranged in the Mother's Shrine:]

My dear little child Huta,

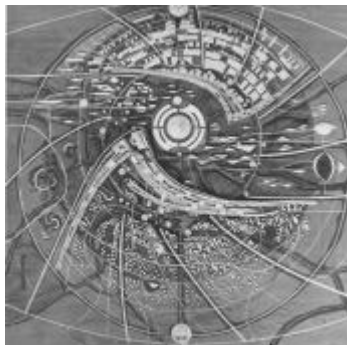
Indeed it is a very good idea to collect and keep all my precious things that are to go in the Mother's Shrine.

The only obstacle is that I have no precious things anywhere, neither in my rooms nor in Dyuman's stores – no precious things at all... and the Mother's Shrine will be an empty place, empty of all material things, meant only for meditation, concentration and prayer... and I hope, filled with light, spiritual force and the presence of the Truth.

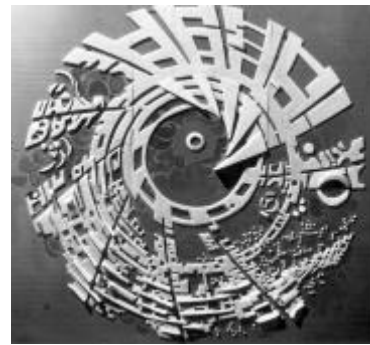
With all my love.

* * *

1967



“Macrostructure” Model



One of the studies

[Throughout 1966 and 1967, Roger and his team worked in Paris on several concepts for the Master Plan of the future township. In the November issue of the *Bulletin*, a photo of the “Macrostructure” Model is published without any explanation. Mother did not like the fact of the two huge buildings blocking the view of Matrimandir and Roger was still not satisfied; he thus continued his studies by splitting up the macrostructure into smaller elements – thus eventually giving birth to the *Galaxy Model*. These models are presented in greater detail in Annexures 3 & 4.]

* * *

1968

Fourth Year of Phase 1

Visions and Ideas

Early 1968 Preparation work for the inauguration ceremony

Report from Huta

Original language: French

Sources: MMTL p. 24; The Spirit of Auroville, p. 189

[Mother draws this sketch of the urn and gives it to Roger.]

[It shows a round base with a square block on it and a lotus upon that square block. The height of the structure from the base to the top of the petals is marked by Mother as 1.65 metres.¹]

Pink or white Marble



*

Excerpt from a book

Original language: English

Sources: Auroville, the first six years, by Savitra, p. 3.

[Savitra's account of how this Urn got made:]

In mid-February of 1968, Vincenzo, a young Sicilian living at "Promesse" was asked to do the marble mosaic for a lotus-shaped urn to be used in Auroville's foundation ceremony on the 28th. Though he had never done marble-work before, (perhaps it was assumed that because he spoke Italian?), he accepted the challenge.

During the next two weeks, he had cut 13,000 pieces, fitting the puzzle together the evening before the 28th.

The following day, children from 124 nations and the states of India ascended a narrow spiral at the centre of the unborn city and placed handfuls of earth from their motherlands into the urn, while Vincenzo, exhausted by his labour, slept.

*

[Roger arrives from France for the inauguration bringing with him a new model: the Galaxy, as well as a model of its central area:]

*

[Many new brochures and pamphlets are printed for the ceremony; the most recent ones bear photos of the "Galaxy model", while older ones show the "Macrostructure" model.]

*

¹ According to Huta 1.65 metres was also Mother's own height.

[Roger Anger and Paolo Tommasi work together at setting up an exhibition under the Banyan tree.]



*

Note

Original language: French

Sources: facsimile in MMTL, p. 41; and The Spirit of Auroville, p. 76; AMW, p. 113

[Mother writes this message and says that it should be written in French and in Tamil (in copper letters on a large stainless steel ring) and put around the trunk of the Banyan tree at the centre of Auroville for the Inauguration Ceremony:]

To put around

the tree

Auroville the City at the

service of Truth

*Pour mettre autour de
l'arbre*

*Auroville la Cité au
service de la Vérité.*



Preparation work for the inauguration. In the foreground, a shallow pond.

* * *

7 February 1968

Taped conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Mother's Agenda, p. 52; AMW, p. 115

[Excerpt from a conversation with Satprem, during which Mother writes Auroville's Charter:]

1. Auroville belongs to nobody in particular. Auroville belongs to humanity as a whole...

There, that's the material fact. Auroville belongs... I didn't put "to no country" because India would be furious. I put "belongs to nobody" – "nobody" is a vague term which I put precisely so as not to put "to no human being", or "to no country". And I put "Auroville belongs to humanity AS A WHOLE", because it is the equivalent of nothing! Because we cannot come to an agreement all together, it's impossible! I did it on purpose.

And then, I don't speak of "citizens" or anything like that. I say:

..But to live in Auroville, one must be the willing servitor of the Divine Consciousness.

They are all going to wince at "Divine", but I don't care! You know, it's the explanation of the Matrimandir at the centre. The Matrimandir represents the Divine Consciousness. All that is not said, but that is the way it is.

* * *

16 February 1968

Report from a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: The Spirit of Auroville, pp. 68-69

[Mother replies to Huta who had reported to her that there was a rumour that instead of the Mother's Shrine, there would be a small lotus² and nothing else:]

Yes, nasty people speak against the Truth... *[Mother goes into a trance and then continues:]*

Your tiny house will be between the Mother's Shrine and the banyan tree. There will be 12 gardens with various kinds of Hibiscus and other flowers, plants, tall trees with marble seats underneath. Marble statues, marble fountains, small waterfalls, small pools with different coloured lilies and lotuses, small bridges, rockeries in Japanese style with varieties of cactus.

There will be only one entrance. The pavement will be decorated with precious and semi-precious stones.³ This area will be surrounded by a huge lake. On one side of it, there will be tall trees – they mean Unity. On the other side of the lake, there will be hillocks with fir trees. The Mother's Shrine will be on an island.

[Mother gives also to Huta a receipt signed by Navajata for the sum she had offered "for the construction of her Pavilion at the Matrimandir of Auroville"; She adds:]

Read it my child, and whenever nasty people speak against the truth; show them this paper. This must be kept as a proof.

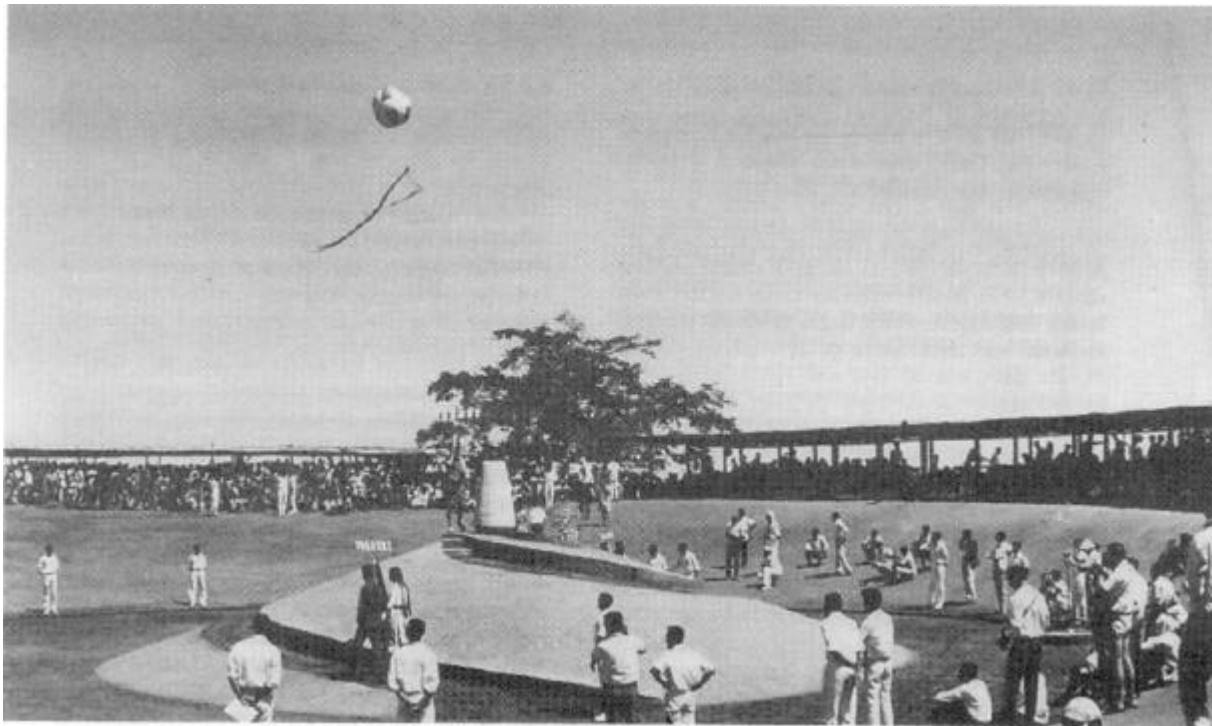
* * *

² This rumour may have been created by the model of the central area of the "Galaxy" as, on it, Matrimandir looked like a large sculpture (symbolising an open lotus?) – and not like a proper house for Mother or a Meditation Hall.

³ Except for the first sentence of this paragraph, this is almost exactly, word for word, what Mother told Huta on 25th June 1965 – that is 3 years earlier. As things kept on changing all the time, one wonders if Huta did not reproduce here this earlier conversation by mistake.

28 February 1968

Auroville's Inauguration Ceremony



Earth from 121 countries and 23 Indian States is placed in the lotus-shaped Urn by a boy and a girl representing each country and state.

28.2.68.

*Greetings from Auroville
to all men of good will
Are invited to Auroville all
those who thirst for progress
and aspire to a higher
and truer life.*

28.2.68

Greetings from Auroville
to all men of goodwill.
Are invited to Auroville all
those who thirst for progress
and aspire to a higher
and truer life.



28.2.68

Auroville Charter

1. Auroville belongs to nobody in particular. Auroville belongs to humanity as a whole.
But to live in Auroville one must be the willing servitor of the Divine Consciousness.
2. Auroville will be the place of an unending education, of constant progress, and a youth that never ages.
3. Auroville wants to be the bridge between the past and the future. Taking advantage of all discoveries from without and from within, Auroville will boldly spring towards future realizations.
4. Auroville will be a site of material and spiritual researches for a living embodiment of an actual human unity.

28. 2. 68

Charte d'Auroville

1) Auroville n'appartient à personne en particulier. Auroville appartient à toute l'humanité dans son ensemble.
Mais pour séjourner à Auroville, il faut être le serviteur volontaire de la Conscience Divine

*

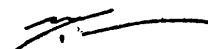
2) Auroville sera le lieu de l'éducation perpétuelle, du progrès constant et d'une jeunesse qui ne vieillit point.

*

3) Auroville veut être le pont entre le passé et l'avenir.
Profitant de toutes les découvertes extérieures et intérieures, elle veut hardiment s'élancer vers les réalisations futures.

*

4) Auroville sera le lieu des recherches matérielles et spirituelles pour donner un corps vivant à une unité humaine concrète.





3 photos of the arrangement made below the Banyan tree by Roger and Paolo



Model showing the location and size of the future city and greenbelt



At the end of the function. In the foreground, model of the central area.



Galaxy Model presented at the inauguration



Model of the Central Area of the Galaxy Model presented at the inauguration

[These two models are presented in detail in Annexures 5 and 6.]

* * *

13 April 1968

Taped conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Mother's Agenda, p. ; AMW, p. 144

[Excerpt from a conversation with Satprem:]

Roger has come for five days, and he wants to do what he calls one “sector of Auroville⁴”, that is to say, instead of immediately facing the problem of ten or twenty thousand people at once, he wants to begin with two or three thousand, from the viewpoint of construction, but especially to see how it's going to work: and to make the experiment of life in Auroville.... I had thought of it, and when I spoke to you last time, that was what came: how to go about the experiment? You know, Yvonne [Arthaud] has ideas about education (I'm not interfering); he [Roger] has ideas about construction (I'm not interfering); but no one has seen the problem from the administrative or organizational or financial point of view, and that's just what I was talking about last time.

* * *

20 April 1968

Taped conversation

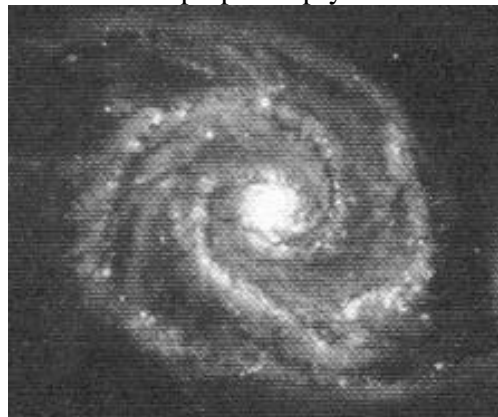
Original language: French

Sources: Mother's Agenda; AMW, p. 146

[Excerpt from a conversation with Satprem:]

Today I received a letter from a Swedish lady, I think (Swedish or Norwegian, I don't know) who bought a painting of the crucifixion.... A huge painting! – huge, I don't remember the dimensions, but it's enormous, something like 10 metres high. She's asking me what to do with it! She wants to send it to me.... So I told her (she paid a lot for it, but she's a very rich woman, only she wanted to give it to me as a gift), I told her to hold an exhibition in a large hall, with a sign saying “the past” underneath it. And then to place beside it, a very small photograph of the galaxy, which is almost identical to the plan of Auroville – a photograph of the galaxy which is so big – and then, beneath this, the plan of Auroville which is big like this (*gesture still smaller*) and then to put a sign saying “the future”. And she will have to ask people to pay an admission fee to see it!

You know that photograph of the galaxy⁵?
It's very lovely.



⁴ This “sector” will become the experimental area of “Auromodel”, which was to comprise all the Auroville settlements in the vicinity of the village of Kuilapalayam.

⁵ Only some galaxies (such as our Milky Way) have a spiral-shape. This photo is unlikely to be the one Mother speaks about. Note that this reference together with the one on 23rd April 1968 (next page) are the only two references on the “Galaxy” model in Mother's Agenda. Unfortunately, there is no other record of Mother's comments on it.

And one of the plans for Auroville is almost identical to it, and they did it without seeing the photograph of the galaxy...

They're going to put those two photos, and if people ask questions, they will tell them: write to them, they'll answer you.

I found that it would be an interesting symbol.

You know, if I put anything else whatsoever, I mean a photo of Sri Aurobindo, for example, or else some books, it will seem... it will look as if we wanted to start a new religion. I don't want any religions, finished with religions!

So it's an attempt at realization.

* * *

23 April 1968

Taped conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Mother's Agenda, p. 110-111

[Excerpt from a conversation with Satprem. Mother shows him a brochure on Auroville, the first photo of which shows a white urn beneath a wide sky.]

***Photo of the Urn
Mother showed
to Satprem***



It's very good. It has something... I don't know, *[Mother pushes her fist down into the Earth]* it's like a Law of Destiny: something which imposes itself⁶.

[silence]

Did I tell you that a Swedish or Norwegian lady wants to send me a big painting of the crucifixion?... Yes. But I didn't show you the two texts. You know, I chose a photo of the galaxy, and then a photo of Auroville which slightly resembles it, and then under the crucifixion we're going to put in big letters *[Mother reads:]*

“The Divine Consciousness crucified by the desires of men.”

And after, in small letters like this, beneath the photo of Auroville, we're going to put:

“The Divine Consciousness manifested through human unity.”

We're going to see! The lady is very goodwilled, we're going to see the response in her country.

* * *

⁶ Mother's comment is very important because it shows that Mother liked the urn made by Vincenzo as per Roger's instructions. This gives credence to what Huta writes in *The Spirit of Auroville*, p. 207: “Roger told Paolo that he showed the photograph of the Urn to Mother and she was very pleased with it and approved fully.”

All this did not shake Huta's certitude that the urn should be modified to look like Mother's original sketch (shown on p. 1968 – 1 of this document) and, in 1974, she will go to extraordinary lengths to try to achieve this.

28 June 1968

Reported after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: MTL, p. 27; The Spirit of Auroville, p. 79; AMW, p. 154

[After meditating with Huta, Mother says:]

Child, do you know the Banyan tree at the Centre of the Mother's Shrine?

I saw you in my vision just now: you were sitting under the Banyan tree, and garlands were hanging all over you from the branches of the tree. Also, the flowers were showered on you from above. You were peacefully quiet.

[Huta painted Mother's vision. When Mother saw the painting, She asked that the length of the grass be shortened and after the modification wrote the name for the painting:]

“The inner life”



* * *

29 December 1968

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: Mother on Auroville, p. 76; Facsimile at AV Archives; MoA, p. 76; CWM, XIII, p. 236; AMW, p. 158


[Arindam writes:]

My house⁷ is finished, should I have a name for this house?
(signed) Arindam

[Mother replies to Arindam:]

“Arindam”,
[Turn Over the page]

my house is
finished, should
I have a name
for this house?

Arindam
“Arindam”
T.O. 

I should like this whole

place⁸ to be called

“PEACE”

and that peace,

actual peace, should

reign there, not only

between the occupants


but with the whole

of Auroville, present &

future.

29.12.68.
I should like the whole
place to be called

“Peace”

and that peace,
actual peace, should
reign there, not only
between the occupants
but with the whole
of Auroville, present &
future. 

* * *

⁷ Arindam's house (actually, a keet hut) was in a place now called “Nursery Pumphouse”, which lies further down than the “Matrimandir Nursery” – that is, outside the future “Crown road”.

⁸ By “this whole place”, Mother meant the entire “Centre area”, where Janet, Arindam, Gene and several other Americans had started to settle – which explains why Mother speaks of “occupants”. Mother did not mention the exact extent of the “Peace” area, but it extended clearly beyond the future crown road. One could even argue that the name “Peace” should apply to the entire city area.

It should also be noted that Mother will speak again of the “Peace” area only once during the following week, but that she never used this name anymore after that – be it to speak of the city proper, or of the Matrimandir area.

1969

Fifth Year of Phase 1

Visions and Ideas

Late 1968, early 1969

Excerpt from a book

Original language: English

Sources: *Auroville, the first six years*, by Savitra, p. 20

[Excerpt from Savitra's account of how the first AV settlements at the centre got started:]

Peace (centre)

Through late 1968 and early '69, a young Canadian girl [Janet] and several Americans [Arindam, Gene and others] settled at various places surrounding the Centre. They remained for longer or shorter periods, during which some trees were planted, but the Centre's focus [Matrimandir] had not yet arrived.

* * *

9 January 1969

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile at AV Archives; MoA, p. 76; AMW, p. 162

[Mother gives the following message to Arindam for the people living in the area previously known as "the Centre" – which she had named "Peace" on 29th December 1968:]

"Peace".

The foremost thing must be Peace. Whatever you do must be by peaceful means.

The second thing necessary is Harmony, not only general harmony but also between the individuals living there.

You must begin to look for the harmony in each individual and not dwell on the disharmony.

The disharmony exists everywhere but you must reject that and allow only the harmony to enter. There must be a sense of Order.

Each individual must have a sense of self-discipline, and actually practice it.

PEACE, HARMONY, ORDER, SELF-DISCIPLINE.

* * *

1969

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: CWM, XIII, p. 237; AMW, p. 163

Janet: It seems that there is more to the Divine's work at Peace¹ than other places in Auroville. Is this true? Is there an occult reason for this?

Be confident and peaceful yourself.

That is contagious.

My blessings are with you.

* * *

¹ The 3 quotes on this page confirm that the "Peace Area" was not at all restricted to the future Matrimandir Gardens. At that time, there was no work at all in the vicinity of Matrimandir; but several small communities had started within the perimeter of the future city.

12 February 1969

Report

Original language: French

Sources: AV Archives

[Excerpt from a report on Organisation, Town-planning issued by “Roger’s office”:]

TEMPORARY STRUCTURES (PEACE)

The first people living in the area of future Auroville will have the role of guardians, and must strive to maintain friendly relations with the local population. Their function is an essentially experimental one at the individual level.

This experiment should neither be encouraged nor repeated, because of the risk of creating an area of spontaneous and uncontrolled habitation. These individual experiments cannot be authorised if they come into conflict with the wider interests of Auroville.

For now it is necessary to complete the Amphitheatre, and to see what help is necessary to allow normal life.

Nevertheless, the establishment of two similar types of site could be authorised in the future: one in the industrial zone and one in the cultural zone. Once wells have been bored on the sites selected after due consideration, people could settle in these places.

[On 13th, Mother writes the following comment on this report:]

I am in full agreement and my blessings accompany the realisation.

* * *

14 February 1969

Reported after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: MMTL, pp. 29-30, The Spirit of Auroville, p. 84

[Mother informed Huta:]

At the end of March, when Roger will come, the final plan will be made.²

At the moment the plan of Auromodèle is being made.

* * *

Early 1969

Interview

Original language: English

Sources: Frederick in the interview “Looking Forward, Looking Back”, Auroville Today, Feb 1989, pp. 2-3

[According to Frederick, Mother having said:]

There is nothing living at the Centre, there is nothing to receive my Force and I want you to plant some trees.

* * *

² According to Roger’s notes, in 1969, he was in Pondicherry until February 19th and expected to be back on 23rd if sufficient land had been bought. His last notes during this period end on February 13th and resume on April 25th.

30 April 1969

Note written after a conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Roger's personal archives

[After talking with Mother,
Roger notes down:]

Pondy, this 30 April
Visit to Mother

Discovery Palace³

Filtered light coming from above, columns,
that's all. A window turning towards the sun.
It must be very simple, no object, only
something to sit on.

Pondy ce 30 Avril
Visite à Mère
Palais de la Découverte -
une lumière tamisée qui vient
d'en haut, des colonnes, c'est tout
une fenêtre tournée vers le soleil
il faut que ce soit très simple, pas
d'objet, seulement de quoi
s'asseoir.

* * *

17 October 1969

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile at AV Archives; Huta's question is only partly reproduced in MMTL, p. 29 and in "The Spirit of Auroville", pp. 85-86.

[Letter from Huta:]

My dearest Mother,

Nava told Laljibhai that the Mother had instructed Roger already to make 12 gardens in the central part of Auroville. And Nava asked Rs. 50,000/- from Laljibhai for the purpose. But Laljibhai has refused owing to so many reasons.

All this I came to know from Laljibhai who sometimes tells me about Auroville. He says that he has an intense aspiration to build the Mother's Shrine and the area around it from the money which will come from the industries. He also says that the money people offer for the purpose might be with various adverse vibrations and desires. So the money for the Mother's Shrine possibly can come from one source and that also with a pure intention, or from sincere offering from anyone.

He says that the Mother's Shrine must be built exactly according to the Mother's will and guidance. [...]

Mother, I am sure you will fulfil the aspiration of true and sincere people.

On my side, I pray to you that your Will may be one for everything in all Truth and Love...

With love

Yours Huta

[Mother answers:]

Very good. I appreciate Laljibhai's attitude and his intention.

You can be sure that the Matrimandir will be done according to the Divine's inspiration.

With love and blessings.

* * *

³ According to Roger, this project was meant to take place in Auromodel. One can only be amazed by the similarity between the proposed features of this Discovery Palace and those of the future Matrimandir.

Autumn 1969

Article

Original language: English

Sources: The Spirit of Auroville, p. 95

[Richard's (Narad) account of how Mother called him to start the gardens of Matrimandir:]

It was in 1969 that Mother informed me through one of her secretaries that She wanted me to prepare to come and develop the gardens of Matrimandir. I wrote to ask Her how to prepare for that great work. She replied that a combination of studies and practical work was best. And suddenly, everything opened before me! Teachers came, constructive opportunities... In the autumn of 1969 I received the most wonderful surprise from the Mother, in her own hand:

A Bientôt

* * *

Monsoon 1969

***The Urn, with no amphitheatre yet,
standing on an island during the
monsoon***



* * *

18 December 1969

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: a letter signed by Anie and Richard Eggenberger, dated 3 April 1970

[Letter from Anie & Richard Eggenberger to friends:]

To give some background on how we became connected with the Auroville gardens, and when and how the Mother gave this vast work I shall go back to 1968 just after the inauguration of Auroville. Richard and I were receiving Darshan of the Mother shortly before his return to America. Mother looked very deeply into him and said,

Don't you want to come for Auroville, I think you can do something there?"

Of course Richard's answer was yes.

After his return to America there was a period of intense inner work and much correspondence with Mother, the result of which revealed to him his work; that of designing Mother's gardens for the City of Auroville. Mother told him to prepare for this work by gaining knowledge and experience, but not to approach the work from a mental standpoint, rather, to allow the Force to work through him. He ultimately gained much experience in the California area; studying horticulture, plant combination theory and design at UCLA and by designing and executing the gardens of some of the finest homes in the Southern California Area.

Since returning to the Ashram in December⁴ of 1969, we again received Darshan of the Mother on my Birthday, December 18. At that time She spoke to us at length about the gardens and the way in which She has envisaged them. (Before Richard's return to the Ashram the Mother had told me that I should work with him in collaboration on this project.) When She spoke to us, She said that She wanted the first design to begin around the banyan tree which is to be the Garden of Unity⁵. She said:

I have chosen all the flowers⁶.

(Each garden is represented by a different Hibiscus flower bearing the inner significance as named by the Mother, and according to the particular garden.) Mother said:

It must be a thing of great beauty, of such beauty that when people come they will say "Ah, this is it". It must be an expression of that consciousness which we are trying to bring down.

Mother added:

One must know how to move from consciousness to consciousness.

In other words the garden of power must really express power, the garden of love, love and so forth. The vibration and essence of each garden must be felt. Since that darshan Richard has had an inner vision of the Matrimandir and a partial vision of the surrounding gardens. He wrote to Mother about what he saw and it coincided with what She had conceived. Now his aspiration is to open more and more to Her guiding Force and less upon preconceived mental ideas and constructions... and so the gardens of Unity, Love, Existence, Consciousness, Felicity, Light, Life, Power, Riches, Utility, Progress, Youth, Harmony and Perfection⁷ await their moment of creation and the knowledge that these gardens must be more beautiful than anything that has ever been done before is overwhelming when brought down to the material level, especially in light of the conditions on the land at present and with Auroville's precarious financial situation. However, we know that it will be done and the challenge has never been greater nor the goal more clearly defined than since we have begun this work and through all the seeming hardship and vicissitude Her Grace and Love are ever with us to sustain and reassure.

[The reader will find in Annexure 7 ("The Flowers of Matrimandir Gardens") Richard Pearson's account of how Mother selected the flowers for Matrimandir Gardens and his own selection of other flowers for each Garden.]

* * *

⁴ On 10th of December, according to Narad ("The Spirit of Auroville", p. 95).

⁵ Narad wrote recently to a friend: "It was at this time that I worked with Sundarmurthi to guide the aerial roots of the Banyan tree to root into the earth to support the limbs that had extended so far that they were in danger of breaking under their own weight".

⁶ It is with Richard Pearson from the Ashram that Mother had already selected the flowers she wanted to have in each one of the gardens. Narad confirmed recently that he was not involved in this selection. Richard's list (as found in AV Archives) is given in appendix.

⁷ Mother gave French names to the twelve Gardens: Unité, Amour, Existence, Conscience, Félicité, Lumière, Vie, Pouvoir, Richesse, Utilité, Progrès, Jeunesse, Harmonie et Perfection. Note that, contrary to what Mother had told Huta on 25th June 1965, these states of consciousness are not Her attributes anymore.

Note also that Mother speaks here of a "Garden of Love", which was meant to come around Matrimandir (which She had earlier called "Pavilion of Love") and is also mentioned in the document prepared by Richard Pearson.

26 December 1969

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: The Spirit of Auroville, p. 87

[*Huta writes to Mother to ask for the refund of the money she had contributed:*]

My dearest Mother,

Last year on 16th February you gave me the receipt signed by Nava for Rs. 14,877/- for the construction of my pavilion at the Matrimandir of Auroville.

I have now only a little money left, out of what you had given me a few years back to spend on Savitri paintings.

Now I have to publish a number of books, as you know. So I would like to have the Rs. 14,877/- back from Nava. I spoke to him about it. He replied that he has used it up for other purposes, while in the receipt it is clearly written that the money was only for one specific purpose. He also told me that he would be able to return the money only in January – next year of course. At the next meeting he was hesitant. I shall be thankful if you'll kindly request him to hand over the sum at his earliest convenience.

I don't wish to cause any trouble but I can't help asking for this money since it is needed for important work, such as material to be bought for "About Savitri"; next year the book "Salutations" has to come out and then the preparation of three volumes of "The Story of a Soul"; I also wish to publish "White Roses" three volumes collected in one. Considering all these things, I pray to you to help me,

Love

Yours,

Huta

[*Mother's reply to Huta:*]

I told you myself that this money was used for the first day ceremony of Auroville, and when the time of building Auroville, your pavilion would be built without asking you anything more. When I gave you the receipt, you did not want to take it, but I told you to keep it as a proof that you had already paid for the pavilion, so that no more money should be asked from you.

There has never been any mention of the possibility of returning the money to you. This is quite out of question.
Blessings.

* * *

27 December 1969

Sources: Alain Grandcolas' memory (He says that he arrived together with Roger.)

[*Roger arrives from France.*]

* * *

31 December 1969

Taped conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Mother's Agenda, pp. 492-501; CWM, XIII, p. 283

[*Excerpt from a conversation with Satprem:*]

You know Paolo [Tommasi, an Italian designer], have you seen him? He's nice.

Satprem: He is nice. As a matter of fact, I have something in this connection. Yesterday I had the visit of Paolo and Nata [an Italian engineer], both of them, and Paolo explained to me a sort of inspiration he had about Auroville. I found it very beautiful, very good, and important. So I told him, "You must absolutely tell Mother about it directly." So when could you see Paolo and Nata?

Will I hear him? Because the difficulty is that people don't know how to speak; they speak too fast, and I can't follow.

Tell me what he wants to tell me!

Satprem: I'll take the bloom off the subject.

Doesn't matter!

Satprem: He says that for a few years, energies in Auroville have been scattered: they are egoistic, everyone wants to build his own little hut, his own little story, or, at best, hopes to build a supercity, which will only be an improvement on all the existing cities of the world. In this Auroville, an axis, a centre is missing. What's missing is... a unification of the consciousnesses around a centre, an axis. So he said that in the past, they built pyramids, they built cathedrals, and around those symbolic constructions, consciousnesses could unify...

[*Mother nods approvingly*]

...and rise and purify themselves. Well, what should be built in Auroville is an axis, a centre; a symbolic temple of the new world we want to create, and all the consciousnesses should unite in the construction of this pyramid of the new world, or this temple of the new world – which will at the same time help to bring down what must express itself there.

It's very good, that was the first idea: there was the centre, and the city was organized around it. Now they're doing the opposite! They want to build the city and put the centre afterwards...

Satprem: And that's why it doesn't work, he says: we should begin with the centre; if we don't we'll achieve nothing.

That was my first impression. But how to have Roger understand that? I don't know. Because it was Roger who changed it; it's he who wanted to begin with "Auromodel", that is to say, with trials and attempts.

Satprem: So the result is that everyone is concerned with his own little story and his own little hut, and there's no "cement," there isn't the Thing that would bind them together and would lift them above themselves and their little stories.

Theoretically, he's perfectly right.

Satprem: Oh, yes. And curiously, when he spoke to me about that, I almost saw it, I saw. He's a boy who could "pull" it down.

Yes, he has the power.
But why doesn't he meet Roger?

Satprem: He asked me, "Should I speak to Roger about it?" Because he says, "it's a problem if I'm the one who speaks, Roger will withdraw or will..." So I told him, "No, don't speak to Roger, speak to Mother, and she will say what has to be done."

I'll see Roger tomorrow, I can tell him. Paolo is an architect⁸, isn't he?

Satprem: You alone have authority over Roger.

Yes... no, if I tell him, "Do it," he won't say no, but he won't do it!... He has to be convinced... All that I can do is to tell him that I am aware of the idea, that I fully approve of it and ask him to see Paolo and work it out with him. This I will do as early as tomorrow.
But I think Paolo has a power of conviction in him.

Satprem: Yes, when he spoke to me, at any rate, I felt the inspiration and the "thing" which was really to come.

It IS ready to come! As for me, I've known it for a long time. It's there [gesture above], waiting.

Satprem: Well, he has a contact with that.

Yes, yes.

Satprem: When he spoke, you felt he had touched the true thing. While the others' only thought is to attract millions and do propaganda- they do things completely upside down.

I think Paolo and Roger have never met so far, have they?

Satprem: Yes, they have. But you understand, Roger's viewpoint is a very materialistic viewpoint.

Oh! Yes.

⁸ Paolo is actually not an architect, but a designer.

Satprem: I'm afraid he may say straight away, "Oh, why is he meddling?"

Ah, no! If I am the one who tells him, he won't say this... This he won't say.

Satprem: You're the only one who can.

No, it has to be me who speaks to him about it.

Satprem: Yes, Mother; because they're putting the cart before the horses, they're doing things upside down.

[After a silence]

I am afraid they may not even have the land⁹. That's the difficulty. Because the centre of the city has been fixed, but there's still a large part of the centre which, I think, belongs to the government, so they're trying to negotiate so as to have it.

[Silence]

Roger had an idea¹⁰, it's an island at the centre, with water around, running water which will be used for the whole water supply of the city; and when it has flowed through the city, it will be sent to a plant¹¹, and from there to irrigate all the cultivated lands around.

So this centre is like an islet, and at this centre, there is what we first called the "Matrimandir" – which I always see as a very large hall, absolutely bare, you understand, and getting a light from above: it should be so arranged that the light from above gets concentrated on a spot where there would be... what we want to put as the centre of the city. We first thought of Sri Aurobindo's symbol, but we can put anything we like. Like that, with a ray of light constantly striking from above-revolving and revolving... to follow the sun, you understand. If it's done well, it would be very good. And then, below, people would be able to sit and meditate, or just rest, but there would be NOTHING-nothing except something comfortable below so they can sit without getting tired, probably with pillars acting at the same time as backrests. Something like that. That's what I always SEE. A hall with a ceiling high enough to allow sun – light to come in as a RAY, depending on the time of the day, and fall on that centre which will be there. If that is done, it will be very good. You could explain this to Paolo.

So then, for the rest, it's the same to me, they will do as they like. They first thought of building a dwelling for me, but I'll never go, so it's no use, it's quite unnecessary.¹² And to watch over the islet, it was agreed there would be a small house for Huta who wanted to be there simply as a guardian – somebody has to guard...

⁹ Indeed, it is only after the Foundation Stone Ceremony (21.02.71) that the required land will be purchased.

¹⁰ When asked recently, Roger said that in 1968 and 1969, he did not work further on the model of the centre area he had presented at the inauguration ceremony and that he had not yet worked on any other model. Mother is therefore speaking of the model shown on the next page, which had been presented at the Inauguration Ceremony. However, the large (white) sculpture in the lake would have been replaced by an islet with Matrimandir (with its Garden of Love) and the Banyan Tree (with its Garden of Unity). Roger adds that if the banyan tree was not represented in his models, it is simply because the exact centre of the town had not yet been finalised – because of the difficulties encountered in buying the required land.

¹¹ "Elle sera envoyée à une usine". Mother probably means a purification plant.

¹² Huta will however keep on insisting on what she calls the two "Secret Chambers": for Mother and for the Lord.

And then Roger had arranged a whole system of bridges to link that to the other bank. The other bank would be entirely gardens all around. Those gardens... we had thought of twelve gardens (of dividing the distance into twelve), of making twelve (I have given the...¹³), each garden concentrated on something and the flowers that represent it. And the twel... the last garden would be in the islet, around (not around but beside) the thing [*the "Mandir"*] and with the Banyan tree, which is there. That's what is at the centre of the city. And there [*on the islet*], there would be an organization, a repetition of the twelve gardens which are around it, the flowers of all this arranged...¹⁴



There are now two Americans here, husband and wife [*Richard and Anie Eggenberger*], and the husband studied there for more than a year the art of gardening, and he came here with that knowledge. So I asked him to start straight away preparing the plan for the inner garden¹⁵: they're working on it.

But then, the answer is always the same: "We have no money!"

Satprem: But Mother; what I think, and what Paolo too has put his finger on, is that if these... say, twenty or fifty Aurovilians sincerely unite their hearts in the construction of this pyramid or temple of the new world, it will ATTRACT money, the millions.

It should.

Satprem: It will come. What's needed isn't to "look for millions", it's first to unite the consciousnesses around something.

Yes.

Satprem: That's the key to the millions.

You'll explain to Paolo all that I have said... That way, we would have something really very fine.

But of course, what's needed... There are material difficulties: for this islet, we need water – naturally; otherwise it's not an islet! To have the water, we must transform it – there isn't enough underground water.

¹³ Mother may have wanted to add: "their names" – or "the name of the state of consciousness they represent".

¹⁴ According to the tape, Mother says: "Alors Roger avait organisé tout un système de ponts pour relier ça à l'autre rive. Et l'autre rive serait entièrement des jardins tout autour. Et ces jardins... nous avons pensé à 12 jardins (diviser la distance en 12), faire 12 jardins (j'ai donné le...), chaque jardin concentré sur quelque chose et les fleurs qu'il représente. Et alors le douz... le dernier jardin serait dans l'îlot avec autour (pas autour mais à coté)... de cette chose et avec l'arbre, le Banian qui est là. C'est cela qui est au centre de la ville. Et alors là, il y aurait une organisation, une répétition de tous les douze jardins qui sont autour, et les fleurs de tous ça arrangées."

¹⁵ The garden on the island; that is the Garden of Unity, around the Banyan Tree.

Satprem: Not enough water?

There is water, but it's enough for one or two houses, anyway not enough to create a permanent flow. We would need transformed sea water: In Israel they have found a way to do it economically (we even have brochures on this), but you understand, economical for a city, not economical for an individual! So then, we'd need to have water to make this islet, that's the difficulty.

Satprem: But before building the islet, we can begin building the "temple" itself... Begin by lifting a pebble.

Yes, we could do that.

Satprem: That's the important point, it's for people to take a first pebble in their hands, put it there, and unite in that – because they'll never unite through their huts and little stories.

Yes, that would be much better.

Satprem: Oh, yes, certainly!

Naturally, logically, or psychologically rather, it's an error to build around first, and the centre afterwards.

Satprem: Of course!

How to make him understand that?

Satprem: Since we want to create "something else", the least we can do is to trust something else.

Yes. I'll speak to Roger about it tomorrow and I'll ask him to see Paolo.

I think that to a certain extent, Paolo can help bring in money, if he is interested.

Good.

So then, build even before it's an islet.

[Silence]

For the outside of this sort of temple, Roger had thought of a big lotus. But then, the inside, this play of light, I don't know whether it will be possible with a lotus shape?

If the two of them could collaborate... If they came together and one of them were always here – one of them, now one, now another; so there would always be one of the two here with a single plan made by them, things would go much faster, a hundred times faster.

Satprem: And it would seize people's hearts.

Yes.

This idea of a ray of sunlight... whenever I look, that's what I immediately see. A ray of sunlight that could come at any time of the day. It would be so arranged that it would come all the time [*gesture following the sun's movement*]. And there would be something there, a symbol, which would be at the same time upright, so as to be seen all around, and lying flat, so as to receive the full light – what would it be?... And let it not become a religion, for heaven's sake!

Satprem: Yes.

[*Passage omitted*]

Who would be able to find the way of realizing that?... Because there's no lack of sunshine there (of course, on some days the sun is hidden, but still, there are many days when it shines)... It should be so arranged that from any side, any angle, the ray should fall [on the symbol]. It's a question of geometry.
You can speak with Paolo, because if he had an idea...

Satprem: When he spoke, I felt he could pull that down.

Yes. And that's what is needed: something, a symbol – we'll find what's needed, we'll see – like an altar, obviously, but... what? A symbol which would directly receive the light from above, and laterally at the same time.

And no other windows, you understand. All the rest in a sort of half-light, and then this light like... That would be fine, it can be very fine. I'd like someone who could feel that. I don't know at all whether Roger is capable of feeling that, but Paolo is.

If it were well realized, it would be very interesting for people. It would be a concretization of something... They'll start saying it's a religion of the sun! [*Laughing*] Oh, you know, I'm used to hearing all, ALL possible nonsense!

[*Silence*]

Roger's idea and the idea of the people around him is to have industries capable of collecting money for Auroville, so...

Satprem: They're wrong, they're wrong!

It means that instead of allowing the thing to be done fast, it will take centuries.

Satprem: And it means the starting point is the old idea and the old principle.

Yes.

Satprem: The starting point should be something else.

It's out of a fear of religions.

Satprem: It could very well be done not as a religion but as the symbol of the new world.

[*Silence*]

Yes... We need someone who understands that – maybe Paolo will understand.

Satprem: Yes, certainly! And he would have the capacity to convince people, I think.

[Silence]

Yes, I'll see Paolo. It would be better if he comes on a day when you're here, because I am afraid of not hearing him... It disconcerts them a lot when they have to speak loudly. So next Saturday, for instance? And tomorrow I'll speak to Roger about it, that is to say, I'll tell him to see Paolo who has excellent ideas, and anyway to work it out with him.

It's very simple, after all: we'll try to have Roger understand and create a collaboration. Roger won't say no to me – but he won't do anything (!) That's how it is, you understand. But anyway, if he can do it, if they can work it out and agree, then it will be very good, there won't be any difficulties. But if he can't, then Paolo will have to be here while Roger is away, and we'll just have to do it!¹⁶... You understand, that's how it is for me! [*Mother laughs*] Because Roger has enough work (he has a tremendous amount of work). It's not that we are taking work away from him, it's that if he refuses to do it, we'll do it, that's all.

I'll see if they can agree.

Now for me, things are no longer exclusive, not at all. I very clearly see the possibility of using the most opposite tendencies AT THE SAME TIME... with some slight deftness, that's all.

It's not exclusive, I don't say, "Ah, no, not this!" No, no, no: everything, all of it together.

That's what I want, to succeed in creating a place where all contraries can be united.

That...

Unless we can do that... [*gesture in a circle*], it just goes on and on, we go on and on.

It's good. Yes, I understand: the thing is to build the centre, even if we can't make it into an islet.

Maybe Paolo will be able to convince Roger. I'll speak to him tomorrow, to start the New Year.

* * *

¹⁶ What actually happened is exactly the opposite: It is Paolo who went away and Roger who stayed; so it is Roger alone who did the plans in the following 3 months.

1970

Single Year of Phase 2

Design and Approval

1 January 1970

Report after a conversation

Original language: French

Sources: facsimile at AV Archives; AMW, p. 249

[Roger has a conversation with Mother and notes down the following:]

~~Voilà~~ ~~MAe~~

note a ~~Mère~~ du 1 janvier
70

~~Saw Mo~~

Note to Mother dated 1 January
70

Mère m'a dit avec précision ce matin
Je veux te dire ^{des} aujourd'hui quelque chose
sur Auroville -

J'ai depuis quelques temps clairement
la devant mes yeux, la vue du centre -
Il y a une grande surface ^{assez hautes} couverte
avec quatre colonnes ^{éclairée par le haut}
par des trous dans lesquels entre la lumière
~~correspondant~~ ^{correspondant} à chaque heure
de la journée

Cette vision se répète depuis maintenant
un certain temps, c'est la chose à réaliser
en premier lieu ~~mais~~, l'argent
ne viendra que lorsque cela sera construit.

Il suffirait si l'on pouvait construire
que l'intérieur, ^{l'extérieur} à l'extérieur après
rien que les rayons de lumière qui
viendraient converger sur quelque chose
très simple pas de meuble.

Il n'y aurait pas de fenêtres la lumière
venant d'en haut par les ouvertures qui
correspondraient à chaque heure de la journée

Il suffit d'une grande surface couverte
avec rien au sol ^{voilà} veux tu y réfléchir

Mother told me this morning with
precision:

Today itself I want to tell you
something about Auroville.

Since some time I have clearly before
my eyes the vision of the centre.

There is a large covered area with
four columns¹, quite high, lit from
above by openings through which the
light enters corresponding to each
hour of the day.

This vision keeps on coming since
quite some time now, it is the thing to
be carried out in the very first place;
money will come only when this has
been built.

It would be sufficient if we could just
build the interior - the outside after.
Inside there would be nothing except
the rays of light converging onto
something very simple - no furniture.

There would be no windows; the light
coming from above through openings
corresponding to each hour of the day.

A large covered area would be
sufficient, with nothing on the floor.

Voilà, will you think about it?

* * *

¹ Note that two days later, on 3rd, Mother will speak of 12 columns.

3 January 1970

Taped conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Mother's Agenda, pp. 15-24; CWM, XIII, p. 286; AMW, p. 249

[*Excerpt from a conversation with Satprem:*]

Satprem: Sweet Mother, I told Paolo to come, he is waiting outside.

Yes... There is an interesting thing.

For a long time I had been feeling something, then we spoke about it the other day² and I SAW it... I told Roger about it. I asked him to see Paolo, and I also told him that I had SEEN what should be done. Naturally, he did not say no, he said yes to everything, but I felt he wasn't too keen... but there is what happened. I clearly saw – very, very distinctly saw, which means it was like that and it still IS like that, it's *there* [*gesture showing an eternal plane*] – the interior of that place [*the Matrimandir*].

Satprem: Maybe you should tell Paolo about it?

Tell him right now?... All right... I'll speak more easily if I speak all alone with you.

Satprem: Fine, then, Sweet Mother.

I could describe it. It came like this. It will be a kind of hall which will be like the inside of a column. No windows. Ventilation will be artificial, with this kind of machinery [*Mother points to an air-conditioner*] and just a roof. And sunlight striking the centre; or when there is no sunlight (at night and on overcast days), an electric spotlight. The idea is to build right now an example or a "model" for a hundred people or so. Once the city is built and the experiment is made, we will make a BIG thing of it – but then it will be very big, for one or two thousand people. And the second one will be built around the first, which means that the first one will go only when the second is built.

That is the idea.

Only, so as to tell Paolo about it (and if possible, if I see that it's possible to tell Roger about it), I wanted to have a plan. I'll have it made – not myself, I can't do it any more; I could have done it in the past, but now I don't see clearly enough. This afternoon, I'll have it made in front of me, and with that plan, I'll be able to explain really well. But to you I simply wanted to say what I have seen...

It will be a tower with twelve facets – each facet representing one month of the year – and the top, the roof of the tower will be like this.

[*Mother makes a gesture showing something like this:*]



² On December 31st 1969.

Then, inside, there will be twelve columns – the walls and twelve columns – and right at the centre; on the floor; my symbol, with above it, four symbols of Sri Aurobindo joining in a square, and above... a globe. A globe possibly made of some transparent substance, with or without a light inside, but the sun will have to strike this globe; so, depending on the particular month or hour, it will be from here or there or there [*gesture showing the sun's course*]. Do you understand? There will always be an opening with a sunbeam. Not a diffused light, but always a beam that will have to come and strike the globe. That requires technical knowledge for its execution, and that's why I want to make a drawing with an engineer.

But inside, there will be neither windows nor lights, it will always be in a sort of clear half-light: night and day: during the day with sunlight, at night with artificial light. And on the ground, nothing, except for a floor like this one [*in Mother's room*], that is, first a wooden floor (wooden or something else), then a sort of thick rubber foam, very soft, and then a carpet. A carpet covering everything – except for the centre. And people will be able to sit anywhere. The twelve columns are for those who need a backrest!

But then, people will not come for a “regular meditations” or anything of the kind (the internal organization will be taken care of later): it will be a place for concentration. Not everyone will be allowed in; there will be a time of the week or the day (I don't know) when visitors will be allowed to come, but anyway without mixture. There will be a fixed hour or day to show the visitors, and the rest of the time only for those who are... serious – serious, sincere, who truly want to learn to concentrate³.

So I think that is good.

It was there [*gesture of vision above*]; I still see it when I talk about it – I SEE. As I see it, it's very beautiful, really very beautiful... A sort of half-light: you can see, but it's VERY peaceful, and with very clear and strong beams of light (the projected artificial light will have to be slightly golden, it shouldn't be cold – it will depend on the spotlights). A globe that will be made of a plastic material or... I don't know.

Satprem: Crystal?

If possible, yes. For the smaller temple, the globe won't need to be very big: if it were this big [*about one foot*] it would be enough. But for the bigger temple it will have to be big.

Satprem: But how will the bigger temple be built? Over the small one?

No, no, the small one will go.

Satprem: Oh! It will go, another one will be built.

But the big temple will be built afterwards, and then on a huge scale... The smaller one will go only once the bigger one is built. But of course, for the city to be completed, we must allow some twenty years (for everything to be in order, in its place). It's the same with the gardens: all the gardens that are being prepared are for now, but in twenty years, all that will have to be on

³ Tout le monde ne pourra pas venir; il y aura un moment de la semaine ou un moment de la journée (je ne sais pas) où on laissera venir les visiteurs, mais enfin pas de mélange. C'est une heure fixe ou un jour fixe pour montrer [aux visiteurs], et le reste du temps, seulement pour ceux qui sont... sérieux – sérieux sincères – qui veulent vraiment apprendre à se concentrer.

another scale; then, it will have to be something really... really beautiful. And I wonder what substance that globe should be made of, the big one?... The small one could be made of crystal perhaps: for a globe this size (gesture about one foot), I think it will do. The globe will have to be visible from every corner of the room.

Satprem: It shouldn't be too high above the floor either, should it?

No, Sri Aurobindo's symbol does not need to be big; it has to be this size [gesture].

Satprem: Twenty-five centimetres, thirty centimetres?

At the most, at the very most.

Satprem: So it would be more or less at eye level?

At eye level, yes, that's right.

And a VERY peaceful atmosphere. And NOTHING, nothing but big columns... There remains to be seen whether the columns' style... whether they will be round, or themselves with twelve facets...? But TWELVE columns.

Satprem: And a roof with two sides?

Yes, a roof in two sides so as to get sunlight.

It will have to be so arranged that rainwater can't get in. Something that needs to be opened and closed every time it rains won't do, it's not possible; it will have to be in such a way that rainwater can't get in. But sunlight must get in AS A BEAM, not diffused. So the opening will have to be limited... It requires a clever engineer, who knows his job really well.

Satprem: When would they start?

I'd like them to start immediately, as soon as we have the plans. But there are two questions: first the plans (workers can be found) and then money... I think that it can be done with this idea of building a small specimen ("small", well it's a manner of speaking, because to hold a hundred people easily it will still have to be big enough), a small specimen to begin with. While building the small specimen we'll learn, and we'll build the big one when the city is finished – that won't be right now.

I told Roger about it, and the next day he told me: "Yes, but it will take time to prepare" (I said nothing of all what I've just told you, I just spoke of doing something). Afterwards I had a vision of that room, so I no longer need anyone to see how it should be – I know. What's needed is an engineer more than an architect, because an architect... it has to be as simple as possible.

Satprem: I told Paolo what you had seen, that large room, empty, without anything. It touched him a lot, he in fact could see that large empty room. He understands quite well. So, "empty", simply means a shape.

But a shape... like a tower, but... (That's why I wanted to have a sketch to show), twelve regular facets, and then we need a wall that's not straight, a wall slightly like this (*gesture of slight slope*), I don't know if that's possible. And inside, twelve columns. So we'll have to find a way to capture sunlight, so that at any time of the year sunlight can get in... We need someone who knows his job well.

As for the outside... I didn't see the outside; I didn't see it at all. I only saw the inside.

I wanted to explain to Paolo once I would have the papers, it would be easier, but since you called him...

[Sujata goes and comes back with Paolo, who comes in with a garland of pink "Harmony". Mother gives him an orange hibiscus – Auroville flower – looks at him, and starts speaking:]

Since we decided to build that temple, I have seen – I have seen the inside. I have just tried to describe it to Satprem. But in a few days I will have plans and drawings, so I'll be able to explain more clearly. Because I don't know at all how the outside is, but the inside I know.

Paolo: The outside comes out of the inside.

It's a kind of tower with twelve regular facets representing the twelve months of the year, and absolutely empty... Only, it will have to hold one to two hundred people. So to support the roof, there would be inside (not outside, inside) twelve columns; and right at the centre, the object of concentration... And with the sun's concentration, all year round it will have to get in AS A BEAM (not diffused: it will have to be so arranged that it can get in as beams); then according to the hour of day and the month of the year, the beam will revolve (there will be some device at the top) and it will be directed onto the centre. At the centre there will be the symbol [*of Mother*], then Sri Aurobindo's symbol supporting a globe. A globe which we'll try to have made of a transparent substance as crystal or... A large globe. Then, people will be let in in order to concentrate – [*laughing*] to learn to concentrate! No fixed meditations, nothing of the sort, but they will have to stay there in silence – silence and concentration.

Paolo: It's very beautiful.

But the place should be absolutely... as simple as possible. And the floor in such a way that people may be comfortable, without having to think that it hurts here or there!

Paolo: It's very beautiful.

And in the middle, on the floor, my symbol. At the centre of my symbol, we'll have four parts (like a square), four symbols of Sri Aurobindo, upright, supporting a transparent globe.

That was seen.

So I'll have small plans prepared by an engineer, simple ones to show, and then I'll show you when they are ready. There. And then we'll see.

As far as the walls are concerned, they will probably have to be in reinforced concrete.

Paolo: The whole structure can be in reinforced concrete.

The roof will probably have to be sloping, and at the centre there will have to be a special device for the sun.

Satprem: You said that you saw the walls with a slight slope.

Either the walls or the roof will have to be sloped – whatever will be easier. The walls can be straight with the roof sloping. And the higher part of the roof resting on the twelve columns. And on top, the device for the sun.

Inside, nothing. Nothing but the columns. The columns... I don't know, we'll have to see if they will be with facets (like the whole thing), twelve facets, or simply round.

Paolo: Round.

Or simply square – that has to be seen.

Then, on the floor, we'll have something thick and soft. Here... (are you comfortable when you are seated?... Yes?), there is first a wooden floor, then that sort of rubber, and above, a woollen carpet.

Satprem: With your symbol?

Not on the carpet. The symbol, I first thought it should be done out of some solid material.

Paolo: It has to be in stone.

The symbol... everything will be around it, of course. The symbol will not cover everything, it will be only at the centre of the space – [*laughing*] people shouldn't sit on the symbol!.. It will be at the centre.

The proportion between the symbol and the whole has to be seen carefully, in comparison with the height.

Paolo: The room will be rather large?

Oh yes, it should be. There should be a sort of half-light with those sunbeams – the sunbeam should be SEEN.

A sunbeam.

So, according to the hour of the day (the hour of the day and the month of the year), the sun will go round. Then at night, as soon as sunlight has vanished, we'll switch on spotlights, which will have the same effect and the same colour. Night and day the light will remain there. But no windows or lamps or things of the sort – nothing. Ventilation through air-conditioners (they're set inside the walls, that's very easy).

And SILENCE. No talking inside!

It will be fine.

As soon as my papers are ready, I'll call you and show them to you.

Paolo: Very good.

[*To Sujata:*] Give me a rose for him.

[*Mother gives two red roses; Paolo withdraws*]

I did not ask him if he had seen Roger because... Roger is quite in nowadays' "practical" atmosphere⁴.

Good, it has to start off!

That's what I have learned, in fact, the bankruptcy of religions was because they were divided – they wanted you to follow one religion to the exclusion of all others. And all human knowledge has gone bankrupt because it was exclusive. And man has gone bankrupt because he was exclusive. What the New Consciousness wants (it insists on this) is: no more divisions. To be capable of understanding the extreme spiritual, the extreme material, and to find... to find the meeting point, the point where... it becomes a true force. And it's trying to teach that to the body too, through the most radical means.

[*Passage omitted*]

On the practical level, I'll try to make Roger understand. But I saw, it seemed to me that we should do... When Roger is here, he looks after Auromodèle, the practical side, all that (it's quite necessary, it's very good), but for this construction of the Centre, I'd like Paolo to do it, and so I'd like Paolo to stay when Roger is gone; let Paolo be here when Roger is away, and with Paolo we could do that. Only I don't want either of them to feel that it's one against the other (!). They must understand that it's to complement each other. I think Paolo will understand.

Satprem: But Roger will take it as an encroachment on his responsibilities?

Perhaps not. I'll try, I'll try.

No, when I told him we had to build the Centre – that I had seen it and that it had to be built – he didn't object. Only he told me, "But it will take time." I said, "No, it has to be done right now." That's why I am getting those kinds of sketches made by an engineer, so as to show him, because it's not the job of an architect: it's the job of an engineer, with precise calculations for the sunlight, very precise. It has to be someone really skilled. The architect will have to see that the columns are beautiful, the walls are beautiful, the proportions are correct – all that is quite all right – and also that symbol at the centre. The aspect of beauty is for the architect to see, naturally, but the whole aspect of calculations... And the important thing is the play of the sun on the centre. Because it becomes a symbol – the symbol of the future realization.

* * *

⁴ "Roger est tout à fait dans l'atmosphère «pratique» de maintenant."

Probably 4 January 1970

[Excerpts from three letters in which Udar remembers the day Mother asked him to draw for Her Matrimandir's Inner Chamber:]

[1st letter:]

Open letter from Udar, dated 9.3.77
Original language: English
Sources: facsimile at AV Archives

The vision of The Matrimandir came to The Mother at the beginning of the year 1970. It was soon after the descent of the great Light and Force which came down at midnight of 31st December, 1969, as the year 1970 was being born. This descent was felt by me and some others and Mother later identified it as the descent of the Superman Consciousness and it was then that The Mother asked me to start Sri Aurobindo's Action. Mother informed me that Sri Aurobindo has Himself come into Action and so this organisation has not only a fine name but a very meaningful one. The vision of the Matrimandir came to Mother soon after that and so I feel that there is a strong connection between the two.

It was on the 3^d January, 1970 that Mother spoke of the great vision She had to Roger⁵, Satprem and perhaps others and then to me. Mother had been waiting for this and it came, soon after the descent of the force of Action and so part of it.

My role in this matter was to make a drawing of Mother's vision. Mother said that it was not for an Architect to do this but for an Engineer and so I had that great, great privilege. Mother gave me a detailed description of Her vision and I took notes on it very fully.

Then I went home, locked myself in so as not to be disturbed and made the drawing on my notes and brought all to The Mother as soon as I had finished – the same day, as far as I can remember. Mother said that my drawing was exactly according to Her vision and I felt very happy to hear this. Then Mother took from me the drawing and all the notes, so I have nothing of all this with me now.

*

[2nd letter:]

Open letter, dated 1.4.77, from Udar who had been asked to write whatever he knew about the Matrimandir for the Gazette Aurovilienne.
Original language: English
Sources: facsimile at AV Archives (Documents given by Udar)

One morning, The Mother said to me that She had had the night before a very wonderful vision of the [Matrimandir] that must be built at Auroville, in the very centre of it. Then Mother asked me to take notes on what She recounted of Her Vision and when this was done, I went home and prepared a drawing based on these notes.

⁵ Udar is mistaken, Mother spoke to Roger on the 1st and then, on the 3rd, to Satprem and Paolo.

When I gave this to Mother, She was very pleased and said that I had been able to get down Her Vision exactly as She saw it. So I also was very happy to hear this. Then Mother took from me the drawing and all the notes so I have nothing left with me at all except the sweet memory.

Now writing from memory I can only say that there were two things which I can remember as important. One is that Mother gave a great importance on the twelve pillars and said that they had a great significance. The other is that Mother described Her Vision of the Temple as a whole, something that was already there, and Her Vision was of the whole. So She saw it from the outside and not from the inside and so the measurement of the central Hall to which also She gave much importance, on its measurement, was 24 metres on the outside⁶.

*

Letter from Udar, to Constance (AVI-USA), dated 16.11.87
Original language: English
Sources: facsimile at Laboratory of Evolution

[3rd letter:]

I have asked the Mother about your question⁷ and She reminded me of how She gave me the details of Her Vision of what She called "The Temple of The Soul". With regard to Meditation Room in the centre of what is now known as the Matrimandir, The Mother gave very special importance to this. She did not give me the measurement but paced out, in the room we were in, the length and the breadth of the room and I measured the points marked by Her and after Her approval, I entered this in the notes She had asked me to take down. With regard to the height, Mother showed me a place up on the wall and I hooked the end of my tape to that point and read the measurement to the floor. So, whatever came from these measurements are the dimensions given for the room.⁸

With regard to the Dome itself, The Mother said very definitively that it must be a Gold Dome. It seems that in the Auroville Committee⁹, it is held that it was Roger who proposed a Gold Dome and that The Mother approved it. This is not correct. The Mother said it was a Gold Dome even before the notes and the drawings I made were handed over to Roger.

* * *

⁶ This is what was written on Udar's drawings; but Udar may have been mistaken....

⁷ Constance had written to Udar to know from him in which manner Mother had given him the dimensions of the Chamber. Udar answered at first that he did not remember, but that he will "ask" Mother.

⁸ This does not seem very plausible as explained in the compiler's study of Udar's drawings (see appendix).

⁹ Mid-October 1987, just before Udar wrote this letter to Constance, a referendum had been held in Auroville, to opt – among other things – either for a Matrimandir with golden disks (model presented by Roger), or for a Matrimandir covered with white marble triangles (model presented by Paolo Tommasi). Those present at the meeting voted in favour of Roger's model.

Do we have any evidence that Mother had already spoken of a golden dome?

✂✂ She did tell Huta on 1st September 1965, speaking of Kyoto's Golden Pavilion: *Child, this is exactly what we shall have except for the shape of the roof*[which will be a dome].

✂✂ But, if Mother had clearly specified that Matrimandir's roof should be a dome and that it should be golden, why did Roger present on 24th March 1970 four models (out of five), which were neither domes, nor golden?

Plans

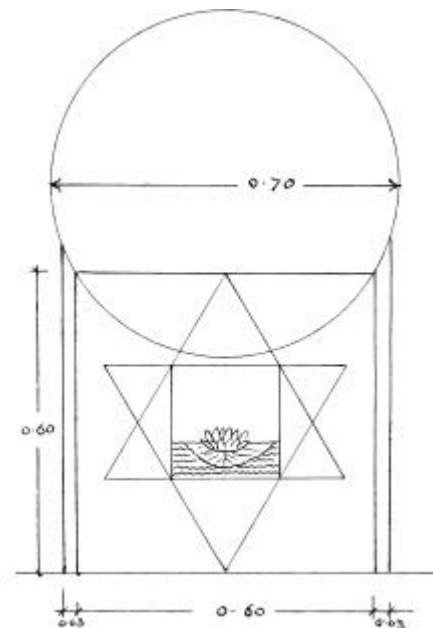
Sources: Piero's personal archives. (Piero retrieved these plans from the office of "Auroville's Future" when it closed down in 1978.)

[Udar first made 3 drawings of Matrimandir's Inner Chamber on two sheets of drawing paper:

- 1. An elevation (scale 1:50)*
- 2. A plan in [horizontal] section (scale 1:50) together with "Sri Aurobindo's symbol"¹⁰ cube with globe" (scale 1:5)]*

[Udar then redrew these two drawings on tracing paper (from which Piero was given a blueprint). Udar said that he gave everything to Mother.¹¹]

SRI AUROBINDO'S SYMBOL CUBE
WITH GLOBE
SCALE 1:5



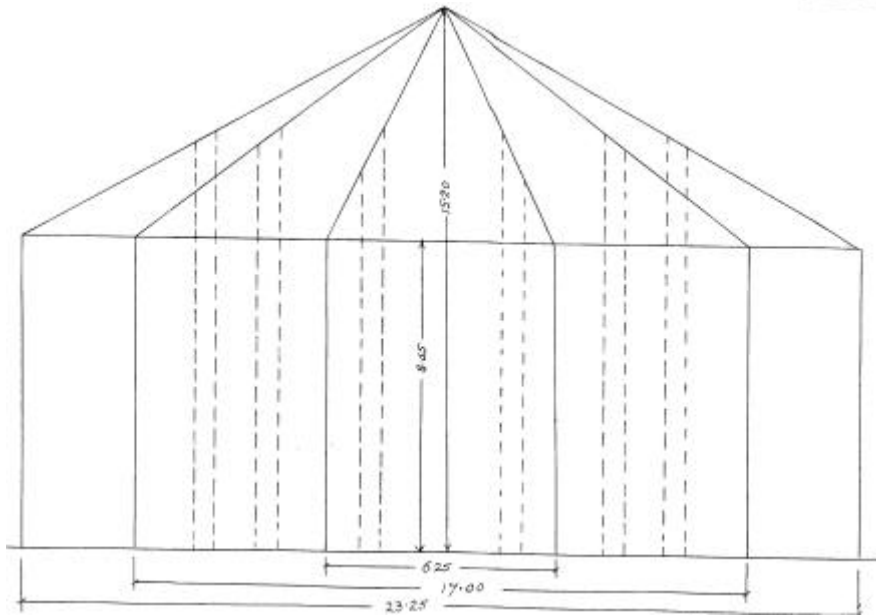
¹⁰ The Symbol of Sri Aurobindo drawn here by Udar (obviously by mistake) was in-use from 1933 to 1962. Udar should have drawn the modified symbol – in-use since 1964.

¹¹ A detailed study of Udar's plans by the compiler is herewith attached (Annexure 8).

MATRIMANDIR

ELEVATION

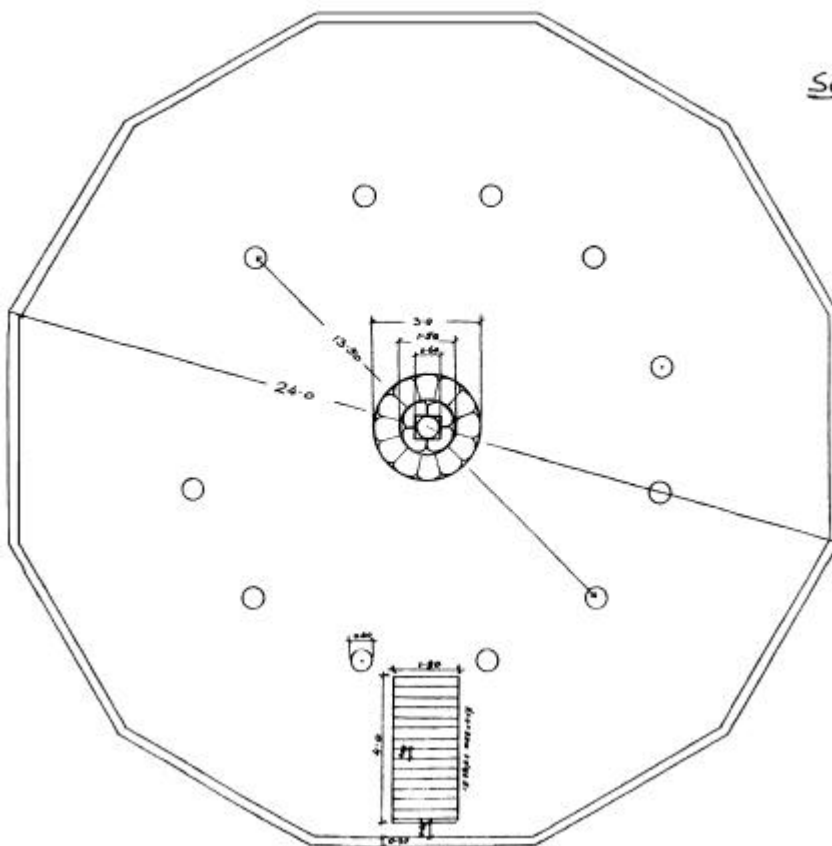
SCALE 1:50



MATRIMANDIR

PLAN IN SECTION

SCALE 1:50



10 January 1970

Taped conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Mother's Agenda, pp. 34-37; CWM, XIII, p. 295; AMW, p. 257

[*Excerpt from a conversation with Satprem:*]

Satprem: Then I have a letter from Paolo...

I'll see him this afternoon.

I told you that I saw the central building of Auroville... I have a plan. Would you be interested to see it?.. There are three scrolls there [*Mother unrolls Udar's plan while explaining*]:

There will be twelve facets. It's a circle. And, at the same distance from the centre, twelve columns. At the centre, on the floor, my symbol, and at the centre of my symbol, there are four symbols of Sri Aurobindo, upright, forming a square. And atop the square, a translucent globe (we don't yet know what substance it will be made of). Then, from the top of the roof, when the sun shines, a ray of sunlight will fall on the globe (only there, nowhere else); when there is no sunlight, electric spotlights will shine a beam (ONE beam again, not a diffuse light) just there on the globe.

Then, no doors, but... after going deep down one comes back up into the temple; one goes under the wall and comes back up again inside – it's again a symbol. Everything is symbolic.

And then, no furniture, but as with a wooden floor here, probably (like here), then over the wooden floor, a thick foam rubber, and over it, a carpet, like here. We have to choose the colour. The whole thing will be white. I am not sure if the Sri Aurobindo's symbols will be white... I don't think so. I didn't see them white; I saw them with an indefinable colour, between gold and orange. A colour of that sort. They will stand upright, carved in stone. And a globe not transparent but translucent. Then, at the bottom (of the globe), a light will be projected upward and will enter the globe diffusely. And from outside, rays of light will fall onto the centre. No other lights: no windows, an electric ventilation. And not furniture, nothing. A place... to try and find one's consciousness.

Outside, it will be something like this [*Mother unrolls another plan drawn by Udar at her request*]... we don't know if the roof will have a pointed shape or...

Very simple, very simple.

It will hold about two hundred people.

So then, Paolo's letter?

Satprem reads:

Very Sweet Mother,

I saw Roger on Sunday, he came to my room and we had lunch together.

With love, I arranged beautiful flowers for You and for Roger. You were with us. We spoke a lot. I felt Roger as a brother.

I told him that Auroville cannot be born like any other city (urban, social, economic problems, all of them to be seen later). The starting point ought to be "something else". That is why we should begin with the Centre.

That Centre must be our lever, our fixed point, the thing we can lean on to try and leap to the other side – because it's only from the other side that we can begin to understand what Auroville should be. And that Centre must be a form manifesting in Matter the content that You can transmit to us on every plane (occult included). As for us, we should only be the open and sincere means through which you can concretize that.

Then I told him how I felt the need for all of us to approach all this while living the experience inwardly and unitedly – people of the East and West – in a vast movement of love, because that is the only possible ‘concrete’ for building “something else”...

What he says is fine.

*... And that Centre can give us this love right now because it’s love of You!
I told him that, on the practical level, we could begin with a moment of silence, gathered together, try to make a complete blank, and in that blank, with everyone’s aspiration bring down the signs for the beginning. But all of us united and together, especially the more spiritually advanced – the Indians.
Roger agreed entirely. He said we should really do that.*

[Mother nods her head]

I’ll see Paolo this afternoon to give him this plan. Because that’s just what I saw.
We’ll do it in white marble. Udar said that he would go and get the marble, he knows the place.

Satprem: The whole structure in white marble?

Yes, yes.

Satprem: But Paolo told me something which I felt to be correct. He said, we’ll put all our heart and aspiration into it, into this Centre...

Yes, yes.

Satprem: And over the years it will get more and more “charged”...

Yes.

Satprem: So this Centre should be definitive, we shouldn’t remove this temple to build another one later.

I said that to reassure the people who think we need something huge. I said, “We will begin with this, and then we will see,” you understand? I said, this Centre should be there until the city is completely built, and afterwards we would see – afterwards no one will want to remove it! Because a lot of people thought of something huge.

Satprem: But Paolo says that from an architectural standpoint, it’s quite possible to extend the thing from the outside, without touching what’s already built.

Oh, yes, it’s quite possible.

You see, Roger asked me, “And then what are we going to do afterwards?” I said, “Well, we’ll think about it afterwards!” –That’s the trouble, they don’t know... they don’t know that one must NOT THINK! As for me I wasn’t thinking about it at all, not at all – one day, I saw it like that, as I see you. Even now, it’s still so living that I only have to look and I see it. And what I saw was the Centre and the light falling on it and then, QUITE NATURALLY, while observing, I remarked, I said, “so that’s how it is.” But it wasn’t “thought”, I didn’t think, “Twelve columns and twelve facets and...” I didn’t think any of that: I saw.

It's like those symbols of Sri Aurobindo.... When I speak of the Centre, I still see those four symbols of Sri Aurobindo joined at their angles, like this, and that colour... strange colour... I don't know where we will be able to find that. It's an orange-gold, very warm. And it's the only colour in the place; all the rest is white.

And the translucent globe.

Satprem: Paolo said he would inquire right now in Italy, at Murano where they make large crystals, whether they can make globe of, say 30 cm, in crystal.

The exact measurement must be on the plan, it should be written there.

Satprem; There have big glassworks there.

Oh! They do marvellous things there.

Isn't the size of the globe mentioned?

Satprem: Seventy centimetres.

It could be hollow. It need not be solid, so as not to be too heavy.

[Silence]

He is fine, Paolo.

Satprem: Yes, Mother.

That underground passageway into the room.... One will enter from about 10 metres away from the wall, at the foot of the urn. The urn will mark the starting point of the descent. I'll have to choose the exact direction... Then, later on, the urn might very well be INSIDE rather than outside the enclosure. So perhaps we could simply have a big wall all around, and then gardens. Between the surrounding wall and the building to be constructed, we can have gardens and the urn. And that wall will have an entrance (one or several, ordinary gates), so that people will be able to move around in the garden.

Then there will be certain conditions to be met before one is allowed to descend into the underground passage and emerge into the temple... It will have to be a bit initiatory: not quite "like that", not just anyhow.

[Silence]

To Roger I said, "We will see that in twenty years!" So that kept him quiet.

But the first idea was to surround that with water, to have an island so that people would have to cross the water to reach the temple. It's quite possible to have an island¹²...

* * *

¹² It's very possible to have an islet. (C'est très possible de faire un îlot...)

17 January 1970

Taped conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Mother's Agenda, pp. 39-57; CWM, XIII, p. 300; AMW, p. 262

[*Excerpt from a conversation with Satprem:*]

What did you want to tell me?

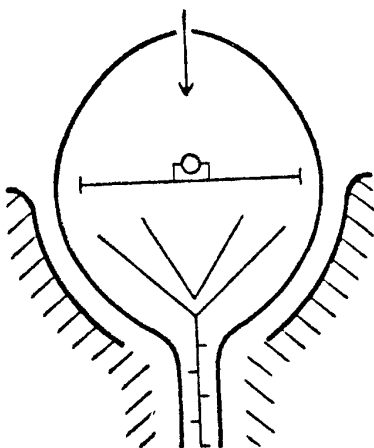
Satprem: I had a visit from Paolo and Nata... There are two things. But first there is the plan of the Centre – to be precise, of the outside of the Centre.

The outside, I didn't see anything. There is a sketch by Udar. I didn't see anything at all and I am open to all proposals. So then?

Satprem: He [Paolo] explained something I found very beautiful and would like to submit to you... As a matter of fact, when you spoke of that Centre, you said, "I don't know whether the walls will have a slope or the roof." You seemed to hesitate. Then Paolo says he received a kind of inspiration and saw something very simple, like a big shell, with one part emerging above the ground and another part buried underground. He drew a sort of sketch which I'd like to show you.

Did he see Roger also? Because Roger had two ideas; he came to see me with two ideas, and I told him which of the two I liked better, but nothing is decided yet. Roger has to draw a sketch of his ideas. So I'll see that and I'll tell you his ideas.

[*Satprem unrolls a plan made by Paolo:*]



Satprem: So you see, this is the outside, which would simply be like a shell. The inside is exactly as you saw it: that big bare carpet, and the ball at the centre. What determined Paolo's inspiration is that you said one would have to go underground and then to re-emerge inside. So he had the idea of going deep down through a spiral staircase here, which would climb back up again, and once here, there would be a series of staircases fanning out in every direction (in the lower part of the shell) and ending inside the temple itself. Then, the whole lower part would be in black marble and the higher part would be in simple white marble. The whole thing is like a big lotus, you see, as if growing out of the earth.

Are you sure that he hasn't seen Roger? Because Roger told me, "I want to make a big circle; the inside is exactly a semicircle and the other semicircle would be underground." He told me almost the same words.

Satprem: Paolo told him his own idea.

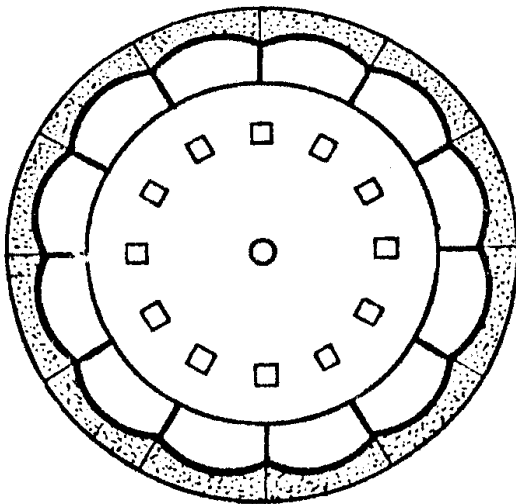
Ah! Paolo told him! Ah, that's why.

Satprem: It's like a bud coming out of the earth.

Yes, yes, that's the first idea Roger told me, almost identically with the same words. And his second idea was a pyramid: leave the temple as we said and have a pyramid. But I also thought of a pyramid and I told him, "I thought of a pyramid...." He said he would make the two plans and we would see. But if he agrees with Paolo's idea, it's very good.

Satprem: But Roger's idea is in fact Paolo's idea.

Yes, that's right.



Satprem: So, when one reaches the top of the "stem", there are a number of staircases in every direction, so that one can emerge into the temple on any side... The centre is absolutely bare, and all around is a sort of footbridge where one emerges from the depths: that's where all those staircases end. And everything bare. There will just be that big carpet bordered from corner to corner by kinds of footbridges. It will appear to be hanging. All white and smooth. Then there was the question of the twelve columns: Paolo said he felt the twelve columns were still an ancient symbol that wouldn't go very well with the shell, and instead he suggested to have symbolically twelve supports, twelve bases of columns that would act as back rests.

Oh, but the columns serve a purpose, because atop the columns we will have spotlights to light up the Centre: there will be light day and night; during the day we'll manage the opening, but once the sun is gone, we'll turn the spotlights on, and from atop the twelve columns their rays will converge onto the Centre.

Satprem: But Mother, if the purpose of the columns is only for the spotlights, those could also be fixed on the walls?

The columns aren't near the wall, they are here, just halfway...

Satprem: Because he saw that space in the centre all bare, with just the symbol at the Centre and that big smooth carpet, without any break caused by the columns. But instead big blocks – twelve big blocks – signalling the place of the columns and also acting as supports. Twelve big blocks about 50 cm high.

It makes no sense.

Satprem: A symbolic sense? Because you did mention those pillars acting also as backrest for people who would want to sit.

Oh, for their backs.

Satprem: So he said that each of those twelve blocks could, for example, be in a different matter, as a symbol: twelve different materials.

On the outer walls we'll organise the general ventilation, which will be electrical (without windows), and atop the columns, there was the light – I saw the columns, I can't say. I clearly saw the columns.

Satprem: Well then, I'll tell him.

As for the gallery all around, I don't know that I like it a lot... I didn't see it: I saw the walls bare, without windows, also the columns, and then the Centre. I am sure of that because I saw it, and saw it for a long time.

Satprem: Does the shape of a shell suit you?

In the sense that it makes a perfect circle: half above, half below.... That's all right. Only, we'll need to arrange something for the sun.

Satprem: Yes, Nata is familiar with the problem of lighting with prisms, because to catch a sunbeam, we'll need prisms. He said he would solve the problem quite easily, he is looking into it. A few prisms will simply be put at a number of places, and they'll catch just one sunbeam.

There must be ONE beam. I SAW the beam.

Satprem: That's right, with a prism the beam will be seen. Then there will be a number of geometrical openings to follow the motion of the sun... But inside, on the wall, the twelve facets will be reproduced.

Yes, yes.

Satprem: And this, [Satprem points to the circular gallery] was in principle the entrance points where one emerges from underground.

I don't know if it's good to multiply the entrance points like that.... There will be a practical problem to be solved: if there is a single entrance with a very severe watch there, it is all right, but if there are several entrance points and not enough light, there will be catastrophes.

Satprem: No, no, Mother outside there will be a single entrance, but when one reaches the base of the shell and climbs up again, there would be that multiplicity of entrance points. Outside, there is only one way down, which ends here, at the foot of this spiral staircase.

[Silence]

Satprem: He thought of this footbridge all around because he said the all white carpet at the centre would stand out better, as if floating separated, instead of being stuck to the wall.

I did not think it would be “stuck to the wall”, there was always a space to circulate around the wall.

Satprem: So that's the space, with a number of footbridges on which people would emerge. And that idea of bareness was also what made him remove the columns.

What I don't like is the idea of footbridges, because the walls were straight from top to bottom, in white marble.

Satprem: Oh, but the footbridges aren't high; they are about 20 cm above ground.

Then it's all right.

Satprem: Besides, he said the carpet could come up at an angle, cover at an angle those footbridges, or rather this circulation all around.

That's quite all right.

[Silence]

All right, then. So they have to agree. But it must be half done already, since Roger told me about the idea. If I had known it was Paolo's idea, I would have said yes straight away. But it will be worked out. It's all right.

Satprem: So I'll tell him to work on that basis... The only question that remains is the outside: should a void be left around the shell to make the descent of the shell clearly visible? Otherwise, if the gap is filled up, it will simply look like an hemisphere placed on the ground. For the shell's descent underground to be clearly understood, he thought there would be an opening all around.

I don't know. I told you, I haven't seen anything for the outside, so I don't know. But that will be dangerous. People might fall.

Satprem: Or else we could have a sort of moat with water all around, transparent water that would make the descent of the shell clear, for instance?

Yes, yes, that could be fine.

Satprem: There is also a question of measurements. According to the plan [made by Udar], you gave 24 meters – 12 meters on each side of the globe¹³. But could some more distance be kept for the outer circle? The plan has 24 m in diameter, and 15.20 meters in height.

¹³ Actually Udar mentioned 24 metres from the outer edge of one corner to the outer edge of the opposite corner.

Oh?

Satprem: Paolo asks whether these proportions could vary: keep 24 metres for the base of the carpet, but with the possibility, for example, of keeping 2 or 3 metres on each side for passages.

Where would the walls be then?

Satprem: The wall would be here [Satprem points to the outer side of the circular passage].

It's the walls that should be 24 metres apart¹⁴.

Satprem: He says that if those passages are to be there, 24 metres wouldn't be quite sufficient.

[Silence]

Satprem: The height, too is in question.

The question was in fact that it should be a perfect circle.

Satprem: If it's a perfect circle, then the height should be half the distance between the walls.

Yes.

[Silence]

What would really please me is if they could agree with each other and present me with a project of the two together. That way, it would be easy to execute... I mean, if Roger has adopted Paolo's idea, why couldn't they see together how to execute it?

Satprem: Yes, that would make things simpler.

Oh, much, much simpler!

[Silence]

What will happen under there?... [Mother points to the underground part of the shell] All that is mental. When you are going to have a big dark underground, what's going to happen in there?.. What's going to happen? – Lots of unspeakable things. Humanity isn't transformed, we shouldn't forget that! And all kinds of people will come.... Even if there is a control at the entrance, you can't stop people from going to see, and what will happen under there?... That was my first objection when Roger told me, "We could build magnificent underground passages!" I asked him, "That's very fine, but who will control what will take place under there?"

¹⁴ The way Mother says it here, seems to mean from one wall to the opposite wall. This statement will create an enormous confusion/debate when Roger, Piero and others will become aware of it – many years later.

Satprem: I had thought the descent was your idea?

My idea was a rather short descent emerging here [*Mother points to the only opening of the original plan*]. A rather short descent, not a big underground passage like that... But it's possible; it is a question of control, that's all. Only, between an underground passage with room enough for two lines of people (one going up and the other going down) and emerging here, and a huge underground passage like this one, there is a big difference! And now he wants it all black on top of it!

Satprem: In black marble, yes.

Yes, so then? It means that one won't see very clearly. So what will take place in there?

Satprem: The underground passages aren't in the shape of narrow passageways: there is a spiral stairway, and when you reach the top of the spiral, it branches out into a series of open staircases, suspended like footbridges. It's not enclosed, it's all suspended.

Won't there be any accidents?... Oh! There's no lack of hallucinated people who might break their heads on the ground.... You see, it's a little too mental to my taste, I mean that from a mental point of view it's very attractive, but in vision...

Satprem: The idea is primarily the collective construction of this underground passage as symbol....

[Long silence]

We'll see! [*Mother laughs*]

[Silence]

At any rate they should get together. Then I will see.

I'd like to have the two of them together with their paper. That would be very good.

Because the one doesn't tell me that it's the other's idea – he presents it as if it were his own (!), and then the other one doesn't tell me he spoke with the first!...

Satprem: But he didn't have an opportunity to tell you.

No, but you mentioned it because I said it to you... But I know. So you understand, we work for "human unity", and the workers don't get along!

And I clearly see, I clearly see in each one what's like this [*twisted gesture*]. It's not that I am surprised, but...

My logic is this: "Yes, it's very good, you are all very nice, you work for human unity – at least be united!..." Do you understand?

Satprem: But I am sure that Paolo wants only to be happy to get along with Roger.

But you surely understand that if Roger has adopted Paolo's idea, it means he admires Paolo's intelligence, otherwise he wouldn't have. So why one side like this and the other side...? We don't want any more of these petty things.

Satprem: But when Paolo showed me this plan, I felt something very beautiful... I'll tell you what I felt; I felt, I am witnessing the birth of Auroville.

No, that's not true.

Satprem: The material birth, I mean.

Yes, yes, I understand, but that's not true.

[Mother goes into a long concentration]

We'll let dust settle. Because, you understand, to accept those changes, I must be sure that the origin of the inspiration is of the same quality as mine... For the execution, I know very well that we need people who know the job and do the work, but for the inspiration, I must be sure that the source of inspiration is AT LEAST as high as mine... And I am not sure, because I saw so clearly. With Paolo's ideas, I saw a mixture straight away. His ideas are all mental ideas, I can assure you because for me that's very easy to see. Well, all of them bring along the same MIXTURE as with anything that's done in the world. And so... what's the use of doing over and over and over again?...

Something bothers me. Entering underground is very good, but that huge underground?...
[Mother pulls a face]

[Silence]

We'll see. Let it settle down, we'll see.

Satprem: And for the upper part, do we keep this idea of a shell, or should it be studied further?

Shell... The idea was a sphere. Why a shell?

Satprem: A "Shell", anyhow a round, spherical shape.

An eggshell is oblong, not spherical. The egg is really somewhat like a spinning top; so the upper part would be broader and the lower part narrower, with only the staircases... That's quite possible.

Give me a piece of paper... *[Mother draws an egg while explaining]* So here, all the way down, there would only be the staircases.

Like this, yes.

Satprem: His idea was to reproduce Brahman's egg – you know, the primeval egg – so that the temple would represent the primeval egg.

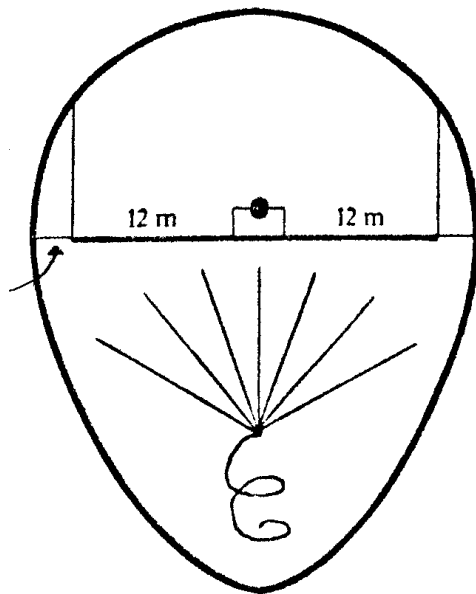
But then, how is it, Brahman's egg?!...

Satprem: I don't know... Like an egg, I suppose!

An egg always has its base narrower than the top. So if we conceive of an egg like this [*Mother draws*] and the base to be the staircase, a spiral staircase climbing up to the temple....

For instance, seven stairways.

Satprem: Seven instead of twelve.



And here [*Mother draws a horizontal line across the "egg"*], it's twenty four metres and only fifteen and a half metre high¹⁵. So this way it's correct.

Satprem: Twenty-four metres for the entire width or for the carpet?

No, the walls must be straight, they cannot be curved. I saw them straight.

Satprem: Straight, and higher up rounded.

From what I had seen, the columns were higher than the walls, and that's why the roof was sloping. And it was on top of the columns that the electric lighting was placed.

And the widest point of the egg would be here (*Mother draws a line at the level of the carpet*).

Satprem: At ground level.

Yes.

Satprem: And you spoke of seven openings?

Seven stairways.

And then an underground passageway leading to the base of the egg, from where the seven stairways begin.

That's possible.

Satprem: In other words, the inner walls of the temple should be straight.

That is, for the outside, to the eye the shape can be rounded, but inside, the wall has to be straight.

Satprem: A straight wall, and over it a dome.

¹⁵ Mother is mistaken here. 15.20 metres is the height written on Udar's plan and She just said it.

Yes, a dome over the straight wall. But the dome can be the egg's dome, and I thought that the point at which the dome meets the walls would be over the columns.

Twelve columns.

And here, for the outside, they can prolong the wall in a rounded shape, like this [*Mother draws*].

There would even be the possibility of having a space between the outermost wall and the innermost wall. Keeping a space here. It's to be decided.

Satprem: That means, in addition to the 24 metres?

Yes, that's understood: the 24 metres end at the walls¹⁶.

Satprem: And the openings for the seven stairways?

I'd rather have them outside the wall.

Satprem: Yes, it would be better because that would leave more space for the Centre.

Oh, yes, and the inside would be much clearer. The sight of all those stairways didn't appeal to me. Even one I didn't like it, but seven... While outside, it's fine.

Satprem: So a passage outside.

The passage outside.

Satprem: Yes, as in India when you go around the temple.

Yes. So that's all right.

Satprem: And the seven stairways start directly from the base of the shell without this "stem" coming up from the bottom?

That's up to them. Below, it's the same to me. Whether they want a stairway like this or a stairway... As long as it is not too steep.

[*Silence*]

Satprem: "There is the second part of the problem"

Oh, what is it?

Satprem: Nata and Paolo realized that if Auroville or the construction of this Centre is left to Auroville's people as separate from the Ashram, it will never work: the true force will never be there, those who are there aren't receptive enough to do the work. If there is that break between the Ashram and Auroville, it will never work, it will be one more "construction" but not something new. According to them, the only hope is for that Centre to be built not by Aurovilians but by all the Ashram people, without distinction

¹⁶ Unfortunately Mother again is not aware that Udar wrote something else on the plans he made.

between Aurovilians and non-Aurovilians; for the whole force to be united in the construction of this Centre, rather than abandon the Aurovilians to an outer break. Just as the disciples built "Golconde" [a guest-house at the Ashram], in the same way all the disciples should build Auroville's Center, without outside manpower.

At Golconde there was outside manpower.

Satprem: Anyhow with as little as possible of the outside element, so it may be a work of consecration. Otherwise, they told me (Nata especially), Auroville's people are all full of arrogance and incomprehension; they see the outside of things. The force of the people here should be mixed into it. If the Ashram people do not mix with them, do not breathe the force into it, it will never work.... Right now, Paolo told me, Auroville as it appears from outside looks like a necropolis.

[Mother laughs]

It is the "living" fruit of egoism. The only saving thing would be for the Ashram people to come in and do the work, and for the others to be absorbed in that, otherwise ...

[After a long silence]

But at the Ashram, we have three centers doing building work: there is Phany who looks after the maintenance of houses, Abbay Singh, and Udar... Abbay Singh isn't equipped for that, and moreover he is too busy, because he doesn't have just building, he has all the cars and all those lands; now I consider he is fully occupied and he does his work well, so if we tried to give him too much, he couldn't do it well anymore. As for Udar, he is very interested and even said he would take care of bringing the white marble; he would himself go and choose it. He is very interested and if I told him to do it... But that wouldn't be better.

Satprem: But that's not what he meant, he didn't mean at all a problem of construction: he meant the problem of having the disciples work with the Aurovilians.... Nata, as an engineer, would look after the construction with the money collected, but the whole manpower would have to be provided by all the Ashram people mingling with the Aurovilians. That's the idea."

That's not possible. All the Ashram people young enough to work are working, they all have their occupation.

Satprem: He saw a sort of rotation, each giving, for example, an hour a day, or a day a week. Because otherwise ...

They'd be only too happy! For them it would be an extraordinary amusement! I have more difficulty preventing them from dissipating their energies than I would have trying to get them to do some work! For them it would be an amusement.

Satprem: "Because he says that if there isn't the inner force of the Ashram people mingling with the Aurovilians, the Aurovilians will remain what they are. There is a break between Auroville and the Ashram.

As for me, I don't find it sufficient.

Satprem: "The break?"

Yes.

Satprem: Well, then...!

I don't find it sufficient. It's not at all on the same level. The people here...

[Silence]

You just have to imagine I were gone.

Satprem: Bah-bah!

Just imagine that and you'll see, you'll soon see what will happen.

Satprem: Well, it's the only hope.

If they come and tell me, "YOU have to take the responsibility," ah, then I would say, "They are quite right." That's quite different. They have been beside the point. It's not that.

Satprem: But, Mother, I think that's what they mean, isn't it?

[Mother laughs] They don't think clearly! It's a muddled thought.

Satprem: "When they say that all the disciples here should take part in Auroville's construction, as was done for Golconde, they mean that you are the one who gives the disciples the impulse to come and participate in the work. That was the idea. But you say there should be a separation on the contrary – no mixture.

[Laughing] If you knew things as they are!... Auroville people bring drugs here, they bring... all kinds of things.

Satprem: Yes, yes, I know – I know, Mother. That's why he says the only hope is...

Is for them to go and catch all those things there!

Satprem: He says, "Otherwise, there is no hope."

Oh no, he doesn't know! It's all in the mentality, all in the mind. They don't know. WHO knows? It's only when one sees. There isn't one who sees.

It's all thoughts and thoughts and thoughts – you can't build with thoughts."

Satprem: Can the elements in Auroville do the work?

I am working and working [*gesture of kneading*] to gather the energies that can do the work. And there has to be some sifting there.

Satprem: Yes.

[*silence*]

But you understand, they speak of physical work, and for physical work there are only the young ones at the School – all the ashramites have become old, *mon petit*! They are all old. There are only the young ones at the School, and those are not here to become ashramites, they're here to be educated – it's for them to choose... Many of them, many want to go to Auroville. So that would mean the Ashram's education going to Auroville – there are many of them. But ... give me names: who can go and work with his hands?

Satprem: But, Mother, the only possibility is for you to SAY; and then, tomorrow I'll go and spend two hours in Auroville picking up baskets [of rubble]!

[*Mother laughs*] "Mon petit, you're one of the youngest!... Can you picture me telling Nolini, "Go and work"!"

Satprem: Oh, but that would pull all the others along.... Anyway, that's Nata's and Paolo's idea.

[*Mother laughs*] Poor Nolini!

[*long silence*]

If you knew how many letters I receive from so-called Aurovilians, saying, "Oh, I want to be in peace at last, I want to come to the Ashram, I no longer want to be an Aurovilian." So there. It's just the opposite: "I want to be in peace." There you are.

[*silence*]

As for me, you know, I don't believe in external decisions. Simply, I believe in only one thing: the force of Consciousness exerting a PRESSURE like this (*crushing gesture*). And the Pressure keeps increasing... Which means it's going to sift people.

Otherwise, there would be no solution, because, you see, in the past (just some ten years ago) I used to go about and see things... But that's over. It wasn't a decision I made, I didn't at all think it was over, it's not that at all: it was something that COMPELLED me. You understand? So I said all right. It's not incapacity: this body is extremely docile, it does everything it's asked to do; if it were asked to go out, it would manage to go out. It's extremely docile. But that's how it is, there is a Command: NO. And I know why...

So, you know, I only believe in this: the pressure of the Consciousness. All the rest is all the things people do; they do them well or not so well, it all lives and dies and changes and gets distorted and... – all the things they've done. It's not worth it. The power of execution has to come from above, like this, imperative [*gesture of descent*]. And for that, this [*Mother points to her forehead*] has to keep still. It shouldn't say, "Oh, we don't want this, oh, we want that, oh, we must do this..." – Peace, peace, peace, He knows better than you what needs to be done. There.

And as not many can understand, I don't say anything: I look and wait.

I LOOK... For instance, I am given a piece of paper as you just did when you gave me that drawing, I look like that, and I very clearly see the part in the paper that's the result from above, the part that has got mixed, the part... Like that. But you don't go and say all that! – Moreover they wouldn't believe me.

[*silence*]

I understand very well – very well – why Sri Aurobindo didn't say "superman," why he said "supramental." He didn't say "superman" because he didn't want it to be "an improved man," that's not it. He said supramental because... He said, leave all this.

Supramental – SUPRA, you understand?

These last few days, I saw the photos of those who went to the moon.... Have you seen them? Did you see how decked out they were?

Satprem: Yes, I saw.

Ah ... so they've become machines.

Satprem: That's right – robots.

Yes, and then (*laughing*), the Russians said, Why not send robots, it's not worth sending men!... That's the point.

[*silence*]

You see, Nata has spent his time speaking ill of Roger as much as he could, saying all his plans are bad and his work couldn't succeed. Roger has spent his time saying, "Nata has ruined all my work!" And another says, "This fellow ..." and this fellow says, "That fellow ..." and they are all like that! So I see in a definite way that IF the work is to be done, FIRST they have to overcome all this mean, petty humanity. They "see," they have "ideas" (they have lots of ideas), they have ideas and they see; others see other things and have other ideas, and then, "Oh, that's worthless, my idea is the right one...." They're all like that! And my whole action is like this: a PRESSURE on them to make them abdicate their little person. Until it abdicates, the work CANNOT be done.

As a matter of fact, they seek all kinds of reasons so as not to see the true one.

We need ... phew, a little air!

The body – this body – is undergoing a discipline, you know, oh, terrible... But it doesn't complain, it's happy, it asks for it. And it sees how we are full of VERY SMALL THINGS that are ceaselessly hindering the action of the Force. Well, the first thing is to get rid of all that. We

must be like this [*gesture of surrender, open*] and receive the Force. Then all inspirations will come, and not only inspirations but the MEANS of execution, and the TRUE THING. Otherwise...

And since not all of them are quite ready, I do what the Consciousness does: I apply the Pressure and say nothing – I wait [*Mother laughs*].

[*silence*]

If you knew all that takes place, you'd find it very funny... The whole side of agriculture, same thing; the whole side of education, same thing; everywhere the same thing... The international side, same thing: everywhere, everywhere, Man [*Mother inflates her cheeks*], Man puffing himself up....

FIRST they must understand: abdicate. Then we will see.

Satprem: "Do I convey your message to them?"

Oh, no, mon petit! Poor things, they will be terrified!

Satprem: Do you think so? It would do them good.

Oh, no, no, they'll be in a tizzy. The Pressure is the best thing. Because they don't understand what you think, they don't understand what you say: they understand what they have inside their heads. They change the meaning of the words... Like what happened with A.R. [the healer], remember how he took it as a personal attack.

Satprem: Yes, that's true! That's true, I noticed it: they take it as a personal attack.

Exactly. But everywhere that's the difficulty: the person first. So that spoils everything.

Satprem: You speak the truth objectively as you see it, and it's as if you were attacking them!

Attacking them, yes. So we must wait and wait till they are ripe – a lot of time is wasted, you understand. It's better not to say anything: apply the Pressure. Oh, I am pitiless!" [*Mother laughs a lot*]

Satprem: So what do I do in the middle of all these people?

You can tell them that... In fact, Roger spoke to me (it was the same thing with other words) and I didn't say either yes or no, I was waiting because I wanted to know how others saw the thing. So now I have seen, I see that they agree. If they can agree, the work will go faster! So there. Objections of detail don't matter because you start with one idea and end with another – you progress a lot in between. So it doesn't need discussion, it's only... Only, try to put your energies together so as to start sooner, that's all!

[*Mother laughs*]

* * *

January 1970

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile at AV Archives; The Spirit of Auroville, p. 93

[Letter from Huta:]

My dearest Mother,

Richard Eggenberger is grateful to You for Your kind blessings.

He is going to start his work of taking the slides of the whole of Savitri.

He came to me today and told me that he could spend more and more time in this work of Savitri if he has no more work of gardening in Auroville. He expressed his feeling that he is more inclined to the art and music and he wishes to do something in the slides of Savitri.

I wish greatly that this work of Savitri should be done wonderfully with the new inspiration. So I pray to You, Mother, please allow him to take up this new work of slides taking and showing with Your recitations and with the new music.

Mother, let this work spread more and more all over the world – let people open themselves to Savitri.

Please do the needful.

Richard wishes to have Your answer regarding this work.

Love

Yours

Huta

[Mother replies:]

*So is all right, he can
do this work at the best
of his capacity.*

*But he must make arrangements so
that the gardens of the Matrimandir
will not suffer.*
Blessings

It is all right, he can do this work at the best of his capacity.

But he must make arrangements so that the gardens of the Matrimandir will not suffer.

Blessings

* * *

Pertaining to January 1970

Open letter

Original language: French

Sources: Gazette Aurovilienne Vol. V, July 77

[Excerpt from an open letter from Roger dated 20.04.77:]

In January 1970, the Mother explained to me her vision of the Matrimandir and asked me to prepare plans for it in view of a speedy construction.

She had then laid emphasis on the simplicity of the hall, its lighting, its colour: the atmosphere that this room should have with its twelve sides and its twelve columns, having at its centre her symbol and that of Sri Aurobindo, which would support the ball lighted by the sun's rays.

To sum up, she told me over again – broadly speaking – what she had explained in detail in the course of talks she had had with Satprem and Paolo. She gave me, a few days later, a plan saying that in this drawing were all the detailed dimensions of the inner chamber of the Matrimandir, and that I was to change nothing with regard to the dimensions which must be respected. As for the exterior, she left me the liberty to submit blue-prints to her. I, therefore, set myself immediately to work after having put to her, on various occasions, a certain number of further questions, which were necessary for purposes of study and for the working out of the plan.

In this context, I, therefore, asked her what was the utility of the columns because in one of my sketches the hall was raised from the ground and the problem of its structure arose before me. The Mother replied to me: "But these are for supporting the roof of the chamber". Having explained to her that they were not necessary from the technical point of view because the construction would probably be in concrete-screen (voile de béton) she said to me: "Well then, if they are of no use, you can remove them."

* * *

21 February 1970 Mother's 92nd Birthday

Excerpt from a book

Original language: English

Sources: Auroville, the first six years, by Savitra, p. 86

[Savitra's account of the beginnings of the Matrimandir Nursery:]

To begin the preparation for [developing Matrimandir Gardens], a nursery was begun on February 21st 1970, behind the site where the workers camp would rise in the following year¹⁷. The work would be overseen by Narad, who had received 10 years training in temperate horticulture and 2 years in sub-tropic, before his five years experience in Auroville.¹⁸

* * *

¹⁷ This particular site was chosen because it was the only plot with trees (i.e. mango and jack-fruit trees) in the area.

¹⁸ Narad's "experience in Auroville" started at the very end of 1969.

Early 1970

Excerpt from the first issue of Auroville's first news-bulletin for Aurovilians.

Original language: English

Source: Laboratory of Evolution's archives

[Article in Auroville's first internal news-bulletin:]

INTRODUCTION

This is the first issue of a news-bulletin for Aurovilians.

The purpose is to present general information about the activities and life in Auroville. Fully aware of our limitations we still hope that this bulletin will become a supporting force towards the realisation of Auroville.

The staff sincerely intends to approach all the news in a positive way. Your response to our format is looked forward to. Our thanks for your interest and cooperation.

PEACE.

Auroville-Centre

NURSERY

At present, activities in the Nursery are mostly concerned with the preparation of flats for seedlings. Also a pot-stand has been constructed which had to be painted to prevent an invasion of white ants. Another plan which was realised is the patio in front of Howard's hut¹⁹, so everyone who is visiting the Nursery can take a rest there and enjoy the fine atmosphere at this place. Melons were planted in the surrounding area and a test for papaya seeds proved to have a positive result with more than 60 per cent germination.

Water-situation.

The team working in the Centre is facing an urgent problem of water supply. Until a few weeks ago it was not possible to put a pipeline from the well to Janet's place²⁰ and from there to the Nursery. Now the financial problem has been solved and we expect to have the project finished within a couple of weeks. But until that time a substitute must be found in trailers with water or even bullock-carriers. Richard²¹ is still considering these ideas, although the costs of hiring the tractor and trailer may put too much strain on the finances for the gardens.

Other events at Peace.

David and Francis completed the huge roof of the hut at Arindam's Orchard, doing most of the work themselves. Francis has now gone to Forecomers to work on the canyon-dam.

The project of the pipeline (see water-situation) has started last week. The length of the 2 inch-pipeline will be 370 meter starting from the well at Arindam's place²² and ending at the Nursery. Permission to cross the village-land was obtained already.

The other well near the Banyan-tree²³ has been completed now and is waiting electricity.

¹⁹ Howard will be later known as Amrit.

²⁰ Janet's place has not changed; in the middle of what is now known as "Centre Field", by the future Crown Road.

²¹ This Richard will be later known as Narad.

²² This explains why the plot on which Arindam had built his house became later known as "Nursery Pumphouse". For more than 10 years, Arindam's well was the Nursery's only source of water.

²³ This well which was dug in the future "Garden of Unity" is still in use.

Four newcomers arrived lately at Peace, Eduard and Joscilyn²⁴, Sally and Jacky, in the meanwhile Harry has left for Sweden. The number of people living at Peace is ten at the moment, while a request for settling in Peace has been made by a Scottish young man. Last week, a community-kitchen was started for Peace-inhabitants. The other (general) kitchen supplies daily food to about 77 people.

* * *

24 March 1970

Roger's 47th birthday

Approval of Matrimandir's design

Letter

Original language: French

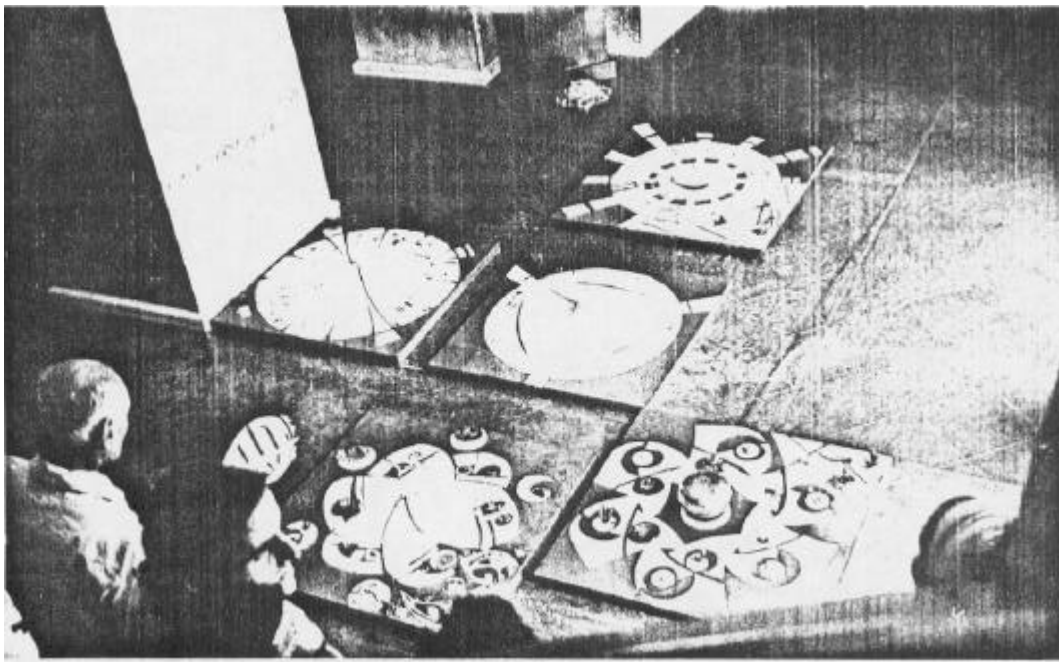
Sources: Gazette Aurovilienne Vol. V, July 77

[Continuation of Roger's open letter dated 20.04.77:]

On March 24, '70, I presented 5 models to the Mother and a maquette²⁵ presenting the lines of the interior of the hall. The columns were no longer represented in that maquette and there figured already the access to the hall by a staircase leading to a gallery encircling the hall.

After having looked at them for long, having asked for the necessary explanations and having spent time over each of the models, the Mother chose one to serve for the elaboration of the concept of the present Matrimandir and she gave me her consent for the work as a whole.

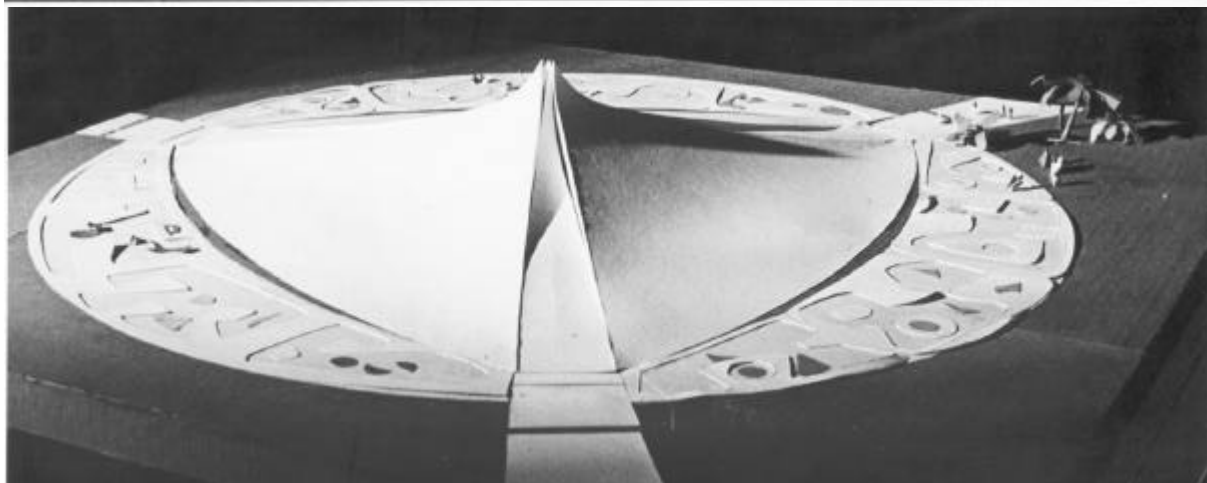
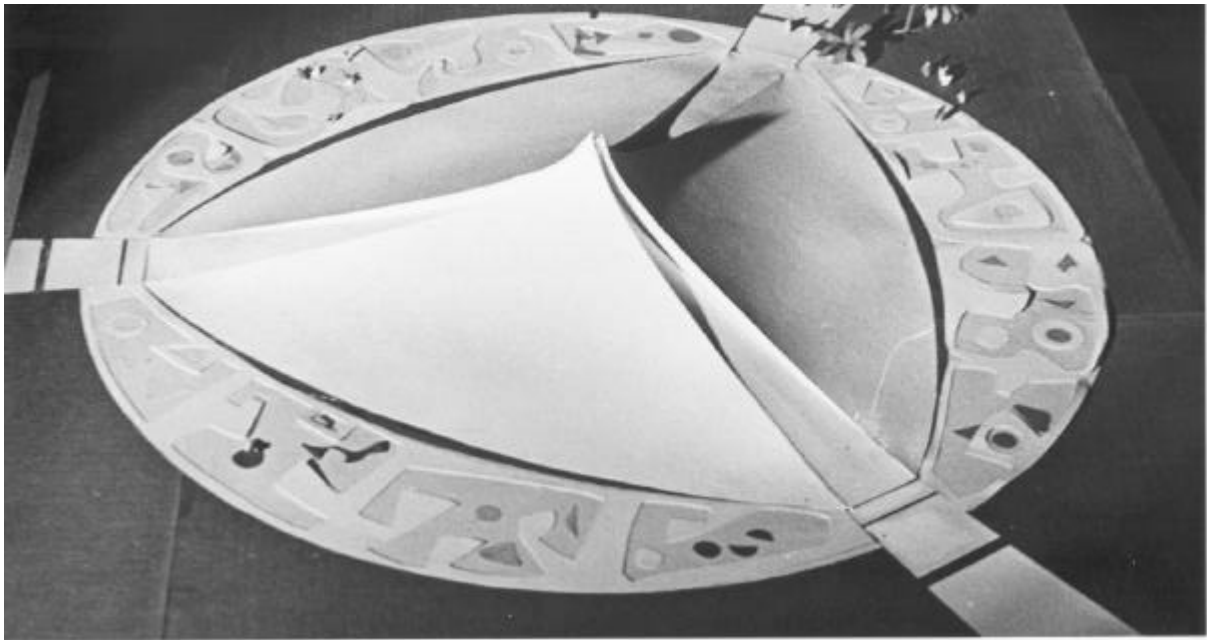
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***The five models and the half model of the Inner Chamber
in the Ashram's Meditation Room***

²⁴ These two names are spelled like this by Anie.

²⁵ "Maquette" = French for "model". As Mother had described the Chamber, it was possible to make a model of it. The same Inner Chamber could have been housed in any one of these 5 different models of the outer structure.



Two photos of the 3-sided Model

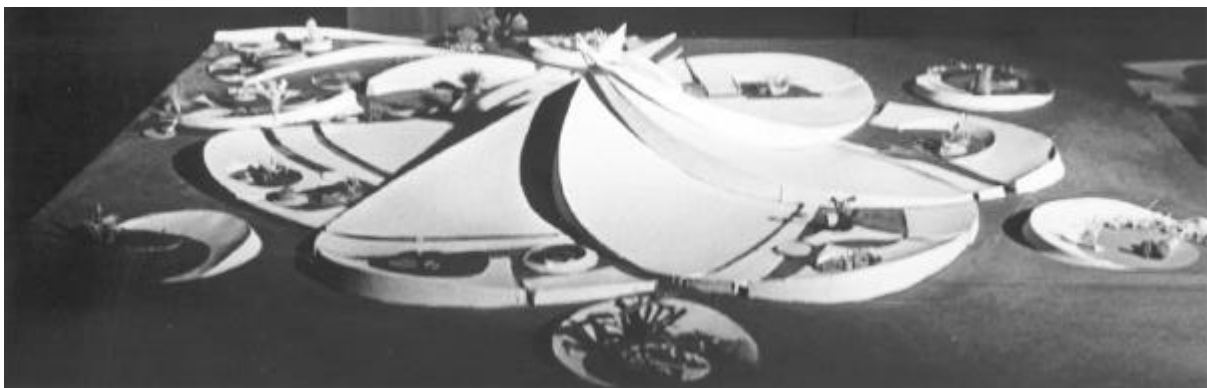
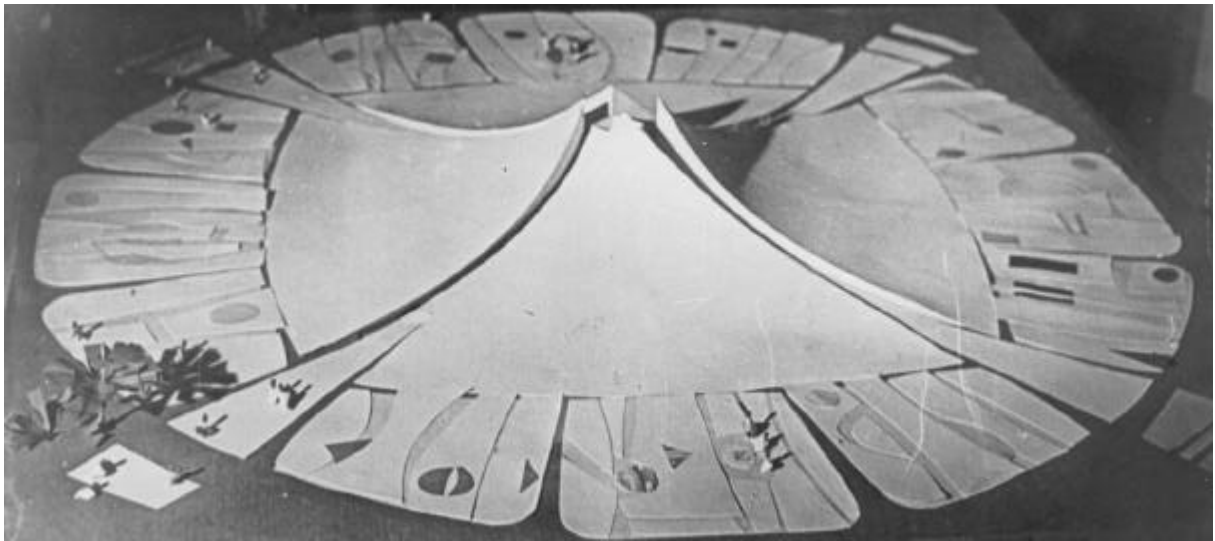


Photo of the 6-sided Model



Two photos of the 4-sided Model

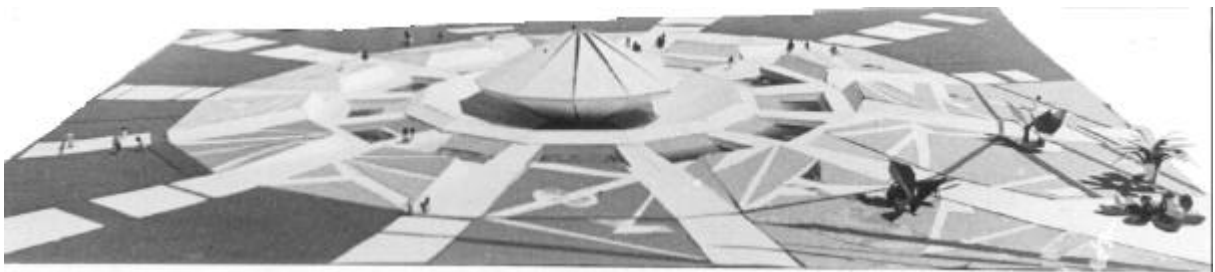
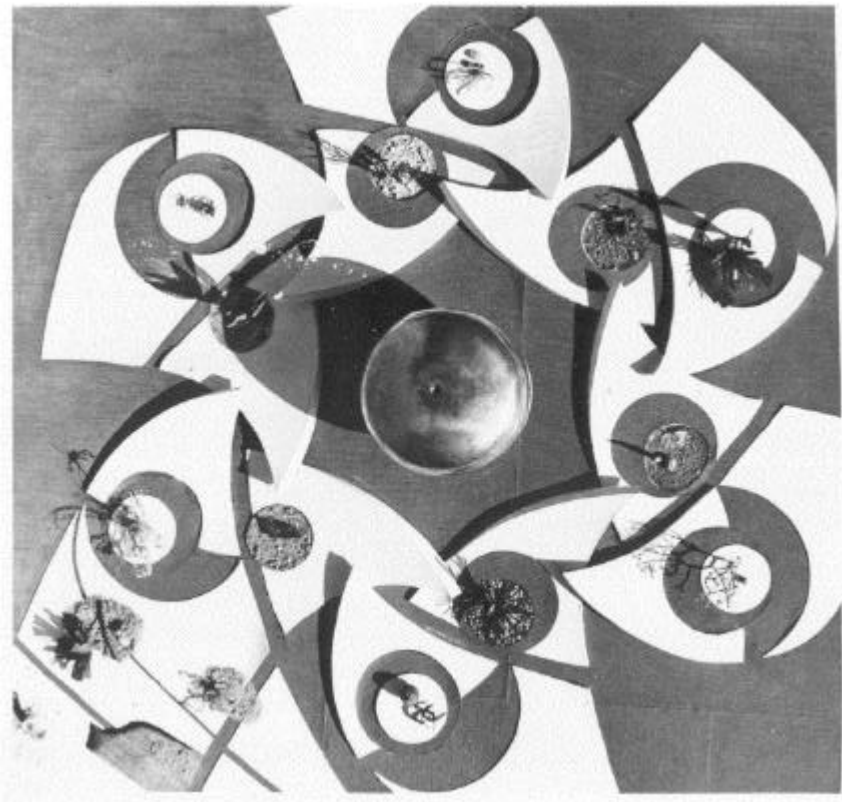
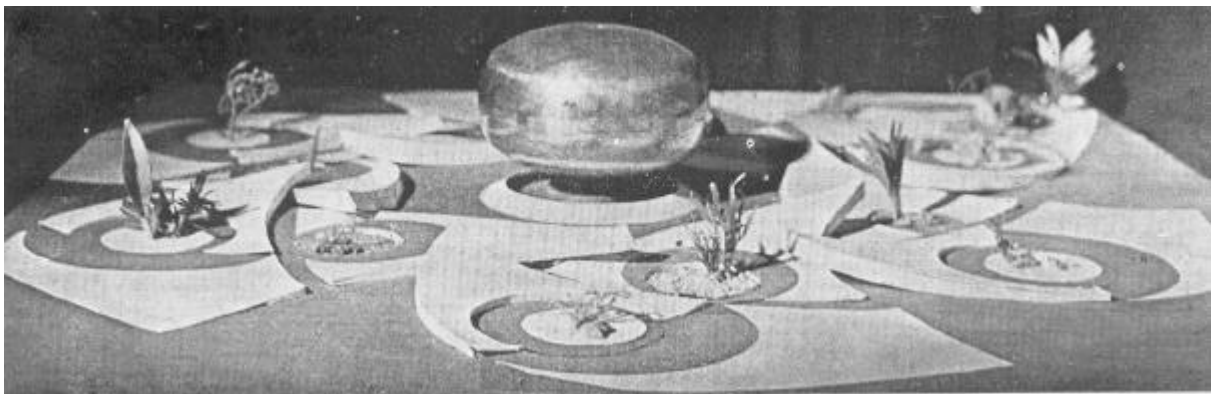
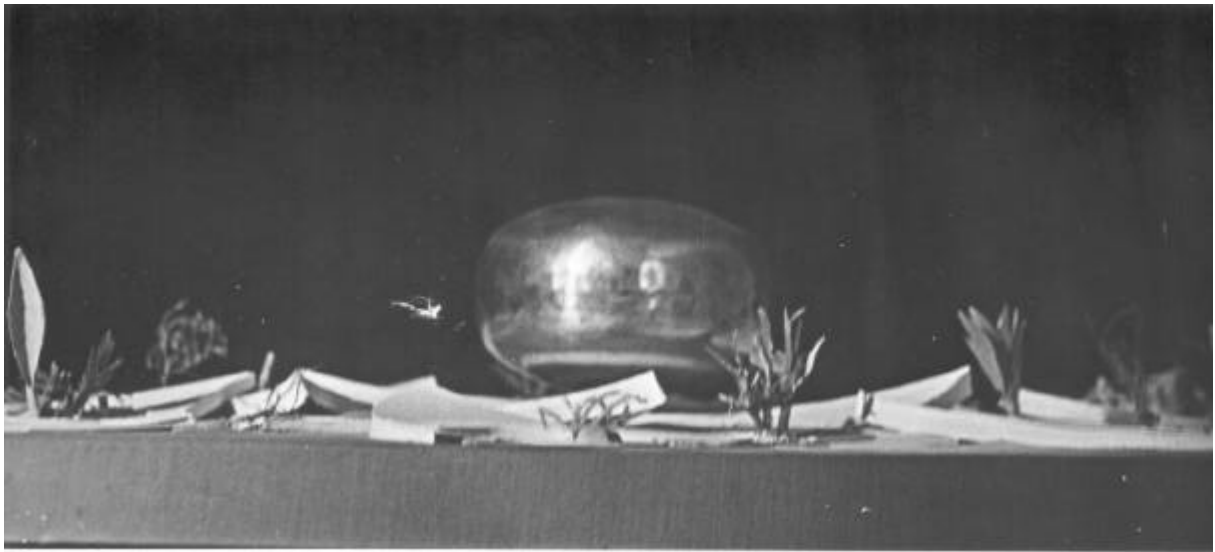


Photo of the "Polyhedron" Model



Two photos of the Model selected by Mother



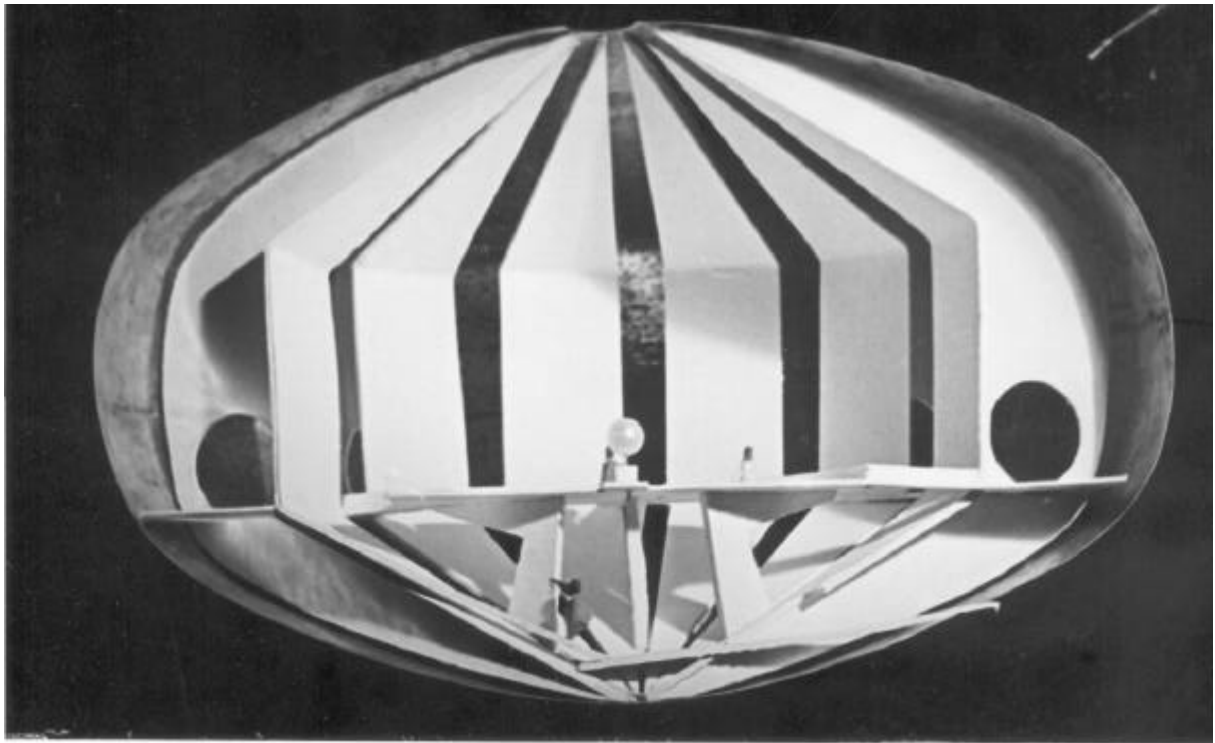
Two more photos of the Model selected by Mother²⁶

[The photo just above was printed on a card²⁷, on which Mother wrote "Matrimandir":]

Matrimandir

²⁶ A small shiny brass pot was used to represent Matrimandir.

²⁷ This card was released on August 15th 1970 to commemorate a first invocation near the future site of Matrimandir.



Two photos of the half-model of the Inner Chamber²⁸

* * *

²⁸ One can see that it had a circular gallery, but no columns. Access to the Gallery was through gaps between walls.

28 March 1970

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile (given by Huta) at AV Archives; The Spirit of Auroville, pp. 100-101

[Mother receives this letter from Huta:]

My dearest Mother,

For the last two months I have been thinking of asking you about Auroville – especially the Matrimandir.

Once you wrote to me to ask you directly regarding Auroville, because you alone knew the future plans of Auroville.

I wonder whether Auroville will be built according to your Vision or according to the vision of human beings!

I feel that there seems to be little harmony, unity, peace, understanding and collaboration among people. Moreover there is no money at all.

Owing to the financial difficulties surely the Divine's plans should not be changed or minimised in any way.

I have heard that there would be no lake around the Matrimandir. The Urn will remain as it is and Matrimandir will be somewhere nearby in a globe-like shape instead of in a lotus shape.

Believe me, I am not anxious about my house over there. I am not particular. House or no house makes no difference to me so long as I am near you.

I shall be grateful and happy if I will know the truth from you about the plans of the Matrimandir.

In case everything will be built in a hurry and on a small scale and not quite according to the Divine's Will because of the financial difficulties, then truly it will be very sad and disappointing for the whole of Auroville. For the Matrimandir is the Soul of Auroville and the Soul of the whole World.

Now will not the Supreme Lord do something for His own Dream?

Our only hope in life is Auroville.²⁹

With Love

Yours,

Huta.

*

[Mother dictates her answer to her son André:]

It has been decided and remains decided that the Matrimandir will be surrounded with water. However; water is not available just now and will be available only later; so it is decided to build the Matrimandir now and surround it with water only later; perhaps in a few years' time.

As regards the Matrimandir itself I have selected our plan which agrees with the vision I had of the inside and has my full approval. Therefore there is no need to worry. The Matrimandir will be built now and water brought round it later.

* * *

²⁹ Huta has made several minor changes in her letter while reproducing it in "The Spirit of Auroville".

2 April 1970

Message

Original language: French

Sources: facsimile at AV Archives; MoA, p. 43;
CWM, XIII, p. 211; AMW, p. 305



2.4.70.

[*Message given to Roger:*]

You must all agree.

That is the only way to do

good work.

With my blessings

*Mettez-vous tous d'accord.
C'est la seule manière de faire
du bon travail.*

avec mes bénédictions

* * *

4 April 1970

Written?

Original language: French

Sources: MoA, p. 43; Gazette, I, 4, p. 14; CWM, XIII, p. 211; AMW, p. 305

[*Comment on the previous message:*]

For everyone to agree each one must rise to the summit of his consciousness; it is on the heights that harmony is created.

* * *

20 May 1970

Taped conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Mother's Agenda, p. 197; AMW, p. 319

[*Excerpt from a conversation with Satprem:*]

Satprem: Roger asked to see me this evening.

Oh, really! Why?

Satprem: Out of the blue. I don't know. Just to make contact.

Things are stirring in Roger! [*Mother laughs a lot*]

He's torn between the old man full of attachments over there, and the new life, the new consciousness which is beginning to be interesting.

* * *

23 May 1970

Taped conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Mother's Agenda, pp. 203-04; AMW, p. 321

[Excerpt from a conversation with Satprem:]

Satprem: In fact, I saw Roger. I saw him twice.

Really! What did he say?

Satprem: It's interesting. First, I found him considerably changed.

[Mother nods her head.]

Satprem: He is another man. And I found him near, not far. I had the feeling that he was very near.

[Mother nods.]

Satprem: And he was enormously interested in this new consciousness. He said, "I would really like to experience this new consciousness, so what has to be done?" He told me, "All the spiritual stories tell you you shouldn't do this, you shouldn't do that, and you have to do this, you have to meditate and..."

No, no!

Satprem: So I tried to explain to him that this new consciousness just wasn't like that.

Yes. But he didn't speak to me about it.

Satprem: It bothers him a lot: "What has to be done to experience the new consciousness?"

He needs to be helped.

Satprem: I have the impression he's right on the brink of something.

Yes.

Satprem: What's to be done to experience the new consciousness?

Well, you could help him.

Satprem: I tried to tell him something; I don't know if I did...

To me, he doesn't ask anything.

Satprem: Still he said to me: "Oh, I go to see Mother every morning and it's my oxygen."

Yes, we talk about what's happening out there [in Auroville], and then I tell him (very frankly, I must say) what I see and understand, that yes... But I mean he doesn't talk to me about himself at all.

Satprem: He's torn by France, by his attachments. But I tell you, I feel he's on the point of something.

Oh, yes! Oh, yes!

Satprem: He has to hang on yet for some time.

You can help him a lot.

Satprem: What I tried to tell him is that this new consciousness doesn't demand spiritual athletics, great concentration and meditation and tapasya, or any special virtues...

No.

Satprem: It simply demands trust in something else, a kind of childlike trust, and a need for something else.

Yes, that's it.

Satprem: He was especially afraid it was again a "matter of spiritual discipline".

No, no, no! No question of that!

But people always fall into that! Even in Auroville: meditation! And I can't decently tell them it's useless! (*Mother laughs*)

Satprem: He was touched by what I told him and reassured. Only he doesn't know what to do.

But you can tell him things that will help him. It is a very good sign that he asked you to see him.

[*Passage Omitted.*]

*Satprem: Oh (laughter)... Well, you've really transformed him in any case... [Mother laughs]
Me too!*

* * *

24 May 1970

Written in a notebook

Original language: French

Sources: On the Path, p. 140; AMW, p. 325

Shyam Sunder: For the last three days the idea has been coming that the "Matrimandir" in Auroville ought to be built soon.

It would indeed be good, and would change things in an unexpected way – but this does not seem to have been revealed to others.

* * *

7 July 1970

Taped conversation

Original language: French & English

Sources: CWM, XIII, p. 348; MoA, p. 97; AMW, p. 344

[Eighteenth “Aspiration talk”:]

Christophe reads a letter written by Rod: “Divine Mother, there is great confusion about Auroville's organization, inner as well as outer.

How can we work together towards the realization of a higher consciousness? It seems that Auroville should become a more homogeneous community with a greater sense of unity.

In order to realize this, would it be possible for all the inhabitants of Promesse, Hope, Aspiration, Peace, etc. to meet in order to work together one day a week on a communal garden, perhaps the garden of Truth?

Or each person could devote one day a week to a communal farm, to produce food for Auroville. That would help us to get to know each other better and make us more capable of organizing ourselves in the right spirit. And perhaps the people engaged in individual projects for Auroville could also work together more closely, so as to form a sort of guiding team in Auroville, so that each one's work could progress more effectively.

Would such a concerted effort in Auroville just now help us to do your work?

With a prayer of perfection.”

The aspiration is good, but... I don't know whether the time has come.

Christophe: He is not the only one. There are several people working in different places in Auroville who feel this need to unite and to do the same work together.

Yes, the idea is good, but this is how I see it. We want to build the Matrimandir; and then, that was the idea: when we begin to build the Matrimandir, everyone who wants to work there will be able to do so. And that would really be working on the central idea.

And it should be soon. It should have been already. So there, there will be work for everyone. We have been thinking of beginning the Matrimandir for a long time. In fact, everyone should come and work there, except, of course, those who work elsewhere. There will be work for everybody. It is better than... It is the centre of the town.

You could tell him this: in principle the idea is good. But as for the application, for a long time, more than a year, we have wanted to begin the Matrimandir so that everyone could work there. A person would have to say, “No, I do not want to” and have his reasons. It is like the Force, the central Force of Auroville, the cohesive Force of Auroville.

There will be gardens. There will be everything, all the possibilities: engineers, architects, all kinds of manual work. So you can tell him from me that he has picked up the idea which was in the air, but that we want its application to be truly symbolic. And when we begin to build the Matrimandir, we will put everyone to work on it. Not every day and all the time, but it will be organized.

* * *

11 July 1970

Taped conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Mother's Agenda, p. 260; AMW, p. 347

[*Excerpt from a conversation with Satprem about "Grace light":³⁰*]

Satprem: Sweet Mother, one last thing, the one who wrote the letter asked a question: he asks if that vast "Grace-Light" or "Truth-Light" of which the Swami speaks is the supramental light?

Which light?

Satprem: That vast "Grace-Light."

Grace-Light... Oh! I liked that very much in his letter... Grace-Light. That's what is at work, you know: the work that is being done through this [*the body*] is precisely like that, it's just like a "Grace-Light". That pleased me very much. It's just like that.

You know, it's a light that has several degrees, and in the most material it's slightly... this must be the supramental force because it is slightly golden, slightly pink (you know this light), but very very pale. There's one [*gesture indicating another, higher layer*] that is white like milk, opaque – it is very strong. And there is one (*gesture very high*) which is a shade of white... which is of a transparent light. That one is something curious: one drop of that on the hostile forces dissolves them. They melt like that (*gesture meaning "in no time at all"*). I told all that to Sri Aurobindo, he confirmed it completely to me.

That is essentially the Grace in its... [*gesture very high*] supreme state. It's a Light... it is colourless, you know, it's transparent, and that light (I have experienced it, I am speaking of it because I know it): you put it on a hostile being and... It melts just like that. It's extraordinary.... And then, in its guise of what you could call "benevolent" (that is, the Grace that succours and helps and cures), it's as white as milk. And if I want an entirely material action (but this is recent, it's recently, since that new Consciousness came), then in its physical action, on the physical, it becomes slightly coloured: it's luminous, it's gold with pink in it, but it's not pink... [*Mother picks up a hibiscus near her*]. It's like that.

Satprem: Like the Auroville flower?

Like the Auroville flower. But I DELIBERATELY chose it as the Auroville flower because of that. And I have the impression that that's the supramental colour: when I see beings of the supramental, they are... not exactly this colour... It's not like a flower, it's like flesh. But it's like that [*Mother indicates the colour of the flower*].

* * *

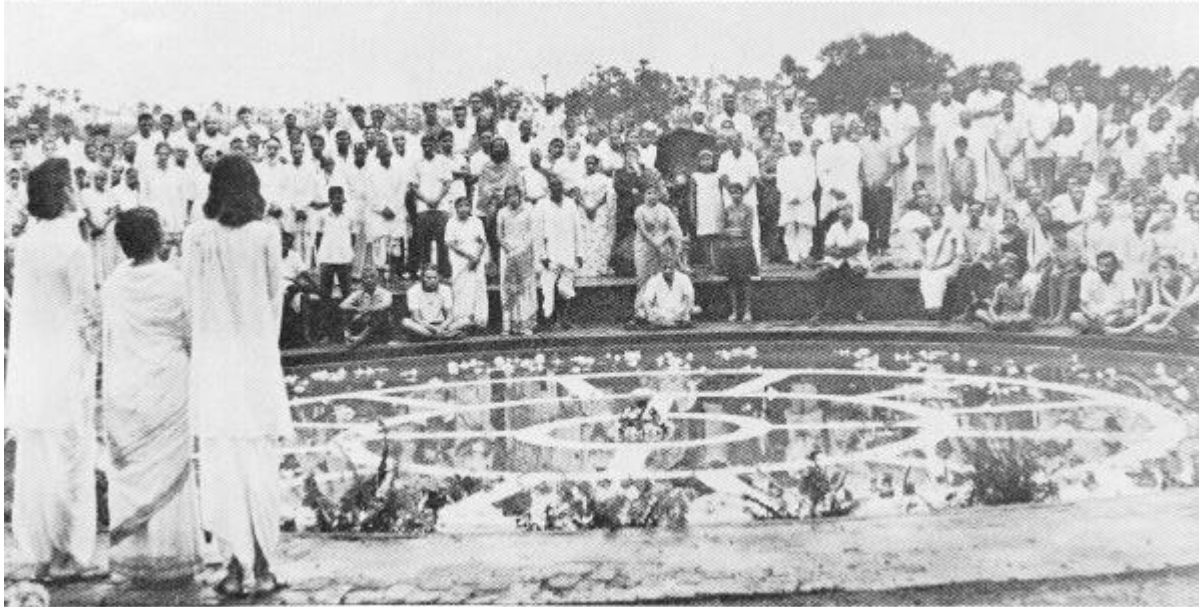
³⁰ This conversation is included in this compilation because, at some point in time, Mother told Roger to create inside the sphere of Matrimandir that particular type of "Grace light", which is of the Auroville colour. We know that Mother gave Roger a small piece of saree to show him the exact colour she wanted, but we do not know when She gave it to him.

14 August 1970

Message

Original language: French

Sources: Matrimandir, pp. 8-9; MoA, p. 4; CWM, XIII, p. 229; AMW, p. 352

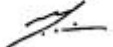


[People from Auroville and the Ashram gathered for a first invocation of the Matrimandir near the Banyan tree. Mother sent this message to be inscribed by this pond³¹.:]



*Le Matrimandir veut être
le symbole de la réponse du Divin
à l'aspiration humaine
vers la perfection.*

The Matrimandir wants to be
the symbol of the Divine's answer
to man's aspiration
for perfection.

*L'union avec le Divin
se manifestant dans
une unité humaine progressive.*


Union with the Divine
manifesting in
a progressive human unity.

* * *

³¹ This shallow pond had already been made for the inauguration ceremony.

Pertaining to 1970

Letter

Original language: French

Sources: Gazette Aurovilienne Vol. V, July 77

[Continuation of Roger's open letter dated 20.04.77:]

Some months later, I took back to her the most advanced version of the selected blue-print as also a maquette of the Matrimandir and of the gardens, and the plans and the cross-sections of the meditation hall with the new details and suggestions which were the result of further work.

The dimensions were naturally consistent with those of the plan given by the Mother, but I had suggested to the Mother that the centre of the hall be left open under the symbol of the Mother and of Sri Aurobindo so that the descending supramental force which would illumine the ball, would also symbolically touch with its light the sheet of water situated at the level of the ground.

Then, I had explained to the Mother in detail about the access to the hall by two helical ramps, leading to two points of entry into the hall.

The Mother had given me, the same day, her full consent for the totality of the plans, after having received all the necessary explanations and the detailed information that she had asked from me.

In the same manner, I had explained to her about the covering of the outer shell of the Matrimandir by means of discs reflecting the light of the sun, to give it the appearance of a golden ball coming out of an opening in the earth in the form of a crater consisting of 12 petals.

* * *



Auroville Designing Centre

Le bureau de dessin d'Auroville

Roger in his office with a model of Matrimandir³²

³² Photo published in the February 71 issue of the Bulletin. Roger must have presented this model to Mother.

September 1970

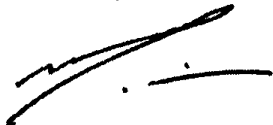
Message

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile at AV Archives; CWM, XIII, p. 229; AMW, p. 352

[Message:]

The Matrimandir wants to be the
symbol of the Universal Mother according
to Sri Aurobindo's teaching



The Matrimandir wants to be the
symbol of the Universal Mother according
to Sri Aurobindo's teaching.

* * *

15 November 1970

Message

Original language: ?

Sources: MoA, p. 4; Gazette Aurovilienne, I, p. 3; CWM, XIII, p. 229; AMW, p. 358

[Message³³.:]

The Matrimandir will be the soul of Auroville.
The sooner it is there, the better it will be for everybody
and especially for the Aurovilians.

* * *

Towards the end of 1970

Reported

Original language: English

Sources: MMTL, p. 30

[Excerpt from a conversation with Huta:]

Child, your tiny house will be very close to the Matrimandir. I will arrange everything for you.
Leave everything to me. I will see to everything...

[Huta takes Her hands into hers.]

Huta: Oh! But, Mother, I have left everything to you, and truly I am not at all anxious about
my house, but I am anxious about the Matrimandir. I am ever grateful to you for
everything.

* * *

³³ Any information regarding this important message would be welcome as the facsimile has not been found.

1971

First Year of Phase 3

Implementation

1 January 1971

Article in a magazine

Original language: English & French

Sources: Gazette Aurovilienne No. 2, 1971

[Excerpt from a short article on Matrimandir in the Gazette Aurovilienne:]

The construction of the Matrimandir Workers' Camp was started on the 1st January.

* * *

Early 1971

Excerpt from a book

Original language: English

Sources: Auroville, the first six years, by Savitra, p. 20

[Savitra's account of how the Matrimandir Workers' Camp got started:]

In the autumn of 1970, the skeleton of a workers' camp emerged in segments: bathroom facilities, a kitchen, and a small hut serving as temporary dining quarters.

On the 21st of February 1971, the foundation stone of the Matrimandir was laid, and by the following month construction had begun on the camp.

By June, the dining room was completed, and in August, the residences as well.

The camp itself, in contrast to the separate clusters of huts in Aspiration, was a single, concentrated unit – the dining area, living quarters, and meditation room being a continuum joined by walkways enclosing gardened courtyards. The walls are of brick construction, and the roof, a series of keet and bamboo waves with low sloping eaves.

* * *

16 February 1971

Written on a note book

Original language: French

Sources: MoA, p. 74; CWM, XIII, p. 229; AMW, p. 368

Shyam Sunder: For the construction of the Matrimandir, will only Aurovilians do the work or will there also be hired workers and other people of goodwill?

[Mother replies:]

It is preferable that

the work be organized without

paid labour so that it

is sure to continue in

all circumstances.

Pour la construction du
Matrimandir est-ce que
seuls les Auroviliens feront
le travail ou bien aussi
les gens employés et les
autres de bonne volonté ?

Il est préférable que
le travail soit organisé sans
travail payé de façon qu'il
soit sûr de continuer dans
tous les cas.

* * *

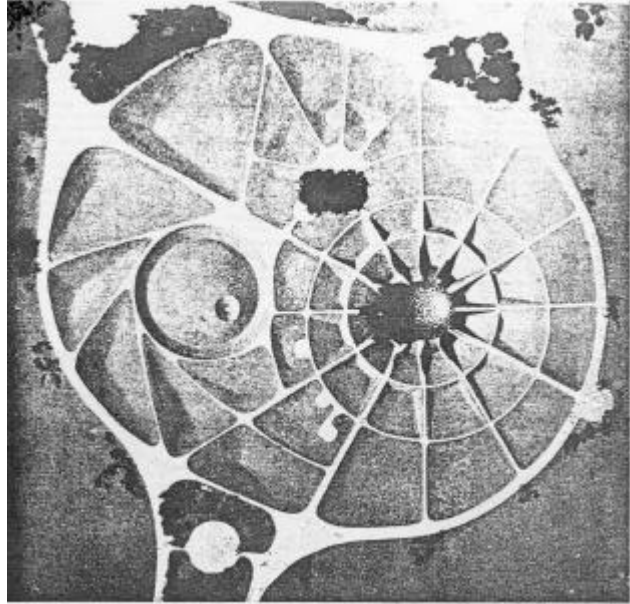
Early February 1971

Reported by André Hababou

[Roger shows two models to Mother for Her approval:]

- 1) *A small model of Matrimandir with its petals and probably also with the entire Oval Island¹. (The rosewood model was not yet complete and, anyway it would have been too large to go through the staircases leading to Mother's room).*

***Model of the Oval Island
that was most probably
shown to Mother***



- 2) *A model of Matrimandir² itself with its golden discs. Roger took it from the yet un-finished "rosewood model".]*

***Model of Matrimandir,
which Mother held in
Her lap for several minutes
while concentrating and
applying Her hands on it.***



¹ The model shown here, made of Styrofoam, will also be represented on the card issued for the Foundation Stone Ceremony. It is however possible that Roger brought to Mother an even smaller model which included only Matrimandir and its petals; in which case he must have shown Her also some photos of the above model.

² The model is seen here from above.



Roger holds the model of Matrimandir he is about to present to Mother

* * *

Early 1971

Roger's notes after meeting Mother

Original French

Source: Roger's personal archives. Facsimile is unfortunately now missing.

[The land required for Matrimandir had not yet been bought... After discussing the matter with Mother, Roger notes down in French³ the conversation he just had with Mother:]

Can we move a little the place for Matrimandir? One just has to move the town. That's all. (Mother's drops her hands.)

If only we could go to a place where there has been no question of buying and where people would be happy to sell.

It is a question of decisive will... of not being attached to one's small mental combination. We shall build Auroville very near.

I am sure that if I would go up there by car and would see the place, I would find where one could do it and where people would be happy to sell.

* * *

³ Peut-changer un peu la place de Matrimandir? On n'a qu'a déplacer la ville. Voilà tout. (Mouvement tombant des mains.) Si l'on pouvait aller a un endroit ou il n'a pas été question d'acheter, et ou les gens seraient bien contents de vendre. C'est un question de volonté décisive... de ne pas etre attaché a sa petite combinaison mentale... on fera Auroville tout a côté. Moi je suis sûre que si je montais en voiture et que je vois tout l'endroit... je trouverai où l'on pourrait le faire et ou les gens seraient contents de vendre.

21 February 1971 Mother's 93rd Birthday Foundation Stone Ceremony of Matrimandir

Sources: Description of the ceremony: Gazette Aurovilienne, I, 3, p. 38. Photo: *Matrimandir*, Auropublications, p. 10

The Foundation stone of Matrimandir was laid at the centre of Auroville on 21st February 1971, exactly at sun-rise at 6.30 am.

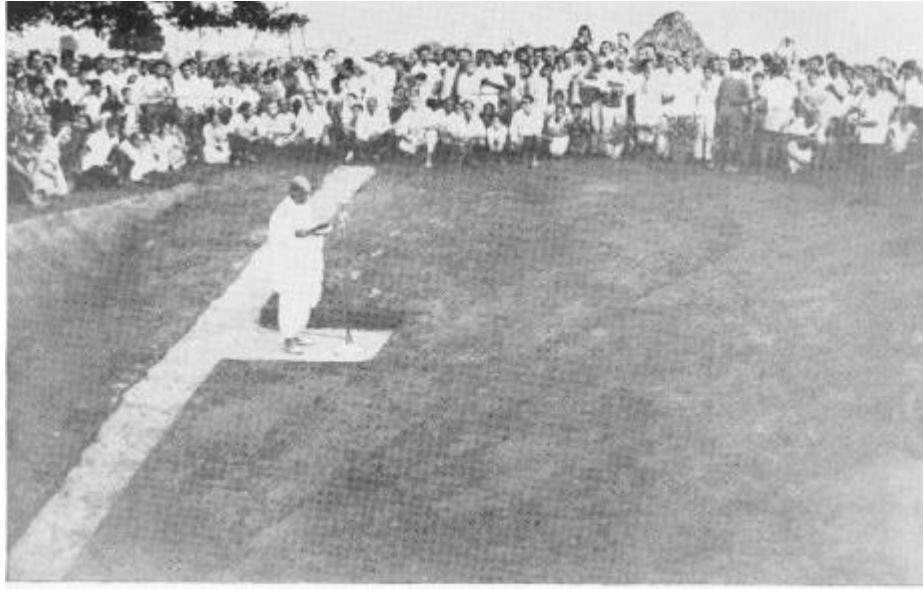
A fire, symbol of the human aspiration, had been lit in front of a simple yet magnificent altar and the large gathering sat in a semi-circle, facing the East, while the air resounded with the Mother's message and the music.

The Mother gave the following message for the occasion: "Let the Matrimandir be the living symbol of Auroville's aspiration for the Divine".

An extract from Sri Aurobindo's book "The Mother" was read out by Nolini Kanta Gupta:

"The Mother's power and not any human endeavour and tapasya can alone rend the lid and tear the covering and shape the vessel and bring down into this world of obscurity and falsehood and death and suffering Truth and Light and Life Divine and the immortal's Ananda."





Foundation of Matrimandir
at Auroville

Pose de la première pierre du
Mâtrimandir à Auroville

Nolini reading Mother's Message

[Description of the ceremony by Shraddhavan:]

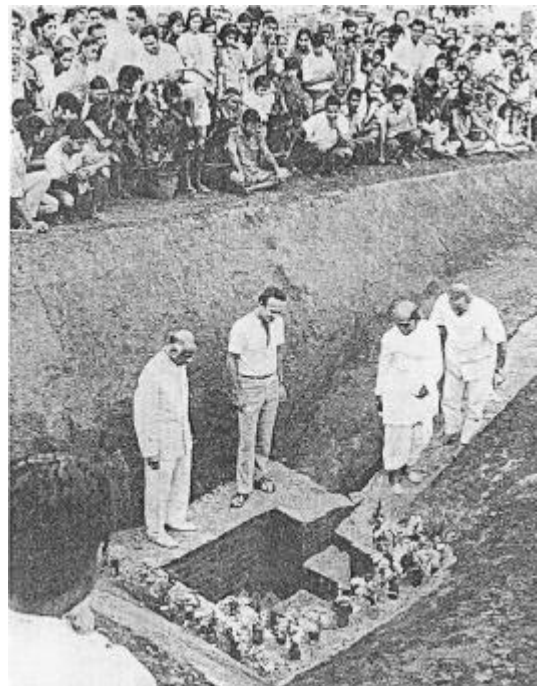
The foundation ceremony for the Matrimandir took place at sunrise.

Sunil had composed a music for the occasion, incorporating Mother's reading of the message in French and in English.

Nolini and Aurofilio had brought a precious wooden box from Mother, which was sealed in the ground between the banyan tree and the present site of the Matrimandir as the land for the Matrimandir had not yet been purchased.



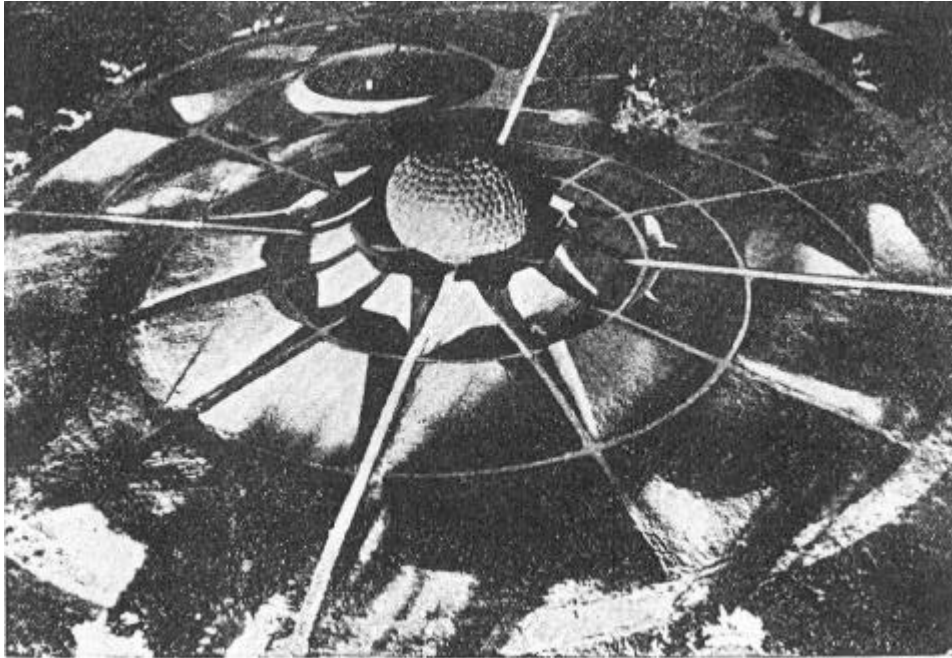
*From left to right:
Navajata, Roger, Nolini, Gene*



Card with photo and message

Original language: English & French

Sources: Card with photo and message at AV Archives; CWM, XIII, pp. 229-30; MoA, p. 4; AMW, p. 370



This photo⁴ along with the text below and the messages (in English and French) on the opposite page were printed on a card that was released for the occasion

Le 21 Février 1971

*pose de la première pierre
du Matrimandir*

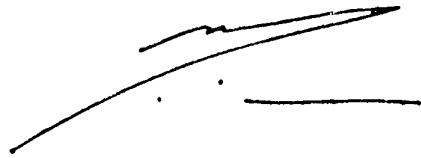
Lineations

21st February 1971

Laying the foundation stone of Matrimandir
Blessings

⁴ This is a photo of the Styrofoam model which was the first made with this layout and was shown to Mother. The rosewood model was larger and much more elaborate (see for example the pattern of the golden discs), but Ved Prakash just managed to complete it so that it could be exhibited on that day.

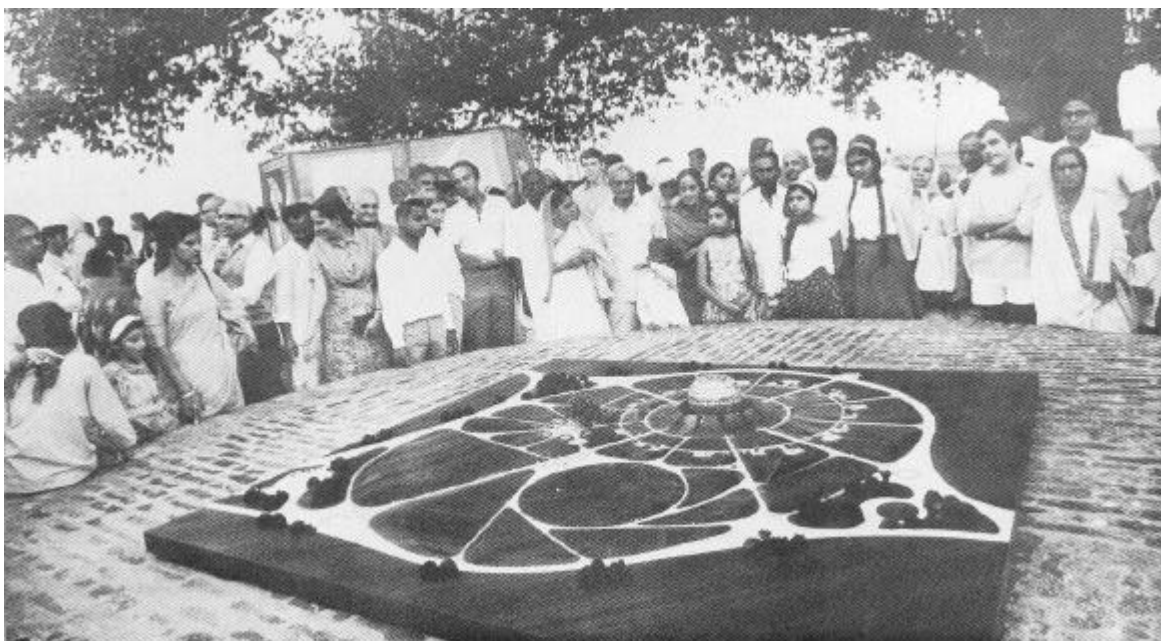
Le Matrimandir est
le vivant symbole de l'aspiration
d'Auroville au Divin



Let the Matrimandir
be the living symbol of Auroville's
aspiration for the
Divine



**Let the Matrimandir be the living symbol
of Auroville's aspiration for the Divine.**



Two photos⁵ of the rosewood model of Matrimandir and its Oval Island, which Ved Prakash had just completed and which was presented for the first time under the Banyan tree.

⁵ The first photo was published in the *Bulletin*, April 1971 issue.

The second photo was published in *Auropublications'* brochure on Matrimandir.



Two photos of the rosewood model

***Roger carrying Matrimandir's model
at the Foundation Stone Ceremony.***



*

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: The Spirit of Auroville, p. 113; AMW, p. 371

[Mother answers the Aurovilians working in the Matrimandir Nursery, who had asked Her whether they should postpone growing flowers and plants in order to join in the work of digging the excavation for the Matrimandir:]

No, the gardens are as important as the Matrimandir itself.

* * *

22 February 1971

Letter

Original language: French

Sources: Gazette Aurovilienne, I, 3 p. 38;

[Satprem writes to Roger:]

Dear Roger,

I wanted to tell you that yesterday I had the very strong perception or sensation in front of the fire. Suddenly I felt as if an OM was springing up from the ancient times of Vedic Sacrifice and we were there to round off a whole cycle – to such an extent that when I heard Sunil's music, I was surprised as though I were hearing the hymns to Agni of the Vedas.

It was extremely powerful. Something did take place yesterday. It is good for the future.

With very cordial regards.

Satprem

* * *

1 March 1971

Message

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile at AV Archives; MoA, p. 35; AMW, p. 373

[Mother asks when exactly Auroville's land purchaser would meet the party whose land was still required for Matrimandir and tells him to pay the price asked. She writes this message:]

For those who have

some land to sell

There is a

Supreme Divinity

witness of all our

actions and the

day of of the

consequence will come

soon



For those who have some land to sell.
There is a Supreme Divinity witness of all our actions
and the day of the consequence will come soon.

* * *

14 March 1971

Letter

Original language: French

Sources: MoA, p. 4; CWM, XIII, p. 230; AMW, p. 376
facsimile of the message: *Matrimandir*, pp. 12-13

[Mother gives this Message for the starting, on that day, of the excavation of the foundation of the Matrimandir by Aurovilians and Ashramites:]

The fraternity of
collaboration.

The aspiration towards
Unity
in joy and
Light.
Blessings

14.3.71
La fraternité de
la collaboration
L'aspiration vers
l'Unité
dans la joie et
la Lumière
Séverine

* * *

Early 1971

Report

Original language: English

Sources: *Auroville, the first 6 years, 1968-1974*, by Savitra, p. 83

[Savitra's account of the beginning of the excavation:]

The weeks and months following [the 21st February 1971] saw a handful of Aurovilians digging into the callous clay in an area roughly marked as the excavation site for an immense crater 10.5 metres deep and 50 metres across at the rim.



Kenneth and other heroes start digging⁶

They dug with their small hand shovels, picks and crowbars, removing the earth in flat pans and wheelbarrows. Joining this first core of Matrimandir workers, a van would come each morning between 5:30 and 7:00 with a crew of a dozen or so who had other works during the day. On Sundays work parties from the communities and Pondicherry would form rag-tag lines of men, women and children, passing pans of burnt earth from the growing matrix to swelling mounds nearby, staining hands and bodies with its indelible red.

* * *

⁶ Photo reproduced from *Basically Blissful*, published in 1992 by Amadi, p.17.

5 April 1971

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 113

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's Notes:]

On the subject of Bharat Nivas, Mother had said to Roger:

I see no reason for not engaging contractors. How to build Auroville without help?

What I have said to Shyam Sunder is that for the Matrimandir it would be preferable to go without it, but for other constructions it is different...

Question: Does Mother agree on the following points:

For the Matrimandir in the present situation, neither contractor, nor paid labour.

For Bharat Nivas, schools, etc. until ordered otherwise, Auroville can utilise contractors under the supervision of the Architectural Office of Auroville⁷.

Mother agrees.

For Kuljian Corporation, Mother has allowed Shyam Sunder to talk to Pradyot.

* * *

5 April 1971

Message

Original language: French

Sources: facsimile AV Archives:

Down Memory Lane, pp. 113-14



[Message:]

As we are in a period of construction, it is imperative that the Aurovilians who live at the centre⁸ should work at the construction of Matrimandir.

Those who do not want to work at Matrimandir should not live at the centre.

Comme nous sommes en période de construction, il est impératif que les Auroviliens qui habitent au centre, travaillent à la construction du Matrimandir. Ceux qui ne veulent pas travailler au centre, ne doivent pas habiter au centre.

5 avril 1971

⁷ "Roger's Office", named by Mother: *L'Avenir d'Auroville – Auroville's Future*.

⁸ Though in December 1968, Mother had given the name "Peace" to the "Centre", she never used this name again.

10 April 1971

Drafted by someone else, signed by Mother
Original language: French
Sources: MoA, p. 86; AMW, p. 381

[Mother approves a Notice submitted to her:]

Auromodel will be developed as a first attempt at community life in Auroville.

At the Centre of Auroville we shall build huts for twenty to thirty people⁹ who will participate in the construction of Matrimandir and its organisation.

* * *

28 April 1971

Taped conversation
Original language: French
Sources: Mother's Agenda, pp. 108

[Excerpt of a conversation with Satprem in which Mother comments on Satprem's letter to Roger about the laying of the first stone of the Matrimandir on 21st February 1971.¹⁰]

I saw your letter (I saw it in English), the letter you wrote to Roger for the "Matrimandir".... It's interesting, it's good.... They have a bulletin, a "Gazette", it will be published there.

* * *

6 May 1971

Notes written after a conversation
Original language: English
Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 115.

[Mother answers to Gene Maslow who had written that he did not want to resume responsible work at the Matrimandir unless it was Mother's wish:]

Until the building of Auroville is over, those who want to live on the spot must help in this building. So it is natural that you should take up some useful work there. Do with good will what is asked from you.

Blessings.

* * *

⁹ This will be the Matrimandir Workers' Camp.

¹⁰ See Entry for 22 February 1971.

May 1971

Excerpt from Ruud's Matrimandir Diary, entry dated 25 September.

Original language: English.

Sources: Quoted in the Dawning of Auroville, pp. 113-14.

[Excerpt from Ruud's Matrimandir Diary:]

Matrimandir is packed with symbols of the consciousness in its various layers; superconsciousness, consciousness, subconsciousness and the inconscient. The trouble now is that the sphere is to emerge from the subconscient, the subterranean layers. I say "the trouble", because it means that we have to dig a crater about ten metres deep and forty metres across.

Quite a part of the digging team of those first days consisted of university people and students, and the spirit was very good. In one word it was fantastic. I don't know why, for the work is heavy if you have never worked with your hands and it was very, very hot. But it was perfectly still, in an infinite and splendid land. One felt oneself tuning in and getting quiet.

Sometimes the whole group passed through a crisis, didn't see the point of it anymore, stayed away for a few days and then came back again. Until the great blow struck, sometimes at the end of May. Mother's transformation process seems to have descended into her legs and feet. In the beginning of this year she could not walk anymore for quite a while. At this moment it is better, but now it has come down to the Ashram people and to us here. At Matrimandir the leg crisis manifested in infections in the legs. At least fifteen people caught them. Me too. "Three weeks", I complained to the Ashram doctor, "for such a simple infection". "That's nothing for an Auroville infection", he said.

After the great crisis very few people resumed the work, with the consequence that even now only a very small group is working.

* * *

1 June 1971

Signed by Mother, but drafted by someone else

Original language: English

Sources: CWM, p. 246; AMW, p. 391

[Shyam Sunder presents to Mother a Notice drafted by him:]

Matrimandir Workers' Camp Kitchen and Dining Room

These are meant primarily for Matrimandir workers and should be kept clean and used cleanly. One should not smoke here and should learn to eat in quietude.

[Mother signs it after writing on it:]

In this country cleanliness is indispensable to avoid typhoid.

* * *

1971

Message

Original language: English

Sources: Mother on Auroville, p. 53

[Message for raising funds for Matrimandir:]

Give your money to the Divine work and you will be richer than you would be by keeping it.

* * *

June 1971

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: French

Sources: AV Archives; AMW, p. 390

[After meeting Mother, Roger notes down:]

About Matrimandir

In India the creation, that means basically the work of the Mother-Creator, has for centuries been considered as anti-divine.

Sri Aurobindo has shown/taught that it is in Matter that the Divine must be manifested; he has insisted on the understanding of this concept of the Mother as Creator.

Matrimandir is here to teach people that it is not by escaping from the world while ignoring it, that they will realize the Divine in life. Matrimandir must be the symbol of this Truth.

I don't want it to be made into a religion; with all my force I refuse. We don't want dogmas, principles, ritual, absolutely not, absolutely not.

Roger: Why do we build Matrimandir?

For the great majority of Indians there is no need for an explanation; they know from their background; it is for the Westerners and the Americans of whom one in a million is able to feel that it is necessary.

*anti du
le d'après
le d'après
le d'après*
Sur le Matrimandir
Sous l'Inde pendant des siècles
la création c. à J au fond le travail
de la mère créatrice est considérée
comme anti Divin
Sri Aurobindo a enseigné que c'est
dans la matière que le Divin doit être
manifesté, il a insisté sur cette compréhension
de cette notion de la mère créatrice
le Matrimandir
c'est pour apprendre aux gens que
ce n'est pas en s'échappant du monde &
en l'ignorant, mais qu'ils réaliseront
le divin dans la vie - le Matrimandir
dont c'est le symbole de cette vérité.
Je ne veux pas qu'on en fasse une
religion de toutes mes forces je refuse,
il ne faut pas de dogme, de principe
de rituel, absolument pas absolument
pas.
Pourquoi construire le Matrimandir
Les Indiens n'ont pas besoin
pour la grande majorité d'explication
ils savent par leur ^{background} formation, c'est
pour les occidentaux et les Américains
qui 1 sur 1 million ne peuvent ressentir
que c'est nécessaire.

Roger: Will the Force more specially be concentrated in Matrimandir?

The new Force works everywhere, especially in this room. You feel it, don't you? There is here a density capable of performing miracles, but few are able to feel it, to perceive it.

Sri Aurobindo and I have concentrated this Force on the whole town; it is palpable, perceptible as a very concrete perfume which penetrates, but one must be able to feel it, to receive it.

But no miracles as people would like to see; for them to believe, they need material proofs without which they deny.

Build Matrimandir; put in place my symbol and Sri Aurobindo's and the suspended ball. I take it upon myself to make it into a very strong centre.

Only those who are capable will perceive it.

la force sera t elle concentrée dans le Matrimandir + spécialement
la force nouvelle œuvre partout, spécialement dans cette pièce, sur la terrasse toi : ... il y a ici une densité capable de faire des miracles mais peu sont capables de les ressentir d'en profiter, elle sera A. et moi avons ~~bien~~ concentré sur nous cette velle cette force elle est palpable, perceptible comme un parfum très concret qui pénètre, ~~dans la~~ mais il faut pouvoir la ressentir la recevoir -
Mais par des miracles comme les hommes voudraient les voir, il faut qu'il y croient ils leur font des preuves ~~sans qu'ils ne~~ matérielles sans quoi ils nient - le Matrimandir
Je construis, je mets en place mon symbole, celui des s. A., la balle suspendue
Je me charge de faire un centre très fort seulement ceux qui seront capables de s'en approprier.

* * *

1971

Aurovilians digging at Matrimandir¹¹.

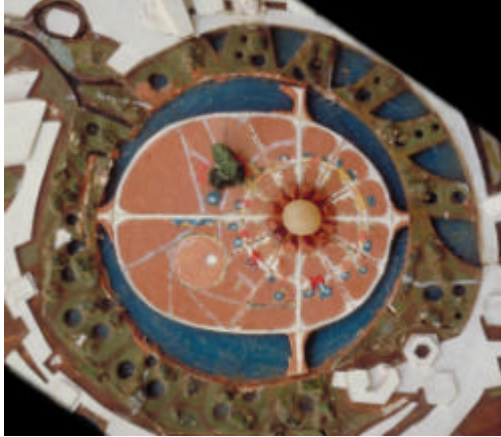


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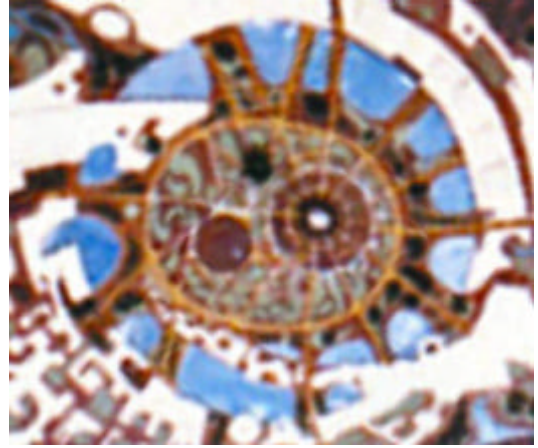
¹¹ Photo reproduced from the German magazine *Indo Asia*, Jahrgang 1974, Heft 4, p. 316.

Sometime in 1971

[The two models of the Galaxy are modified¹² to include Matrimandir and its Oval Island:]



Small Galaxy model modified



Big Galaxy model modified

[These two models are modified in two different manners as neither the Lake, nor what will come between it and the first row of buildings is finalised as the size of the lake depends on the availability of water, which was – and will remain a question for very long time.]



Section of the Galaxy with Matrimandir at its centre

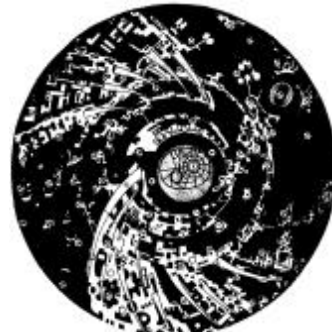
* * *

July 1971

[When the construction of Bharat Nivas was about to start, the land on which it was meant to come up had not been acquired. The only place where Auroville had adequate land and access was in an area earmarked for the Residential Zone. To change the zoning of this particular area, the Galaxy had to be rotated by some 50°. Mother gave Her approval:]



***Galaxy model
before rotation***



***Galaxy model
after rotation***

* * *

¹² The photos of these 2 models before modification can be seen in the “Presentation of the ‘Galaxy’ Model”.

August 1971

[In its August 1971 issue the "Bulletin" publishes this photo of the Matrimandir and it's Oval Island:]



* * *

28 August 1971

Message May not have been for Matrimandir
Original language: English
Sources: CWM, p. 219; AMW, p. 395

For each problem there is a solution that can give satisfaction to everybody; but for finding this ideal solution each one must want it instead of meeting the others with the will to enforce one's own preference.

Enlarge your consciousness and aspire for the satisfaction of all.

* * *

17 September 1971

Message May not have been for Matrimandir
Original language: ?
Sources: MoA, p. 43; CWM, XIII, p. 219; AMW, p. 396

You see only your side of the question, but if you want to widen your consciousness it would be better to look from all sides impartially, later you will discover that this attitude has great advantages.

* * *

20 September 1971

Message May not have been for Matrimandir
Original language: French
Sources: MoA, p. 44; CWM, XIII, p. 220; AMW, p. 396

Widen your consciousness to the dimension of the earth and you will have a place for everything.

* * *

25 September 1971

Excerpt from Ruud's Matrimandir Diary.

Original language: English.

Sources: Quoted in the Dawning of Auroville, pp. 113-14.

[Excerpt from Ruud's Matrimandir Diary:]

After half a year not even one-third of the crater has been completed. Some, many, had expected Matrimandir to be ready by August next year, for the day of Sri Aurobindo's Centenary. But now one starts thinking in terms of a period of seven years, Mother's Centenary. We think She will come herself to inaugurate Matrimandir. Other complications came in, too. For example, we were doing nicely and working quite enthusiastically when one day a jeep arrived with people from the Pondy drawing office, to have a look and do some measuring. What did they tell us? The crater was twenty metres out of position. Nobody got hot or cold and we quietly continued digging out of position. To this day we still don't know exactly where the centre of the excavation is supposed to be, for one day it shifts seven metres to the left and the next day five to the right. Also the mounds of earth around it are all out of position, and we dig on and on, for nobody digs to dig a hole, but just to dig in one's subconscious to carry things up, to bring them into clear daylight, to organize them.

* * *

1971

Reported to Compiler

Original language: English

Sources: Based on an article in AV Today, March 1989

[When time had come to locate precisely Matrimandir's centre and orientation, someone suggested to Mother that the East-West axis could be the axis of the rising sun on a specific date. According to the original drawing, it was some day in March. Five dates were proposed to Mother: February 21st or 28th, March 29th, April 4th or 24th. March 29th was the closest date to the original drawing. The Mother indicated April 4th, anniversary date of Sri Aurobindo's arrival in Pondicherry, as being the day when the sun should rise exactly in the East-West axis.]

* * *

October 1971

Message

Original language: French

Sources: MoA, p. 4; CWM, XIII, p. 231; AMW, p. 396

[Mother replies to a question from Alain Grandcolas:]

The Matrimandir is directly under the influence of the Divine and certainly He arranges things better than we could do ourselves.

* * *

5 October 1971

Report of a conversation, followed by a Message

Original language: English

Sources: Champaklal Speaks (2002 Edition), p. 228 & 269; MoA, p. 4; CWM, XIII, p. 231; AMW, p. 397

[Having constructed a special building at their Centre¹³, some devotees asked Mother to give her consent to their naming it “Matrimandir”; the following conversation ensued:]

*Champaklal: Mother, there is only one Matrimandir, the one you are building in Auroville.
This name should not be used anywhere else.*

[Champaklal says that, without his asking for it, Mother wrote the following note:]

There is only

one Matrimandir,

the Matrimandir

of Auroville.

The others must have

another name.

[Thereafter, to anybody who asked permission to use this name, Mother would say this.]

* * *

10 October 1971

Signed by Mother, but drafted by Roger

Original language: French

Sources: facsimile at AV Archives; MoA, p. 87; AMW, p. 398

[Mother approves, with Blessings, this Notice drafted by Roger:]

The building of the Matrimandir now requires the support of all men of goodwill, both inside and outside Auroville.

The help of specialized and qualified contractors, backed and supported by the enthusiasm and faith of the Aurovilians, is necessary for its rapid construction.

Blessings

* * *

¹³ Somewhere in Orissa.

20 October 1971

Letter

Original language: French

Sources: Question: facsimile Piero's personal archives and partly reproduced in Satprem's report to Mother about this letter on November 10th.
Mother's answer: facsimile Piero's personal archives; MoA, p. 74; CWM, XIII, p. 230; AMW, p. 398

[On 18th October, Piero had written to Mother:]

Mother dear,

Last Saturday, some fifty Aurovilians met at Peace and expressed their desire to participate actively in the construction of Matrimandir.

I have made a detailed study of the work to be done, and I have reached the conclusion that we [Aurovilians] can take upon ourselves the responsibility for the excavation and construction works of the four pillars. These could be completed for August 15th 1972.

Then, according to Ramanathan¹⁴, a contractor such as EEC would agree to take over the construction of the Matrimandir, if we requested them to do so; moreover, one could already ask for their collaboration for testing and to check the progress of the work. It therefore seems that the work of the Aurovilians is not an obstacle to the rest of the work being handled by a specialized firm.

Labour is a very important problem.

To ensure the regularity of the work, it will be necessary to rely on paid labour, guided by ourselves, while keeping some specific works – such as concreting – in priority for the Aurovilians.

I want to speak to you more specifically about this point.

Many of us [Aurovilians] want to open up some contact with the inhabitants of Auroville's surrounding villages. Would work at Matrimandir be the place where one could establish a more open and friendly collaboration with the Tamil villagers?

In the framework of this [construction] work, Auroville's most important and most symbolical, isn't this the best place to bring them our aspiration for perfection, our joy to work and our humility?

On a small scale, I have constantly the experience that working with Tamil labourers is useful and gives positive results. With your help may we try on a larger scale?

If we would give the responsibility of the work to a contractor [from outside], it seems to me that we would be renouncing this possibility right from the start.

This is why I request your Blessings for this program of work, and your help to establish a good atmosphere of collaboration, goodwill and discipline.

For me, it would be the opportunity to always look for your help and your encouragement.

With devotion

Piero

[Mother replies to Piero:]

That's very good, I am fully in agreement.

The safety and strength of the construction should come before personal questions.

I count upon you to see that everything is done harmoniously.

Blessings.

¹⁴ Then Auroville's Chief Engineer.

C' est très bon, je
suis pleinement d'accord.

La science et le sol de la
terre ont leur avenir

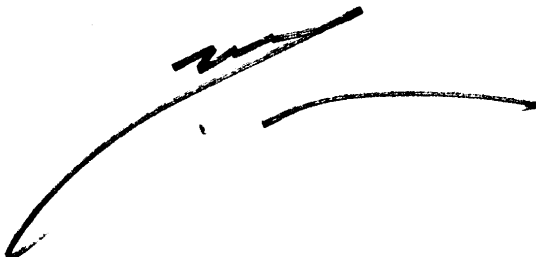
Les questions personnelles

Le compte sur nous pour

non pas tout se faire

harmonieusement.

L'éducation



* * *

3 November 1971

Letter

Original language: French

Sources: facsimile at AV Archives; MoA, p. 74; CWM, XIII, p. 230; AMW, p. 400

[Alain Grandcolas had written to Mother: "Can you give some general ideas about the way in which you want the Matrimandir to be built, so that we shall have no more doubts and may build with light and confident hearts?" She answers him:]

Strength, safety, durability, harmonious balance.

The foundations are especially important and should be done by experts.

There is room for everyone of goodwill, and for those who in all sincerity and simplicity want to offer their work, there is enough to keep them usefully occupied.

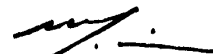
Blessings

Solide, sécurite, sursée & équilibre
harmonieux.

Les fondations sont particulièrement
importantes et doivent être faites
par les experts.

Il y a place pour toutes les
bonnes volontés et pour ceux qui
en toute sincérité et simplicité
veulent donner leur travail, il y a
le quoi les occuper utilement.

Benedictions



* * *

7 November 1971

Excerpt from Ruud's Matrimandir Diary.

Original language: English.

Sources: Quoted in the Dawning of Auroville, pp. 114-15.

[Excerpt from Ruud's Matrimandir Diary:]

Yesterday morning we had another meeting at the Centre. We didn't understand anything anymore. Letters went back and forth between Mother and the offices and now all of a sudden things take a new turn: the digging will be done by Tamil workers, to be finished by February 1972 and then a contractor will take over to complete the pillars by August 1972. It seems a serious thing: the Aurovilians who are here now can't get it done and even here we have to employ paid labour. The Tamilians come with their own teams and have their own rhythm, and we would only be in the way. And so we lost our most important project.

* * *

Pertaining to November 1971

Report

Original language: English

Sources: "Auroville, the first 6 years, 1968-1974", by Savitra, p. 83

[Savitra's account:]

In the summer of '71, a meeting was held in the recently completed workers camp at Peace to clarify directions, approaches and methodologies. The excavation needed to be accelerated. The workings of the small group of Aurovilians was remarkable in its own way, removing 2,000 cubic metres of



Shraddhavan, David and others digging

compact earth with primitive hand tools; but it was more a symbolic action and an initiation. Earth-moving equipment was suggested but rejected because of its incapacity to negotiate the steep incline, its expense, and the general undesirability of heavy machinery when avoidable. It was decided to employ large numbers of villagers in traditional hand methods. Beginning in November, a swarm of 400 labourers began chipping away bit by bit and in February 21st of 1972, the excavation was completed. Twenty thousand cubic metres of earth had been excavated.

* * *

10 November 1971

Taped conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Mother's Agenda, pp. 291-293; AMW, p. 402

[Excerpt of a conversation with Satprem:]

Well, do you have anything?

Satprem: I have something, but what about you?

Me... for the moment... *[Mother seems tired]* I don't know if something will come later.

The consciousness *[of the body]* is changing very fast.

I'll see later if something comes.

Tell me first what you have.

Satprem: An Auroville story.

Auroville? What happened?

Satprem: A few days ago I received a letter from a young man who is an architect [Piero] there, (I don't know him). He wrote me saying that he would like to see me.

Ah, why?

Satprem: Because he would like to explain to me Auroville's problems. So I replied: "Auroville's problems will be solved and cleared up only when Aurovilians turn directly to Mother, and hence I wish they would go directly to the Source instead of going to an intermediary." Then I added amicably that I could nevertheless... etc.

You did well.

He has an idea of how to make the Matrimandir, and others have another idea, but then Roger is going to arrive soon – I would like to wait for Roger to be here, and he will decide.

Satprem: Because he wrote me a second letter, saying, "I agree that one must turn to the Source, which is the 'stable and welcoming' reference, but unfortunately one doesn't have direct access to the Source, one has to go through intermediaries...."

[Mother nods her head]

Satprem: So there are some problems and he has explained one of them in his letter to me.

Tell me what it is.

Satprem: For example, he says he wrote you a month ago, in October, and you answered him in writing. He wrote you this: "I have made a detailed study of the work to be done, and I have reached the conclusion that we [Aurovilians] can take upon ourselves the responsibility for the excavation and construction work of the four pillars; then a commercial firm such as EEC (I don't know what it is, it's in Madras, I think) would agree to take over the construction of the Matrimandir itself... etc. It therefore appears

that the work of the Aurovilians is not an obstacle to the rest of the work being handled by a specialized firm....” Then you answered, “That's very good, I am fully in agreement. The safety and solidity of the work should come BEFORE PERSONAL QUESTIONS. I am counting on you to see that everything goes harmoniously.”

And then I realized... Afterwards, the others told me that he had written that without consulting them.

Satprem: And he tells me he did it “after consultation with about 50 Aurovilians”.

No.... Listen, those things are enough to drive anyone crazy!

Satprem: In a nutshell he wants the work to be handled by the Aurovilians, without barring the participation of experts.

But that's how it is. It will be that way. That's what I said; but when it comes to the actual execution.... I advise you not to get involved in this!

Satprem: Oh, but I don't intend to at all!

Yes, they're... It's pretty complicated!

Satprem: I'll simply tell him to wait for Roger's return and that the decision will be made then.

Yes. But the decision has been made – I don't know, I thought they were already working.

Satprem: The “official” decision is that a firm in Madras will do the work.

Not all the work. We have asked the Aurovilians to be there – exactly as he puts it.

Satprem: Well, because he says he is ready even to undertake the foundation work for the pillars.

Oh, no! That's... Look, tell him that Roger will soon arrive and everything will be decided when he's here.

Satprem: But I really don't want to get involved in their problems!

Well, no!.. Did you see the sentence in my letter – there are also personal questions behind. He is not saying it, but that's what it is. He's hoping to find someone [Satprem] who will give him the authority, you understand?

Satprem: Yes, I think he is.

So just tell him what I said.

* * *



Diane, Larry and Navoditte digging

* * *

13 November 1971

Excerpt from Ruud's Matrimandir Diary

Original language: English.

Sources: Quoted in "The Dawning of Auroville", p. 115.

[Excerpt from Ruud's Matrimandir Diary:]

Ron and I suddenly said: "Let's go". We got onto the motorcycle and slid towards Matrimandir over slippery red roads in streaming rain. There wasn't a soul anywhere around and full of joy the two of us carried pans of wet sand. We only remarked that those lines of "Peanuts" by Schultz could have said: "There is something nice in being fanatic".

Today we went again, for an hour or so; it was sunny again and there were about twelve Tamil workers. Next week, when the work will be given on contract, two hundred are expected. We'll have to find our place in between which won't be easy. Every Sunday a bus with people from the Ashram and Pondy-based Aurovilians used to go out to Matrimandir for work. From this week on even that bus will not go anymore. That leaves only the little group from Aspiration which has been going out digging for the last few months, every morning from 5.30 to 7.30. This group, the two of us and some other individuals will be for the time being the only Aurovilians at Matrimandir. It may only be a symbol.

* * *

14 November 1971

Letter

Original language: French

Sources: Question: facsimile: Piero's personal archives

Answer: facsimile: Piero's personal archives ; MoA, p. 75; CWM, p. 220; AMW, p. 405

[Piero had written to Mother on 13 November:]

Dear Mother,

I wrote to you a letter 20 days ago to present to you a detailed program for the construction work of Matrimandir's 4 pillars. The work is relatively simple and I thought I had enough experience to assess that the work can be realized under my direction and that of other Aurovilians who are construction experts.

You approved this proposal and we received your blessings.

We started immediately with the site organisation with serieté and enthusiasm.

Shyam Sunder now tells us that the work will be executed by a contractor such as E.C.C.

I am very puzzled; my sentiment is still to participate in a creative work directly in contact with matter, to transform it. For me, Mother, on a concreting day, in the noise of the machinery and people, when concrete flows well mixed in the formworks and boils above the needle vibrator, there is here some poetry. And when everything is over and we feel the heat of the reacting cement that rises up through our feet, this heat goes straight to the heart! One feels physically that the miracle of its strength starts just at that time. Eternal strength one feels through one's feet!

If you had seen with us the beautiful machines at work in the mines of Neyvelli, the announcement of a world in evolution, the harmonious image of a huge power which is under control and guided by small men, there won't be any obstacles big enough to make it come here and work at Matrimandir.

Me, I see you much higher than us: if you decide that work will be handed over directly to the contractor and we will excavate by hand by a contractor, your will shall be welcome.

I only request you to allow me to suspend my work. This is not the direction in which I am working for the past 3 years in Auroville and I feel that I cannot change now, by reverting to the old position in the relationship with a contractor, which is based on money.

You had told me at that time to start and from you I now await with the same confidence your decisive reply.

With devotion

Piero

[Mother answers Piero:]

Each one has good reasons
to support his own opinion,
and I am no expert to judge
between them.

But from the spiritual point
of view I know that with
true goodwill all opinions
can be harmonized

in a more comprehensive
and truer solution.

This is what I expect from
the workers of Auroville.

Not that some give

way to others, but

that on the contrary all should
combine their efforts to achieve
a more comprehensive and
perfect result.

The ideal of Auroville demands
this progress – don't you want to
make it?

Blessings

Chacun a de bonnes raisons
pour défendre son opinion; et
je ne suis pas un expert pour
juger entre elle.

Mais au point de vue
spirituel je sais qu'avec le
vrai bonne volonté toutes les
opinions peuvent s'accorder

à une solution plus
compréhensive et plus vraie.

C'est cela que j'attends des

travailleurs d'Auroville
non pas que les uns cèdent
la place à d'autres, mais

au contraire que tous combinent
leurs efforts pour arriver à un
résultat plus compréhensif et
plus parfait.

L'idéal d'Auroville demande
ce progrès – ne voulez-vous
le faire ?

Bonne nuit

M.

* * *

Mid-November 71



Alain and Olivier survey the site before starting with the coolies.



Coolies digging the red earth.

* * *

3 December 1971

Reported

Original language: English

Sources: "Matrimandir Diary" by Ruud Lohman, pp. 20, 24, 26

[Excerpt from Ruud's Matrimandir Diary:]

At the Matrimandir excavation a fight broke out between workers from two different villages; after an hour the fighting was stopped, but no more work was done that day. On the same morning, the Indo Pakistan war started.

* * *

11 December 1971

From Vikas' diary

Original language: English

Sources: Quoted in the Dawning of Auroville, p. 116

[Excerpt from Ruud's Matrimandir Diary:]

The Matrimandir is no more than a great wide circular hole in the ground. It is emerging as a crater, a colossal theatre-in-the-round. But it has a most strange and very powerful character, an individuality, a genus loci. A spirit descends over the place.



Anyhow, this hole, the Matrimandir in its present form, looks a bit like a scene from a Twentieth Century Fox wide screen epic, with 200 coolies, women and children, carrying huge baskets of rich red earth on their heads. It could be a scene from ancient Babylon, or the construction of the pyramids. Timeless, eternal.



Alain talking with Piero

But there, in the middle, as if to give the game away, like the Shakespearean actor who forgot to remove his wristwatch, is the thin, nervous, bespectacled, plastic-raincoat-clad figure of Alain, the chef-d'oeuvre, strutting around at the bottom of the pit amidst the pools of water, a band of loin-clothed Indians attending his every word. It's rich, it's beautiful, and it's funny.

* * *

Late December 1971



Excavation work well underway

* * *

1972

Second Year of Phase 3

Implementation

1 January 1972

Excerpt of a Diary

Original language: English

Sources: "Pages from a Matrimandir Diary" by Ruud Lohman, in "The Golden Bridge" (Auroville 1978), pp. 23-36; quoted by Bill Sullivan in "The Dawning of Auroville", p. 116. Photo: Matrimandir, p.16

[Ruud's account of New Year's Celebration:]

This morning at 6.30 we had a New Year's celebration at Matrimandir. On the bottom, now 9 metres deep, four large fires were lit and all the workers gathered around them and on the various ledges which run around the excavation at different heights. Many people from the Auroville communities and from Pondy came, too. The first rays of the sun emerged. Then we played the New Year's music, as an experiment, for we were not sure how the workers would react.

But they got more and more quiet and seemed to experience it intensively. Somebody gave a five minute talk in Tamil on the meaning of Matrimandir and their work and explained the idea of the Centenary Year.

When sweets were distributed they got so much into it that they started making it into a festival. They lost all idea of work and after two hours they left and we also took the day off.

This morning was a clear symbol of what has been established during the last six weeks; a good understanding between the Tamilians and the Aurovilians.

The work has gone beautifully, the first phase of Matrimandir will be completed this week; the huge crater is ready.

It is splendid, great. It reminds many visitors of the construction of the pyramids, of the Coliseum, of cathedrals, really a monument that embodies a new age.





Celebrating the New Year 1972 at dawn at the excavation site

* * *

Completing the excavation



* * *

12-19 January 1972

[The entries in Mother's Agenda, dated 12th and 19th January, which pertain to Matrimandir's 12 meditation chambers, are shown in this compilation on 12 & 19 July 1972. The reason is that they seem to go together with an entry from Roger on the same subject, dated July 17th. We thus believe that either Roger or Satprem mistakenly dated his entries. We opted in favour of Roger's dating because it is in July that the 4 pillars were started and it thus seems appropriate that Mother should have then given them their respective names.]

* * *

Mid February 1972

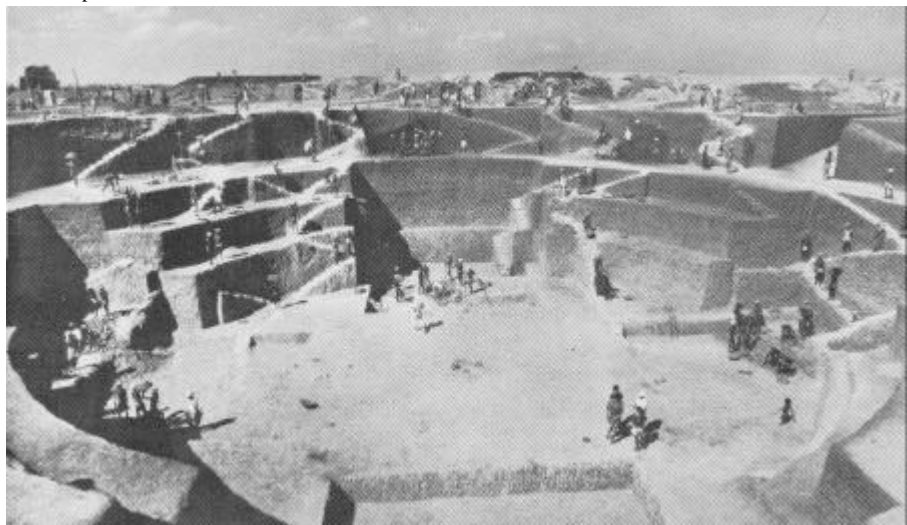
Photo

Original language of the legend: English

Sources: "Matrimandir", Auropublications, p. 17

Excavation complete

*10.50 metres deep,
50 metres across
(at ground level).*



* * *

21 February 1972

Mother's 94th Birthday

Ceremony for the Cementing of Matrimandir's Foundation

Report

Original language: English

Sources: Matrimandir, pp. 20-21; MoA, p. 5; CWM, XIII, p. 232

[At an early morning ceremony, about 2,000 people filed past the cement mixer at Matrimandir, each placing a granite stone in the machine; it was the symbolic beginning of the construction, the cementing of the foundation. Mother had inscribed on a stone the date, the OM symbol, blessings and her signature. This was laid at the base of the east pillar.]



Report on the Quarter
Bulletin, April 1972, p. 101

[On 21 February, 1972 a solemn function was held at the Matrimandir site in Auroville timed at sun rise. Last year, on the same date was laid the foundation stone. This time marked the end of the heavy excavation work and the commencement of the next stage – the construction of four pillars.]

At 6.15 a.m. with the music of "The Hour of God", those present there started putting, one by one, a stone in the concrete mixer.

A stone bearing the Mother's writing (Om) and Her signature was put in the base of one of the pillars by Martha and L. Ramalingam.]

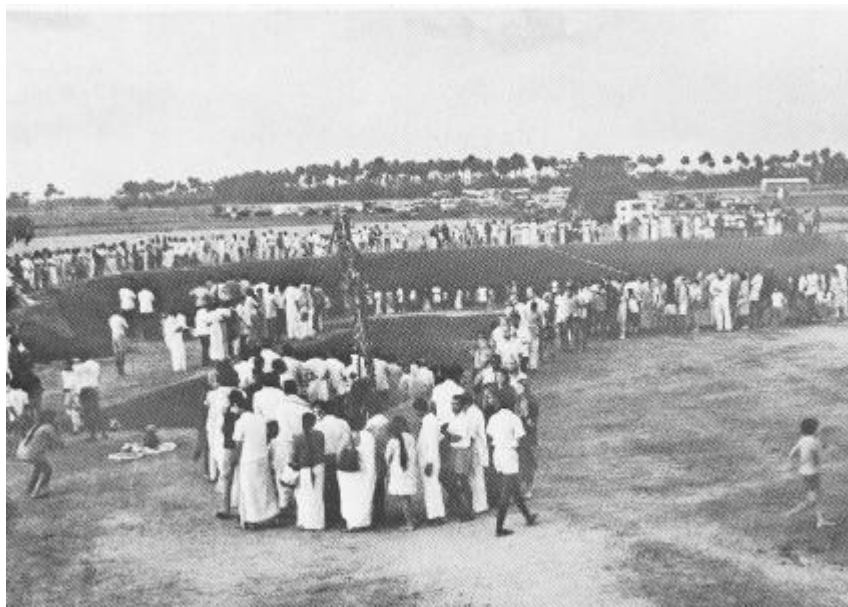


Excerpt from Ruud's Matrimandir Diary.
Original language: English.
Sources: Quoted in the Dawning of Auroville, pp. 116-17.

[Excerpt from *Ruud's Matrimandir Diary*:]

Today a year ago there was a grand solemnity in the heart of Auroville where nothing was to be seen yet except the Banyan tree and some palmyras. Hundreds of people had gathered before sunrise to attend the laying of the first stone of the "Soul of Auroville", the Matrimandir, the Temple of Truth. It was a tremendous event, it is told, which reminded many of the Vedic times, the ancient history of India.

This morning we had another grand solemnity, at sunrise. Again hundreds of people had gathered in the splendid light of the rising sun. On the hill formed by the excavated earth, twelve fires had been lit and later another great fire was lit in the centre of the crater. This time we had gathered to officially commence the next phase of the work: casting the four huge pillars which emerge from the depths up to zero level to carry the large sphere.



There were twelve people, all in some way close to Mother. The group descended towards the first level at three meters depth, where they all received a stone. They walked in procession all around the excavation and then put their stone in the cement mixer. Behind them then followed the hundreds, even thousands, each contributing a pebble.

The remarkable intensity in and around the crater was this morning more perceptible than ever. At Matrimandir you are one with a tremendous stream flowing through the centuries and driving you on towards higher realizations. You are one with all great events and all great people of history and of this moment, you're one with the greatest consciousness and the consciousness.

A Divine Presence manifesting in the world in ever-increasing intensity and clarity.

*


[At 6.45, Nolini reads this Message:]



Let Auroville be the symbol of a progressive Unity.

And the best way to realize this is a unity of aspiration towards the Divine Perfection in work and in feeling, in a consecration of the entire life.

Auroville veut être le symbole
d'une unité progressive
Et la méthode pour la réaliser
est une unité d'aspiration vers
la Perfection Divine
sans le travail et les sentiments
sans une consécration de la vie tout entière



* * *

22 February 1972

Note from Mother
Original language: French
Sources: Mother's Agenda, p. 69

[Mother writes a Note:]

All day long on the 21st I had a strong feeling that it was everybody's birthday, and I felt the urge to say "happy birthday" to everyone.

A very strong impression that something new was manifesting in the world, and that all those who were ready and receptive would incarnate it.

In a few days, probably, we will know what it was.

* * *

28 February 1972 Auroville's 4th birthday

Notes written after a conversation
Original language: English
Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 126

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

Shyam Sunder mentions to Mother that the next day, 29th February, at 6 a.m. concreting work of the Matrimandir pillars¹ will start and that there would be a meditation.

Sebastien wanted to dance at the Matrimandir the next day in the evening in the foundation-hole. Shyam Sunder commented that the concreting work was to start in the morning and these things disturbed the work.

He can dance elsewhere.

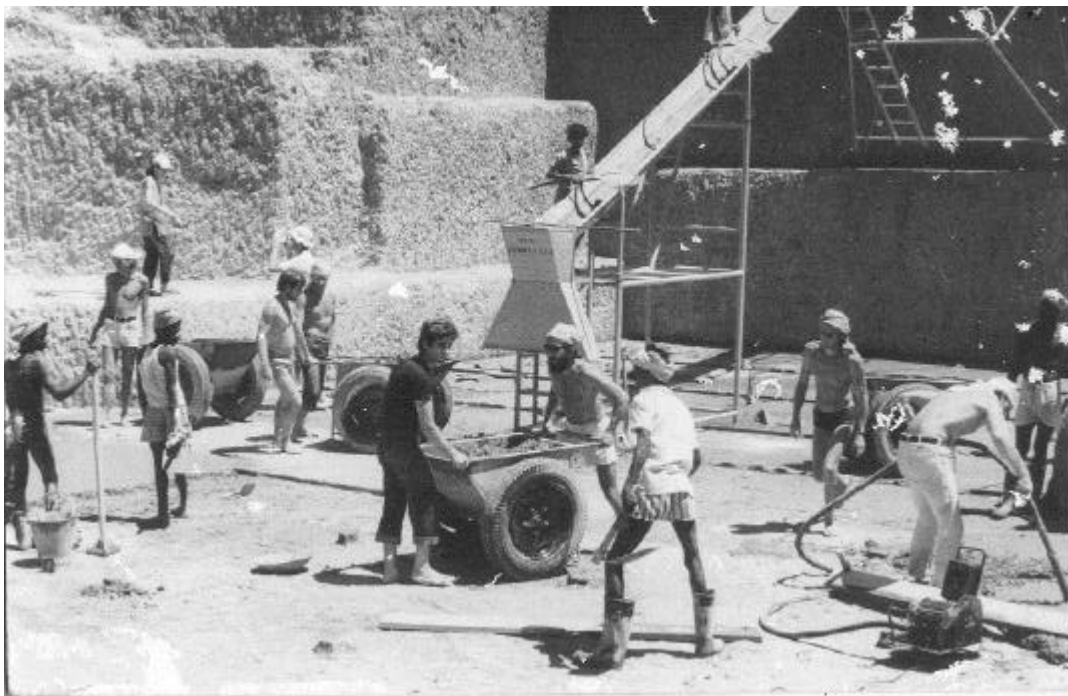
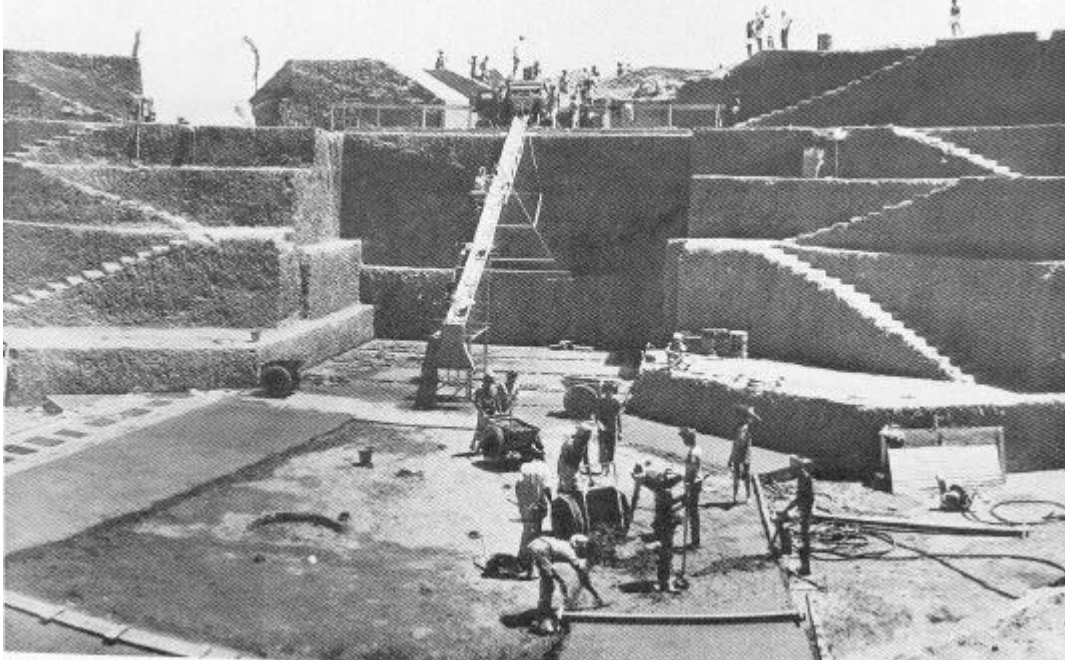
* * *

¹ Shyam Sunder is mistaken; it is concreting work of the Matrimandir foundation.

29 February 1972

4th leap-year celebration of the Golden day of the Supramental Manifestation

Sources: *Matrimandir*, published by Auropublications, p. 25



Concreting of the foundation's first layer (a 30 cm thick PCC "mat")

* * *

March-April 1972

Excerpt from a book

Original language: English

Sources: *Auroville, the first six years*, by Savitra, p. 85

[Savitra's account of the preparation work for the next concreting:]

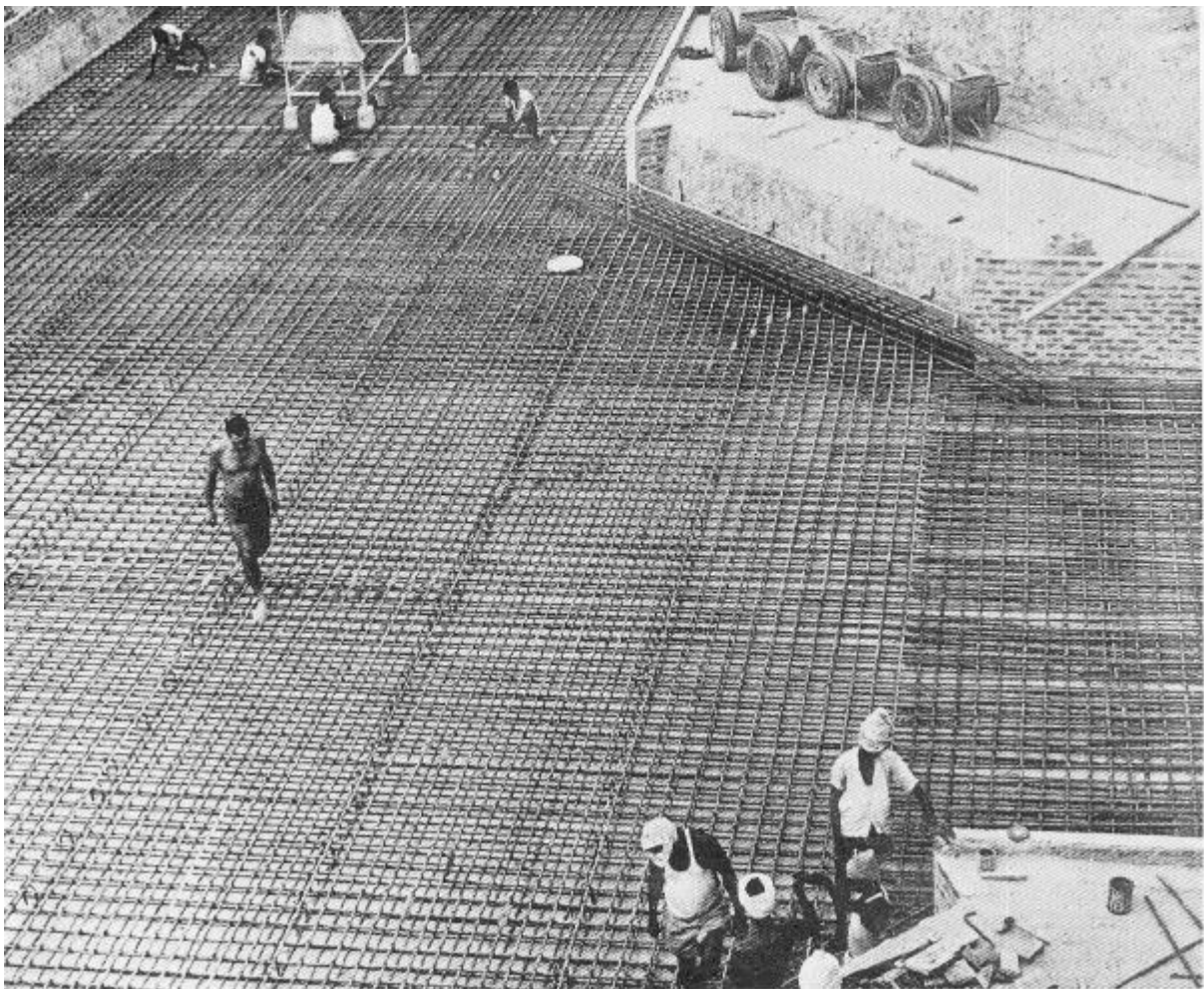
Setting foundation footings capable of bearing 1500 ton/ft. load transmitted by total weight of Matrimandir and pillars; tie-slab 22 cm thick reinforced concrete connecting footings in structural unity.

Preparing for this concreting, materials delivered, 400 cu. ft. of wood shuttering cut, 15 tons reinforced steel bent and welded.

Temporary carpentry shed established.

12 regular Aurovilians, team of village workers.

Sources: *Matrimandir*, published by Auropublications, p. 28



Laying the steel reinforcement for the foundation

* * *

1 May 1972

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: AV Archives

[Piero writes to Mother:]

Douce Mère,

After two months for preparing the reinforcement in the foundation of the Matrimandir, Wednesday evening finally, we will start the concreting.

Give us, Douce Mère, a message for the first day and night, so that for all the work will be light and guided from You.

Can we symbolize in the four piers of the Matrimandir the four personalities of the Divine Mother?

Wisdom

Strength

Harmony

Perfection²

Thank You to have given to us the Matrimandir.

Piero

* * *

3 May 1972

Message

Original language: English

Sources: MoA, p. 5; CWM, XIII, p. 233



[Ashramites and Aurovilians gathered to work for 26 hours concreting the tie-slab connecting the foundations of the four pillars of Matrimandir.

At 4 p.m., before the work starts, Shyam Sunder reads out this message:]

3.5.72

Let us all work

with a growing sincerity

for the manifestation

of the Divine Truth.

With my blessings

3. 5. 72.

Let us all work
with a growing sincerity
for the manifestation
of the Divine Truth.

with my blessings

* * *

² Piero now says that there was a rumour that the four piers had been given the names of the four Aspects of the Mother and that he wanted to know if it was true.

34 May 1972

Concreting of the tie-slab connecting the four pillars

Note

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p.173

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes dated 3rd May:]

Yesterday the 20 hour concreting work of the Matrimandir foundation basement has started. The biggest number of Aurovilians so far came to work. In the midnight the Ashram students also joined.

*

Excerpt from a book

Original language: English

Sources: *Auroville, the first six years*, by Savitra, p. 85

[Savitra's account of this concreting:]

*40 tons reinforced steel for tie-slab emplaced.
Pouring operation commenced same day, completed 26 hour later.
76 m³ concrete. Target strength of 250 kg/m² exceeded.
Approx. 120 people participated.*



Starting to pour the concrete of the 22cm thick tie-slab

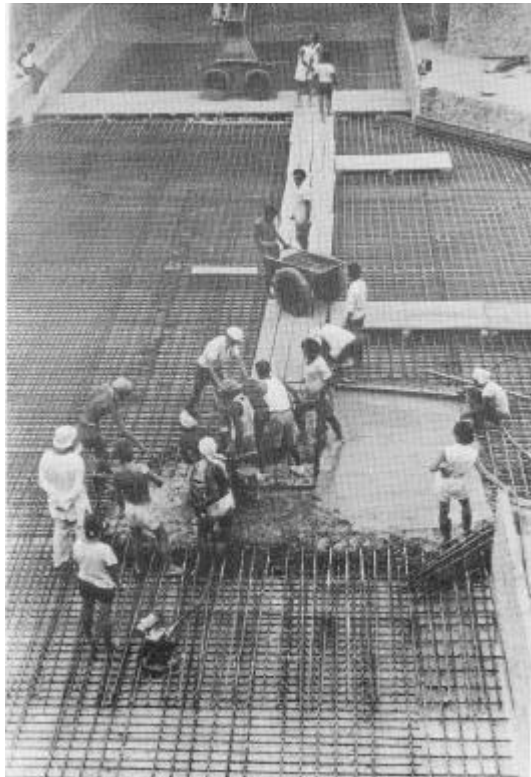
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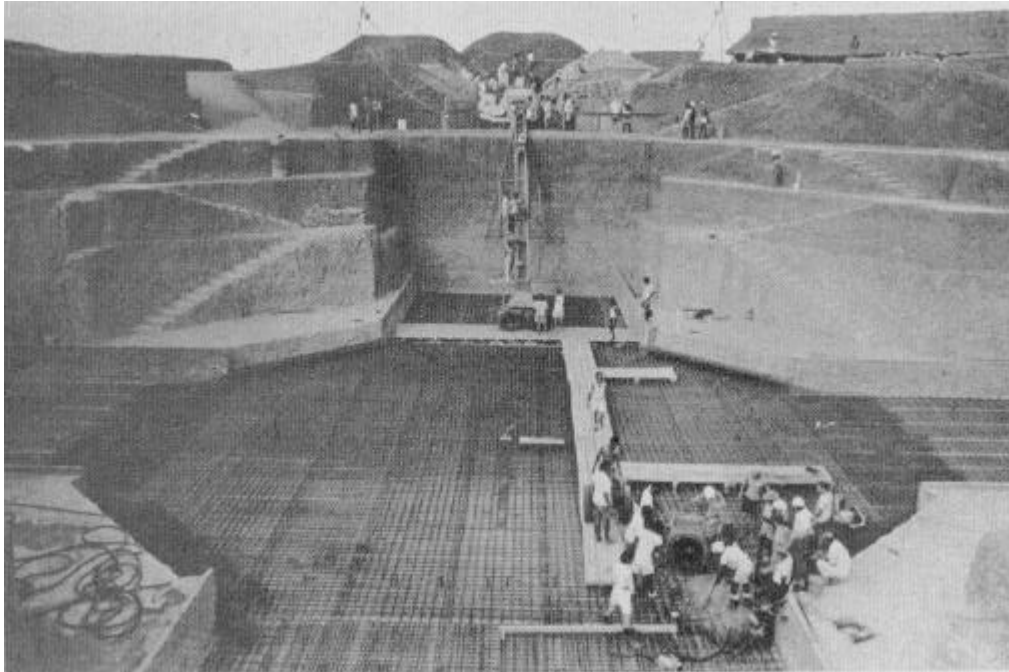
Excerpt from Ruud's Matrimandir Diary.
Original language: English.
Sources: Quoted in "The Dawning of Auroville", pp. 117-18

[Excerpt from Ruud's Matrimandir Diary (dated 31 May:)]

Things have been going nicely this month of May. Suddenly work is picking up speed and it looks as if we'll get the four pillars ready by the Centenary celebration, though we'll have to work with all the energy available. And that's what is happening. Especially this month another saying of the Mother has become a fact of experience that the construction of Matrimandir will be like a festival.

The first great festivals we had on May third and fourth. Between the projected pillars had been woven an enormous mat of steel rods intended to keep the four pillars interconnected and in balance by spreading and dividing the weight. This mat had to be covered with concrete all at one stretch. It started on May 3 at 4.00 p.m. Members of the Ashram would work from 4.00 to 9.00 p.m., Aspiration and other groups in Auroville from 9.00 to 3.00 a.m. and then the full-timers at Matrimandir would finish it. Immediately from 4 o'clock the real push was there. From zero-level, bags of cement, pebbles and sand are transported via a balance into the cement mixer. The mixer is standing at the three metre level. From there the cement is worked down via a chute towards the minus-ten level into the wheelbarrows. We need about thirty people for the whole process, but we had more than double the number and when at 9.00 p.m. Aspiration came, three times the number. When you put down your shovel for a second someone else has snatched it away. One almost fights for work.





Concreting went on day and night for 26 hours



* * *

20 May 1972

Excerpt from a book

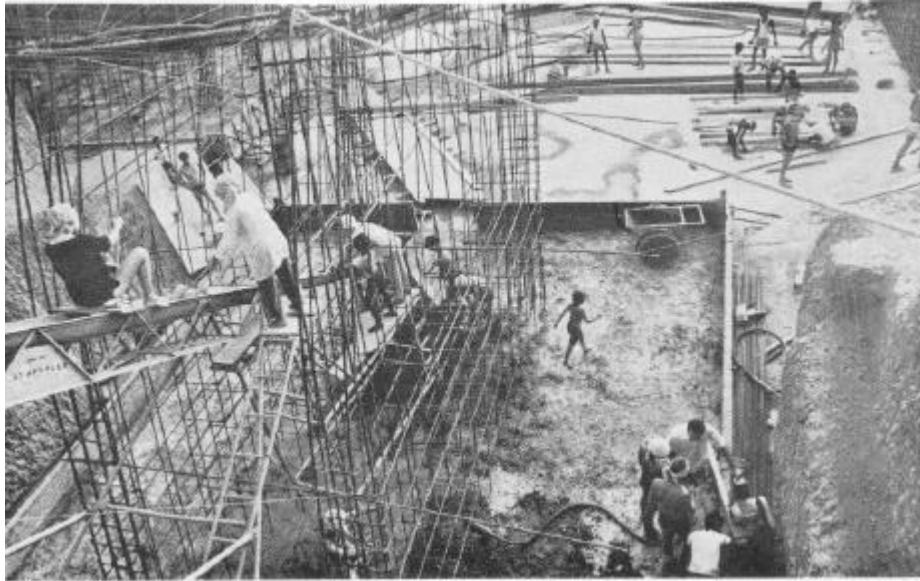
Original language: English

Sources: "Auroville, the first six years", by Savitra, p.85

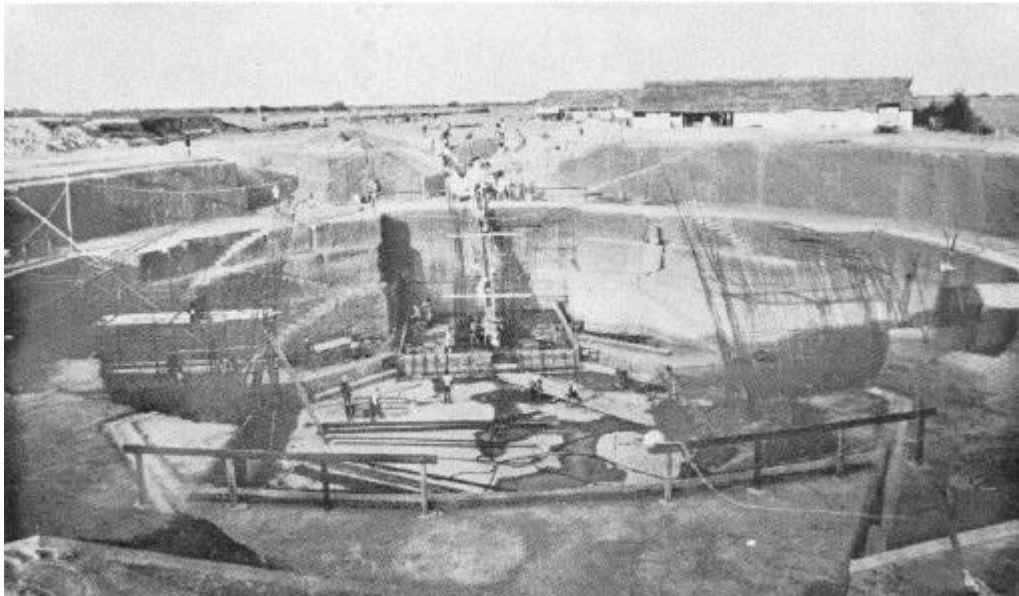
[Savitra's account of the concreting of the footings of the pillars:]

Concreting south and east footings (100 m². - 1.20m. deep)

Quantity 240 m³. to commence 20 May - one layer/night, 8 consecutive nights, 4 PM-2AM.



Concreting the footings of one pillar



* * *

6 June 1972

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 187; AMW, p. 437

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

The Madras engineers [from S.E.R.C.] came yesterday. They say that the quality of the Matrimandir construction work done so far is satisfactory.

*

[Mother signs, with Blessings, a Notice:]

Matrimandir Workers' Camp is meant for those who:

1. Work whole time at the Matrimandir or in the Matrimandir Garden Nursery.
2. Do not take alcohol or drugs, and live cleanly.
3. There should be no smoking or sex-indulgence in the Matrimandir area.

With blessings.

* * *

8 June 1972

Excerpt from a book

Original language: English

Sources: *Auroville, the first six years*, by Savitra, p. 85

[Savitra's account:]

4 foundation footings completed 8 June. (480 m³).

* * *

11 June 1972

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 188

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

*The basement of Matrimandir pillars is finished. The construction of the actual pillars is to start. The work will be slow now due to lack of resources.
Mother apparently did not like the slowing down.*

* * *

19 June 1972

Excerpt from a book

Original language: English

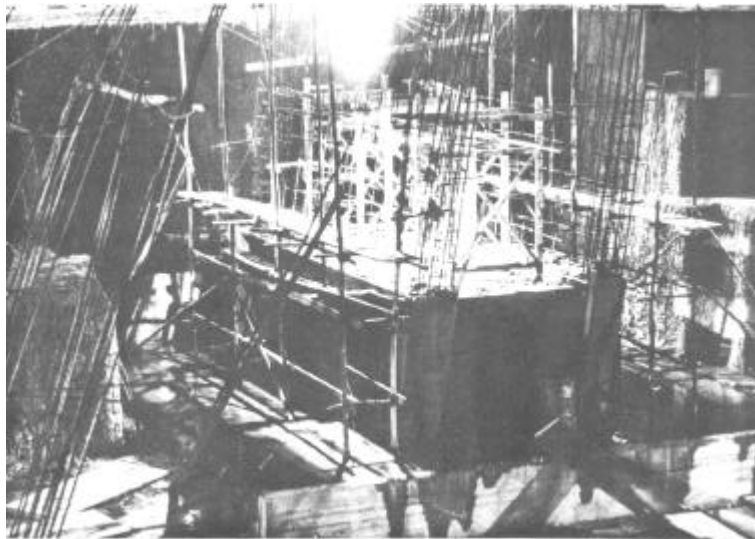
Sources: *Auroville, the first six years*, by Savitra, p. 85

[Savitra's description of the concreting:]

4 paired pillars begun, taken up to starter level of 30 cm by 19 June.

West pillar, 2 m. poured; East, shuttering and form work.

Projected: 4 levels to be poured, 3 - 2m. each,



Night concreting of the first pillar

* * *

10 July 1972

Note

Original English

Sources; Down Memory Lane, p. 197

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

Matrimandir's second pillar has come up to two metres. Now we take up the third one.

* * *

Pertaining to mid-July 1972 (unless it is mid-January³?)

Letter

Original language: French

Sources: Gazette Aurovilienne, Vol. V, July 77

[Excerpt from an open letter from Roger, dated 20.04.77:]

Later, when the work had advanced further, I had suggested to the Mother to utilise the interior of these petals to situate rooms therein. The Mother had then explained to me that these could serve as rooms of concentration on various levels of consciousness. Two days later, she gave them, in writing, an appropriate name and colour, as well as the significance of the four pillars supporting the Matrimandir.

* * *

12 July 1972 (12 January as per Mother's Agenda)

Taped conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Mother's Agenda, pp. 27-28

[Excerpt of a conversation with Satprem:]

Do you happen to remember where I wrote the twelve attributes of the Mother (the symbol with twelve petals)? There's one, four and twelve.

Satprem: Yes, I think it was for Auroville.

For Auroville, but I said it years ago...

Satprem: I saw it recently.

The twelve.

[Sujata goes out in search of the paper.]

On this one there aren't any details.

[Mother extends a note in English:]

Mother's Symbol

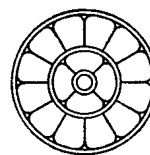
The central circle represents the Divine Consciousness.

The four petals represent the four powers of the Mother.

The twelve petals represent the twelve powers of the Mother manifested for Her work.

* * *

MOTHER'S SYMBOL



The central circle represents the Divine Consciousness.

The four petals represent the four powers of the Mother.

The twelve petals represent the twelve powers of the Mother manifested for Her work.

³ The entries dated here 12, 17 & 19 January obviously go together; but Satprem dated January the two conversations of 12th and 19th, while Roger wrote "July" on his notes of the 17th. As it is in July that the piers got started, we believe that it is on this occasion that Mother gave these names.

17 July 1972

Note

Original language: French

Sources: Mother on Auroville, p. 5

[Mother wrote for Roger the significances given for the twelve underground meditation Chambers.]

Sincerity, Humility, Gratitude, Perseverance,

Aspiration, Receptivity, Progress, Courage,

Goodness, Generosity, Equality, Peace.

Sincérité, Humilité, Gratitude, Persévérance
Aspiration, Réceptivité, Progrès, Courage,
Bonté, Générosité, Égalité, Paix.

[Roger noted where to start and in which direction:]

Visit of 17 July 72

Mother gave the following answer:

The colour light blue

for Sincerity and dark

blue for Peace.

One rotates towards the left.

Agreement for this solution.

Visite du 17 juillet 72
Réponse donnée par
la couleur bleu clair
pour la sincérité et bleu
foncé pour la paix -
on tourne vers la gauche
Accord pour cette
solution.

[Mother wrote also for Roger the significance of the four pillars of the Matrimandir:]

North

Mahakali

NORD

Mahakali

South

Maheshwari

SUD

Maheshwari

East

Mahalakshmi

EST

Mahalakshmi

West

Mahasaraswati

OUEST

Mahasaraswati

Blessings

Blessings

* * *

19 July 1972 (19 January as per Mother's Agenda)

Taped conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Mother's Agenda, pp. 41-42; AMW, p. 412. Names only: MoA, p. 5

[Excerpt of a conversation with Satprem referring to the conversation he had one week earlier with Mother on 12th. Mother was asking for a certain paper, saying that in 1927, she told Sri Aurobindo the meaning of the petals in her symbol. He wrote it down, but that paper could not be found later.]

Last time I told you I was looking for the twelve attributes *[Mother takes out a sheet of paper]*. Here they are; someone found this:

Sincerity	Humility	Gratitude	Perseverance
Aspiration	Receptivity	Progress	Courage
Goodness	Generosity	Equanimity	Peace

The first eight concern the attitude towards the Divine, and the last four towards humanity.

And we also found a text from Sri Aurobindo (with a coloured chart of the twelve petals).

Centre and four powers, white.

The twelve all different colours in three groups:

top group red, passing to orange towards yellow;

next group, yellow passing through green towards blue; and

third group, blue passing through violet towards red.

If white is not convenient, the centre may be gold (powder).

Sri Aurobindo
20 March 1934

The centre is gold.

Satprem: But what did you need these twelve attributes for?

They're going to build twelve rooms around the Matrimandir, at ground level, and Roger wanted each room to have a name: one of the twelve attributes of the Mother, and the corresponding colour.⁴

* * *

⁴ Satprem's note:

According to Sri Aurobindo, these colours generally have the following significances, though the exact meaning may vary with the field, the combinations, the character and shades of the colour, the play of forces: red = physical; orange = Supramental in the physical; yellow = thinking mind; green = life; blue = higher mind; violet = Divine compassion or grace; gold = Divine Truth; white = the light of the Mother, or the Divine Consciousness.

Compiler's note:

Naming the 12 chambers according to Mother's attributes would thus have come from Roger.

The "centre" here is Matrimandir's shell, or rather its outer and inner shells. The outside shell is gold (symbolising Divine Truth), while the Inner Chamber is fully white (symbolising the light of the Mother, or the Divine Consciousness) and the (double) shell of the sphere will let through a particular type of "Grace Light" (salmon-pink). (See in this compilation the entry dated 11th July 1970).

23 July 1972

Note

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory lane, p. 202

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

Matrimandir's four pillars have been constructed up to two metres high. The concreting of the second level begins tomorrow.

* * *

27 July 1972

Report of a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: The Spirit of Auroville, pp. 139-140

[Excerpt from a conversation with Huta:]

A few days back I told Roger to build a small house on the island near the Matrimandir. It must be simple: one sitting room, a sleeping room and a bathroom.

* * *

3 August 1972

Excerpt from a book

Original language: English

Sources: *Auroville, the first six years*, by Savitra, p. 85

[Savitra's description of the concreting:]

*East pillar concreted 2 layers, 2 consecutive nights.
Steelwork prepared on north and west, south in process.
Metal workshop begun.
Steel stockyard established in field.*

* * *

23 July 1972

Note

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory lane, p. 209

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

The Matrimandir pillars are to be completed in four stages. Two pillars have come up to the second stage. The second stage of the third one has started. We are going ahead with the work.

* * *

August 1972

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Roger's notes; facsimile at AV Archives; AMW, p. 441

[After a meeting with Mother, Roger noted down what she had said:⁵]

À propos de

À propos du Matrimandir
la qualité du silence

Je voudrais qu'on garde le
silence, il faudrait écrire
ici on garde le silence, en

Français en Anglais en l'amour
- Pas de Musique

À propos des fleurs

Pas de fleurs à l'intérieur, il
faudra une salle pour les garder
dans un couloir.

À propos des gens admis au
Matrimandir -
Pas pour les visiteurs en l'absence
réservé aux Auroviliens mais
Tout le monde ne sera pas admis
la 1^{re} condition pour ceux qui
voudront y aller, le demander.

Ceux qui auront contribué
à la construction seront admis
en premier lieu, s'il y a des cas douteux
on me les soumettra. Tous ceux
qui ont une précaution douteuse

n'iront pas. Si on a le moindre
doute on ne présentera le cas.
Les gens doivent être connus, et pour
leur qualification

August 1972

On the subject of Matrimandir

Quality of silence:

I would like people to keep silent. It
must be written there that one keeps
silent, in French, English and Tamil.

And no music.

About flowers:

No flowers inside. There should be a
room to put them in, in a corridor.

About admissions to Matrimandir:

Not for visitors...

reserved for Aurovilians but

Not everyone will be admitted.

The first condition for those who
want to go there is to ask.

Those who have contributed to the
construction will be admitted in the
first place. If there are doubtful
cases, they should be referred to me.
All those who have a doubtful
presence won't go.

If there is the slightest doubt, the case
will be presented to me.

People must be known for their
qualifications.

⁵ Roger's notes were not checked again with Mother.

porte Malin
on ne peut pas l'avoir ouvert !
il faudrait alors des gardiens
volontaires, jour et nuit. Je crois
que les portes c'est plus simple -

Matrimandir door:

One cannot leave it open.
Then voluntary guardians would be
needed, day and night.
I think it's simplest with doors.

* * *

Some time in 1972

Report

Sources: Shyam Sunder's memory, confirmed by Anjani,

*[In India and in other Asian countries, people like to cover with gold the roof of the sanctum
sanctotum of their most sacred shrines. Feeling deeply that Matrimandir should be covered
with real gold, Mrs. Anjani Dayanand⁶ shared her feelings with Shyam Sunder and Roger,
who then spoke to the Mother and received Her approval to use real gold for the discs⁷.]*

* * *

13 August 1972

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 211

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

*Piero writes that the Matrimandir construction requires concentration and it is not possible
to accelerate it so as to finish the pillars by 15th August.*

No hurrying.

Shyam Sunder: He wants to know what is to be done after the pillars.

We will see.

* * *

⁶ Anjani was an ex-member of the then defunct "Comité Administratif d'Auroville".

⁷ Until then, Roger's idea was that Matrimandir's outside face would change as the consciousness of the Aurovilians rises. To start with, he had planned gold coloured plastic discs.

14 August 1972

Excerpt from Ruud's Matrimandir Diary.

Original language: English.

Sources: Quoted in the Dawning of Auroville, pp. 118-19.

[Excerpt from Ruud's Matrimandir Diary:]

In two and a half hours the Centenary [of Sri Aurobindo] will be here. I have never known a day lived towards so intensively as tomorrow. People expect all kinds of things. "August 15th" has long been a mystical date after which, in fact, nothing will come any more. A bit like the magical year 2000. Many are expecting miracles. The beginning of a new creation. The return of Sri Aurobindo in our midst. Sri Aurobindo's appearance on the Darshan balcony, together with Mother. The conquest of all our weaknesses and human imperfections. The breakthrough of the new being. But that would be conjuring, not a new creation and a new man, one would say. I have a strong feeling that the stress is not on the day of tomorrow as much as on the days, months, years after it. As if it is now getting serious. As if the time of hanging on is over and we now have to put our hands to it. It will not be so nice any more, it won't be a holiday camp any more, not a place for superficial freedom and for pleasures which have not yet become joys. The transformation of man and matter looks like a laborious work and not something of one day.

It is again typical of this yoga that we inaugurate the Centenary with work. We are having a concreting now, with the help of the Ashram.

Starting at 8 this evening we will be ready just before midnight. At exactly 12 o'clock five fires will be lit on the three metre level after which we'll have a half-hour meditation. The four pillars are not completed for the Centenary, but we are almost half-way which means that it will take another two months, especially because higher up it becomes more difficult. The second level of two pillars has been cast and we are at this moment casting the second layer of the North pillar.

It has been a silent day today; as if everything and everybody is closer to the source of his being. Becoming quiet is the great art. Then only can we hear It and Him and Her.

* * *

15 August 1972

Sri Aurobindo's 100th Birth Anniversary

Message

Original language: English

Sources: MoA, p. 104; CWM, XIII, p. 233; Matrimandir, p. 39

[Major concreting of one of the pillars of Matrimandir. People from all over Auroville and from the Ashram gather to help. Mother sends this message:]

Good will and peace to all.

Blessings.

* * *



15. 8. 72

Good will and peace
to all

Blessings

17 August 1972

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 211

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

[Mother comments on a letter from Narad, who had written to Her about the smallness of the size of the Matrimandir gardens fixed by Roger:]

I have never told Narad that it should be very big... Roger is the best judge.

* * *

September 1972

Excerpt from a book

Original language: English

Sources: *Auroville, the first six years*, by Savitra, p. 72

[Savitra's account of the beginning of the Matrimandir Workshop:]

Michael [Tait], a young Englishman who had gained construction experience in the initial stages of Bharat Nivas, established a keet workshop in September '72 adjacent to the Matrimandir to meet its growing need for machine maintenance – vibrators, mixers, handtools. But with the evolving complexity of the construction work, the workshop soon outgrew its simple quarters, inheriting a dozen power tools and a new, expanded cinderblock and asbestos building. It designed and constructed its own furnishings, and in addition to overseeing the multiple spheres of work concerning the Matrimandir – welding, barbending, production of scaffoldings, shutterings and tubular support-frames – it also services miscellaneous needs in other areas of Auroville, including the construction and assemblage of two trailer wagons for the reforestation program.

* * *

13 September 1972

Excerpt from a book

Original language: English

Sources: *Auroville, the first six years*, by Savitra, p. 85

[Savitra's account of the concreting:]

East pillar up to 4th level, 8.64 m. Begins to rise up and out of excavation.

Curvilinear shape clear, steps indicated by protruding reinforced rods.

Aurovillians increased to 2 teams.

Crane of 1-ton capacity constructed in workshop to hoist concrete from mixer level to pouring level.

* * *

14 September 1972

Note

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 222

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

Last midnight we have completed one pillar of Matrimandir. The other three pillars we expect to complete in six weeks. Lack of money is a big difficulty.

* * *

15 September 1972

Note

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 223

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

The Madras engineers, who came to inspect the construction of the Matrimandir, have found it to be very satisfactory. Roger is going on 20th. That day he will give them further instructions at Madras.

* * *

16 September 1972

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 223

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

[Piero's letter about the next phases of the Matrimandir construction. He wants to know whether it should be continued by ourselves or by a contractor.]

What does Roger say?

Shyam Sunder: He agrees that it be continued by Piero, preferably with the help of the Ashram engineers, if available.

[Mother approves of our continuing the work.]

* * *

3 October 1972

Not

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, pp. 230-31

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

The second pillar of Matrimandir was completed last night. In the first pillar a foundation stone touched by Mother was placed. Now two blessing packets are asked for the next two pillars. Mother took two blessing packets and asked Shyam Sunder to choose one. For the fourth, she said, the blessing packet will be given when the work is being done, she said.

* * *

20 October 1972

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 237

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

At Matrimandir the third pillar is finished.

[Mother was happy to know.]

Day before yesterday when Shyam Sunder went to Matrimandir, there came the idea of starting the work of construction of the twelve meditation rooms and the Matrimandir gardens.

[Mother was happy.]

On the other hand we have no money. There is no money to pay the land already bought, several construction works have stopped; even for the Matrimandir work already done we have borrowed a lakh of Rupees. In spite of this difficulty the idea persists.

Shyam Sunder: I want to know what Mother sees about it.

There is no money at all?

Shyam Sunder: No, Mother.

I see a pressure in the atmosphere... but what to do?

Shyam Sunder: I have spoken to the people at Matrimandir, Piero, Alain. There is the difficulty of money. They have asked me to ask Mother if she says 'yes'. At present, even if one begins, one can begin only slowly.

Are materials necessary?

Shyam Sunder: In the beginning, no, it does not cost much. But towards the end, it will cost a good deal.

[Mother gave her approval for commencing.]

Shyam Sunder: Do I say to the people at Matrimandir that Mother has said Yes?

Yes.

* * *

24 October 1972

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: AV Archives (Shyam Sunder's file)

[Letter from Piero to Shyam Sunder:]

Dear Shyam Sunder,

I was informed today from Alain about your conversation with the Mother regarding Matrimandir.

I am now very busy to execute some drawings to be sent urgently to Madras. The same drawings are needed later for the execution of the main structure. Sorry, I cannot see you today.

I am feeling that with the limited material, persons and drawings that we have now, it is for me difficult to see clearly and with a convenient security the execution of the work, specially if we start now the execution of the petals.

I do not feel to be technically and psychologically strong enough to have responsibility in the work in these conditions, specially with a tremendous pression to do more and more.

Sorry, but I should consider the possibility of giving the honour and joy of building the Matrimandir to somebody else.

Thanking you for all, sincerely.

Piero

* * *

24 October 1972

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 239; facsimile of the message at AV Archives and in The Spirit of Auroville, p. 145

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

A few days ago, Shyam Sunder had spoken about the extension of the areas of work of the Matrimandir construction and Mother had approved of it.

She confirmed:

Yes.

Shyam Sunder: But Piero does not agree to it.

Why?

[Shyam Sunder read out the letter written by Piero to him and Mother wrote a message:]

The true spirit of Auroville is Collaboration and must be more and more so.

True collaboration paves the way to divinity.

Blessings

* * *

25 October 1972

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 239

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes about Matrimandir:]

Shyam Sunder: I spoke yesterday to Piero. He says that it is not a question of collaboration or goodwill or faith in Mother. He speaks of financial difficulty; his overwork and increase in work due to change in plans.

Truly, I can't say what to do. I am no architect, not an expert. Each one is sticking to one's own point of view. [She shook her hands]. What is the solution?

Shyam Sunder: Piero is the most capable person for the construction. He is necessary for the work. I can try to persuade him, Mother.

And if he is not persuaded?

Shyam Sunder: Then I don't know.

Try to find out a meeting point, a common base for the work to be done.

Shyam Sunder: Yes, Mother, I can try.

[Mother gave a blessing packet.]

* * *

26 October 1972

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 240

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

Yesterday, Shyam Sunder went to Matrimandir, took Piero with him and there was a meeting with the people working there. The talking was done without passion and it is agreed that we should first finish the necessary studies in detail and then start the new areas of work in a few weeks.

[Mother was pleased to know of it.]

* * *

31 October 1972

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 241; facsimile in The Spirit of Auroville, p. 146; Matrimandir, p. 41

[On a request, Mother gave a message for the Matrimandir workers, along with a blessing packet, for the concreting of the four pillars up to ground level.]

31.10.72



31. 10. 72

Harmony

Harmony

Goodwill

Good will

Discipline

Discipline

Truth

Truth.

I can work with you only if
you do not say a lie and are at
the service of Truth.

I can work with you only if
you do not say a lie and are at
the service of Truth.

* *

3 November 1972

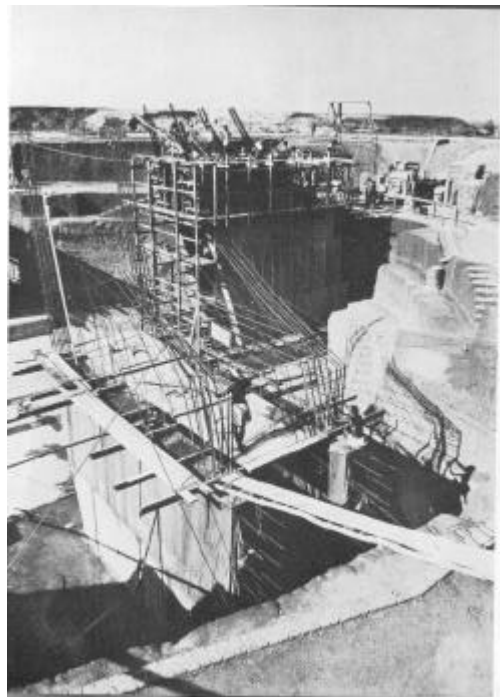
Note:

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, 242

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

The fourth pillar of Matrimandir is going to be completed, if it does not rain. Piero and Gérard have asked for a blessings packet to be put in this pillar. It is the Western one, Mahasaraswati. Mother gave a white packet.



* * *

3 November 1972

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: The Spirit of Auroville, p. 146

[Huta reports that Shyam Sunder had asked her whether Mother had told her and written to her about Auroville and Matrimandir. Huta answered she had, but could give the material only with Mother's approval. She thus went to Mother and told her about Shyam Sunder's request:]

Yes, I approve fully. But you must not give him the original letters and our conversations corrected by me. Make copies of them, put them in a file and then give it to him.

* * *

4 November 1972

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: The Spirit of Auroville, p. 147; Down Memory Lane, p. 242

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

Mother said that Huta will be the guardian of Matrimandir. Her residence is to be built in one of the twelve gardens. She has given money also for it. She must have a kitchenette also. Shyam Sunder said that when Roger comes back, he will speak to him about it and get it settled.

* * *

5 November 1972

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 243

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

Last evening the four pillars of Matrimandir have been completed. Mother gave a box of toffees for the Matrimandir Camp.



The four pillars of Matrimandir completed

* * *

9 November 1972

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 244

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

Shyam Sunder has received from Huta what Mother wrote to her about Matrimandir and her house. He will speak to Roger about it when he comes.

[Mother nodded.]

* * *

14 November 1972

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: MMTL, p. 31; The Spirit of Auroville, p. 148; facsimile at AV Archives

[Letter from Huta:]

My dearest Mother,

Some time some beings throw their falsehood at me. But I am not in favour with their falsehood.

I request You to protect me constantly.

Also I wish You to dispel all the obstacles which are in my way and prevent me from realising my soul. And, truly I feel strongly that now my soul must take an entire lead of my whole being.

Mother, didn't I pray to You in 1965 when You appointed me guardian of the Matri Mandir that I would not step into the Sacred Temple until and unless I became perfectly pure and worthy?

And with a smile, You said: "You will be..." and I was relieved.

Now this is high time that my whole being must be purified thoroughly and must be influenced by my soul and its aspiration. Then and then only I shall deserve to serve the Truth integrally.

Please fulfil my aspiration. And I know that nothing is impossible for Your Grace... And You know very well what I aspire for...

With all my love and kisses.

[Mother answered her in writing:]

Yes, have faith.

Love and blessings.

* * *

Pertaining to 24th November 1972

Note written a long time after the events

Original language: English

Sources: Two notes written by Alain G

Beginning of the work in the gardens

[Note by Alain Grandcolas (who was then working with Ruud Lohman and Vikas):]

In November 1972, the four pillars had just been completed up to the level necessary to support the ground-floor slab. But we could not proceed further since some studies had to be finalised before starting. At that time, everybody had in mind to complete Matrimandir + Meditation rooms and gardens by the end of 1977.

The layout of the gardens were finalised and we had decided to start. Ruud and myself had carefully outlined and marked the contours of the gardens. Mother had given: 24th November at 6.15 a.m. for the date marking the beginning of the work: more than hundred of us, led by Shyam Sunder, walked on the contour, as far as the land was acquired.

The design was very simple: the whole oval "will be covered with a layer of concrete overlaid with tiles" (entry on 18.12.1972 in Ruud's diary). In other words, the shape will be like the rosewood Matrimandir model. Detailed drawings had been prepared by "Papa Richardet". Under Piero's guidance I had built an experimental canal "for determining the best method of making the decorative water channels and monsoons drain" (1.11.1972) and to determine the minimum slope also. With Ruud I had gone to Madras to some factory which could manufacture these tiles (18.12.1972). We had also studied with Coco Garden how we could manufacture them ourselves.

"Twenty-five new workers had been invited to come the next day to continue the road-clearing and then start the levelling work" (3.12.1972). But we just discovered that a hired bulldozer could do the same work for 1/20th of the cost. Since we were expecting our own small bulldozer at the end of this month, it was decided to wait a little for the gardens".

But I remember, which is not in Ruud's diary, that since we became idle, Ruud and myself, one afternoon, went to see Shyam Sunder in his house with Richardet's drawing and asked him if we could not start immediately that Unity garden, without waiting for the bull-dozer, which may also be delayed. Shyam Sunder looked at the map and suddenly put his index on the urn: it was the invitation to start the amphitheatre, which we did and were so much involved that there was no longer time to think of the gardens.

Later on, I remember to have met some Madras guy who was proposing some binding, with a tar-like but biological material, which would be mixed with the Auroville red soil and would replace the layer of concrete to be overlaid with tiles which would disappear. The process had been approved by Roger: it was much less costly, easier for maintenance (no risk of fungus) and the look was quite similar to our red earth.

And then, what about the 12th/13th gardens? They were located inside predefined geographical areas. To have Japanese gardens:

- Sand could be brought (and removed or displaced one year later),*
- Stones could be brought and removed and displaced,*
- Trees and bamboos idem. No permanent trees: "nothing which can distract from far the view of the Matrimandir with its golden discs" (my memory again). Only trees which would arrive in pots/beds and would leave later,*
- Grass and lawn? Maybe they could be brought on square patches (and removed): less water would be needed.*
- Flowers? They were inside beds of pottery/wooden beds, which were assembled like puzzles. They would change every quarter/year "according to the consciousness of Aurovilians" (these words from Roger are engraved into my memory). These flowers beds (in pottery or wood or plastic or...) would not be laid only on the ground but could be laid on a temporary scaffolding in wood.*

Interesting, is it not? I am sure, although we do not have presently any record, that the Mother had been informed about these plans and had given her approval. Roger remembers quite well the concrete overlaid with tiles, thinks that he had designed two gardens and may be has shown them to the Mother (I was not aware myself). So many people have told to Roger that we would have to cross an oven before reaching the Matrimandir structure that Roger does not dare to talk again about it?

In this context, the last statement by the Mother on 12.2.1973 is gaining some more strength:

"February 12, 1973, commenting on a letter from Narad about the planting of trees around Matrimandir, and his feelings of emptiness and request for guidance to find a new way, Mother tells Shyam Sunder that the execution of the Matrimandir Gardens has already been told in detail to Roger, and that is what is to be done."

Alain

*

In 1972, Ruud and Alain (two Aurovilians) were given the responsibility to build the amphitheatre and Vikas (another Aurovilian) had the responsibility of the architecture (under Roger's supervision) and of the design and detailed drawings. Together with Ruud and Alain, they thought of what could be the activities to be performed in this amphitheater. The basic idea was that the amphitheater would have for Auroville the role that the playground has for the Ashram, in other words a place for lecture (the Mother gave biweekly talks), a place for collective meditation (which could be triggered off by music or readings – these were taking place twice a week also), a place for movies (every Saturday evening, there were films which exclude detrimental exposure such as: violence, sex, promotion of bad characters...), theatre. We did not imagine sport activities nor march past (which take place in the Play ground)

Vikas, on behalf of the three of us, wrote to the Mother to express our understanding of the future activities to be performed in the amphitheatre and asked for her comments since the drawings had to be prepared. The full letter was read by Shyamsundar to the Mother who said "C'est

bien". This letter and the Mother's answer are quoted in a Matrimandir diary by Ruud (which is unpublished).

That is why, on the East side, Vikas had provided two green rooms, one for men, one for women (these are now occupied by the air-cooling system of the Inner Room). On the West side, there was provision for a cinema room (with two windows inside the last step of the amphitheater to provide for camera projection) and on the stage, there were two holes so that two big poles could be planted and hold the screen for movies.

From this description, it is quite clear that the amphitheatre is meant to be a living center. All these activities are supposed to be performed in the evenings, at a time when the Matrimandir will be closed and would not disturb the main use of the inner room.

* * *

29 December 1972

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 257

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's notes:]

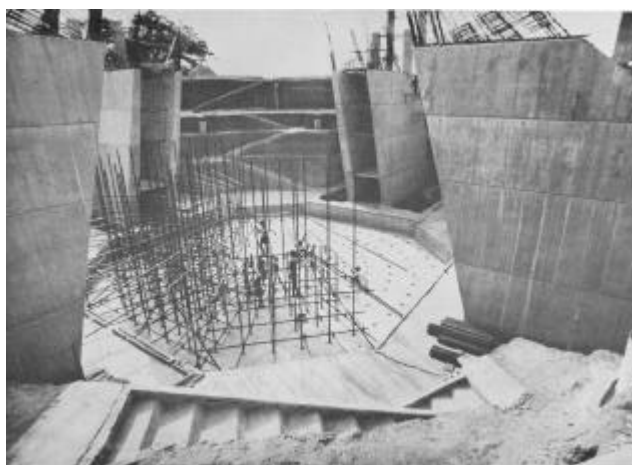
Piero's letter to Mother: He mentions two points about the Matrimandir construction:

- i) not getting drawings from Madras engineers [SERC] and Roger,*
- ii) his ill-health.*

Mother gave a blessing packet with Sri Aurobindo's picture.

Regarding drawings Shyam Sunder said he is no more hurt as before by these delays although the work suffers.

* * *



Preparation for work on the sphere started with the erection of a steel-pipe scaffolding , building up from the foundation

22 December 1972

Letters

Original language: English

Sources: AV Archives. Mother's reply only: Down Memory Lane, p. 255

[Letter from Mary Helen to Mother, dated 14th November 1972:]

Nov. 14, 1972

Divine Mother,

In the Matrimandir Gardens nursery I am now working on a small area as an experiment in Japanese landscaping using mainly ferns, begonias and orchids. For the future gardens of Auroville will a careful study of Japanese garden design be useful? Should the Japanese style be kept pure and traditional? or should their basic rules of harmony and balance be studied and applied in new ways to achieve the subtle beauty and unity and timelessness?

*Your child,
Mary Helen*

*Naturally, in the
Japanese way
22-11-72*

Divine Mother,

In the Matrimandir Garden nursery I am now working in a small area as an experiment in Japanese landscaping using mainly ferns, begonias and orchids. For the future gardens of Auroville will a careful study of Japanese garden design be useful?

Should the Japanese style be kept pure and traditional? Or should their basic rules of harmony and balance be studied and applied in new ways to achieve the subtle beauty and unity and timelessness?

*Your child
Mary Helen*

[Mother's response as noted by Shyam Sunder:]

Naturally in the Japanese way.

* * *

1973

Third Year of Phase 3

Implementation

9 January 1973

Letters

Original language: French (?)

Sources: Paulette

[Satprem replies to Piero who had asked him to make public his conversations with Mother on Matrimandir:]

As far as I can remember, those conversations with the Mother had been communicated personally to Roger with a special authorisation from the Mother. Those conversations weren't meant to be published and I don't think they are. If Roger, personally, wants to show them to certain workers, it is his own responsibility. As for the text that has been made public, it has been given all that could be given. The rest belongs to Mother's personal papers. (...)

* * *

January 1973

Letters

Original language: English

Sources: The Spirit of Auroville, pp. 153-154

[Huta writes to Mother:]

My dearest Mother,

For the New Year I pray for your constant Victory.

It is really sad that the work of Matrimandir is going on very slowly because there is no money and harmony.

I feel that building and breaking things cannot lead to the goal. It is a sheer waste of time, energy and money, and moreover it is a waste of your Consciousness and Force.

It was decided that the gardens around the Matrimandir should be grown along with the construction of the Matrimandir so that everything can take shape together and the whole thing can be done before your Birth Centenary which is not very far.

So far I have never said anything about having a secret chamber for you in the Shrine. Do you remember, Mother, several times you expressed your feeling about having the carved marble seats with satin and velvet cushions so that you can sit there? I feel that you must have your secret chamber in the Shrine. The Lord also will come – where will he sit?

This I am expressing from the occult and the spiritual point of view because the Supreme Truth will manifest there. The whole thing can be mysterious and occult. Mere outer appearance or a piece of art and architecture has no meaning and value. What has to be done must be done exactly according to the Lord's "Dream".

Mother, I have no right to suggest all this but since you had revealed so many things about the Matrimandir, I can dare to write knowing that you will understand me.

Mother, I am neither an Ashramite nor an Aurovilian but a child of yours and a lover of the Divine Beauty, Divine Love, Divine Peace and the Supreme Truth.

I am here because of you, your work and your Love.

I remain your child in all Truth and Love.

Huta

[*Mother replies to Huta:*]

My love is always with you.
For ever.

* * *

19 January 1973

Reported after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: MMTL, p. 32; The Spirit of Auroville, p. 154

[*Mother answers Huta who had asked again whether Matrimandir would be built according to Her vision:*]

Yes

* * *

22 January 1973

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 267

[*Entry in Shyam Sunder's Notes:*]

The Madras engineers [SERC] working upon the architectural design of Matrimandir say: "What is the assurance that there will be no further change¹?"

Mother said that Roger had not informed her of the changes. She approves that Shyam Sunder tells them through Chamanlal that there will be no further change without mutual consent.

* * *

26 January 1973

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 269

[*Entry in Shyam Sunder's Notes:*]

Chamanlal's letter about his visit to Madras for Matrimandir work. We have said that no major change will be done in the design without mutual consultation.

* * *

¹ The changes are quite obvious from the plans shown in this compilation. They concern mainly: 1) the floor of the inner chamber and the size of the holes in its centre (top and bottom); 2) the access ramps and internal staircases, 3) enclosing of the volume below the chamber in concrete walls or letting the inner skin be seen.

10 February 1973

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile at AV Archives

[*Narad writes to Mother:*]

Dearest Mother,

Today, I have met with Vikas to look at the area for tree plantation around Matrimandir.

Roger wants me to begin this work soon.

Mother, I am empty of all ideas. I have no plans, no ideas, no vision as to how this work should proceed and I pray to Thee, if it is Thy Will, to fill me with Thy vision so that all may go according to the Lord's Will.

I humbly wish to serve in the new way Mother, but I cannot do anything unless it is clearly Thy will.

At Thy Feet.

Narad.

* * *

12 February 1973

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 273

[*Regarding Narad's letter about tree plantation around Matrimandir, Shyam Sunder notes:*]

Mother said that the execution of the Matrimandir Gardens has been already told in detail to Roger. That is what has to be done.

Shyam Sunder has to remind Roger about the living place for Huta.

* * *

13 February 1973

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: AV Archives; Down Memory Lane, p. 273; The Spirit of Auroville, p. 155

[*Mother approves of Shyam Sunder's draft reply to Narad:*]

Narad,

I have read your letter of 10th to Mother.

Mother says that the Matrimandir gardens' execution has been already told in detail to Roger. That is what is to be done.

Shyam Sunder

* * *

Work progresses in the amphitheatre

* * *



15 February 1973

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: The Spirit of Auroville, pp. 155-56

[Alain Grandcolas and Ruud Lohman write to Mother:]

Divine Mother,

Roger asked us to go to Huta to discuss certain things regarding her house near Matrimandir as to how she wishes to have it built. She said that everything should be done exactly according to the Mother's wish. We asked her what was the Mother's wish. Then she said that the Mother wished her to be the guardian of the Matrimandir and her house is to be built between the Matrimandir and the banyan tree – on the island; it must be a tiny and simple house. The Mother has already explained the plan to Roger and Shyam Sunder. And for the rest Huta said everything is explained, including the copies of the Mother's letters regarding the Matrimandir and Auroville, in the file which is given to Shyam Sunder according to the Mother's wish and approval. Now Shyam Sunder has given the file to Roger to study.

Now, in the present plans of the Matrimandir we can easily include Huta's house in one of the 12 huge petals, which are surrounding the Matrimandir, over one of the meditation rooms, so that she can enter the Matrimandir whenever she wants to check one thing or another – and this is exactly between Matrimandir and the banyan as You have wished. Now shall we go ahead with this plan? We wish to have Your approval and guidance.

Also, Huta spoke firmly and insisted to have two secret chambers inside the Matrimandir itself – one for the Mother and the other one for the Lord – with carved marble seats with velvet and satin cushions. In the present plans these chambers are not shown but while looking at the brochure of the Matrimandir, we can say they can easily be built – facing each other on the top floor of the Matrimandir and this will look really wonderful. When we showed the plans and spoke to Huta about this possibility, she was extremely happy and satisfied.

Huta also said how practical the Mother is: when She did the sketch of the Matrimandir, She did not forget to show in Her drawing the small box-room to keep dusters and things like that to clean the Matrimandir. So Huta said that these minor things are also to be considered. And we found that there is a place for this small room also. Like this everything can be done easily.

Mother, please guide us as to how You wish Your rooms to be built and how the marble seats are to be carved and arranged in the rooms, so that Roger and we can do accordingly.

We await Your kind blessings and Force to make this plan and project materialised exactly according to Your Vision and Will in all Truth and Love.

*Your children
Alain, Ruud.*

* * *

16 February 1973

Reported

Original language: English

Sources: The Spirit of Auroville, p. 158

[Shyam Sunder informs Huta that Mother had reminded him once again to tell Roger about her house at Matrimandir. So he passes on to Roger the file he had received from Huta on 6.11.72.]

*

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile at AV Archives; The Spirit of Auroville, p. 157

[Huta writes to Roger:]

Dear Roger,

It is very nice of you to have asked Alain and Ruud to come to me yesterday evening to discuss my house near the Matrimandir. I have explained to them all that the Mother wished and decided. Moreover, everything is stated in the file which Shyam Sunder has given to you.

Alain and Ruud wrote a letter to the Mother which I hope you read to her.

Frankly speaking, I have no will of my own – whatever she has decided for me and whatever she wants me to be – I will be. She has appointed me the guardian of the Matrimandir and repeatedly told me about my having a house very close to the Matrimandir so that I can look after the Matrimandir according to her wish and command. She told me that she had already explained the plan of my house to you in July last year. She also spoke three times to Shyam Sunder about the same thing. So I have nothing more to say regarding the matter except that I leave it to the Mother and to you to do the best.

But I am very particular and feeling strongly all that the Mother told me about her rooms in the Matrimandir itself on the top floor, which I may call the "secret chambers". I shall be very happy if Her rooms will be in the Matrimandir – for She will surely go there one day.² I trust you and I feel sure that you will organise and plan out everything wonderfully, exactly according to the Mother's Will – in an occult and mysterious way. And we all pray for the Victory of the Truth.

Thank you ever so much

*With kindest regards, yours sincerely
Huta*

* * *

² In her book, instead of this sentence, Huta wrote: *She must have her rooms – for she will surely go there one day.*

15 March 1973

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Roger's personal archives

[After meeting with Mother, Roger wrote down the following³:]

Vu Mère le 15 mars 73
au sujet du Matrimandir
En ce qui concerne les chambres
secretes Mère a dit que cette
idée était ancienne et n'avait
pas de raison d'être maintenant
dans le projet retenu du Matrimandir.
Lui ayant dit toutefois que cette
possibilité était réalisable si elle
le désirait encore maintenant
dans le projet actuel, et qu'elle
qu'elle pourrait y venir lorsqu'elle
aimerait.
Ce n'est pas, je ne crois pas dans mon intention -

Seen Mother on March 15th
1973

About Matrimandir.

Concerning the secret chambers, Mother said that this idea was old and there was no reason for keeping it in the actual project of Matrimandir.

Having told her that, however, this possibility was feasible if she still wished it now in the actual project, and ~~that~~ she that she could come there when she wants, or for.....

[Mother replied:]

I don't believe it. It is not in my intention.

*

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: facsimile at AV Archives; The Spirit of Auroville, p. 157

[Underneath Huta's letter dated 16.02.73, Roger wrote with his hand in French⁴ what Mother told him:]

That was long ago, at the beginning. The important thing is to plan a room for her in the gardens.

The Mother

15 March 1973

* * *

³ Vu Mère au sujet du Matrimandir.

En ce qui concerne les chambres secrètes, Mère dit que cette idée était ancienne et n'avait pas de raison d'être maintenant dans le projet retenu du Matrimandir. Lui ayant dit toutefois que cette possibilité était réalisable si elle le désirait encore maintenant dans le projet actuel et qu'elle pourrait y venir lorsqu'elle aimerait, ou....

Mère répond:

Ce n'est pas, je ne crois pas dans mon intention.

⁴ C'était il y a longtemps au début. L'important c'est de prévoir une pièce pour elle dans les jardins.?

Mère, le 15 mars 1973

26 March 1973

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: The Spirit of Auroville, p. 159

[Note from Roger; copy of which was sent by Roger to Huta:]

Further to the letter of Huta and the different questions asked by a few Aurovilians concerning the Matrimandir, particularly on the subject of the secret chambers, The Mother has said that these were envisaged at one time but are not retained in the actual project.

The Mother has confirmed that the sole important thing is the lodging foreseen for the guardian within the framework of the gardens around Matrimandir.

Roger

* * *

28 March 1973

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: The Spirit of Auroville, p. 161

My dearest Mother,

I have received this note⁵ from Roger through Shyam Sunder. First point: Whatever You have decided for the Matrimandir is absolutely right because You know much more about the matter than anybody else does.

Second point: You had appointed me the guardian of the Matrimandir in 1965 – and I am grateful to You for that – but now I truly pray to You to release me from this appointment because I do not really deserve anything, and I do not know what work I have to do there, also there are many reasons and complications which prevent me from going there.

For some time I had been feeling to write to You all this before I received this note. I am really sorry that I shall not be able to be the guardian – I am helpless and hopeless. Please do forgive me. There are many capable people who can carry out this wonderful mission according to Your will.

Finally, I pray to You to get arranged and restored my present house by Udar or Phany. There are white ants and it needs repairs and whitewash which has not been done for quite a number of years.

I will do Your work, which is quite a lot, in my apartment, and my temple is my heart where the Divine call be realised by His Grace.

Mother, I love You and I trust You, knowing that You will surely lead me to my goal by fulfilling my soul's aspiration. Ever Yours

Huta

[Huta adds that Vasudha, Mother's personal attendant, read out this letter to Mother and that She remained in trance and said nothing except that she sent a blessing-packet through Vasudha.]

* * *

⁵ Dated 26 March 1973

28 April 1973

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: The Spirit of Auroville, pp. 161-62

My dearest Mother,

I have been always frank with You because You are my true Mother and I know that You understand me perfectly well. What You have said about the secret chambers in the Matrimandir, is perfectly right. I myself feel within me that the Supreme Lord and the Supreme Mother do not need any human devices. So it is all right. But I hope that the beautiful gardens, rockeries, small waterfalls and tall trees will be retained.

You have confirmed to build my house in the framework of the gardens. But let me inform you and clear this matter, that two months back or so Alain and Ruud came to me according to Roger's instructions. They showed me the plan and spoke to me that Roger had told them that somehow Roger and these people would accommodate me in one of the rooms of the Reception Building which would be quite far from the Matrimandir – at the end of the garden. If Roger explained to you this framework of the gardens, then he means exactly that, and perhaps from his point of view I am supposed to be a receptionist and not the guardian of the Matrimandir.

You have appointed me a guardian of the Matrimandir, and You told me and wrote to me several times that my tiny house would be very close to the Matrimandir. How can I remain very far if I have to look after the Shrine? And I cannot be a receptionist because I do not know the job.

It is understood from within that it is out of the question to have my house in one of the petals of the Matrimandir, because the Truth must stand by itself – above everything and everyone. But to be reasonable, isn't it proper to have a very small house surrounded by trees and flowers somewhere near the Matrimandir? With all my heart and soul I do aspire to remain near the Shrine and serve the Truth and do the work whatever You command, but please don't send me far.

I am sure You will plan out everything regarding my life and work. And You will surely fulfil the aspiration of my soul.

With love.

Ever Yours

Huta

[Huta does not say anything about the outcome of this letter.]

* * *

4 May 1973

Notes written after a conversation

Original language: English

Sources: Down Memory Lane, p. 287

[Entry in Shyam Sunder's Notes:]

Madanlal Himatsingka's letter regarding funds for Matrimandir. He feels that he should work for it.

Very good, I am happy over the proposal. All my force is with you.

* * *

6 May 1973

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: The Spirit of Auroville, pp. 162-63; facsimile at AV Archives

[After meeting with Roger and Shyam Sunder on Mother's terrace, and talking about her house near Matrimandir, Huta sends this letter to Mother, which was read to her on 10th.:]

My dearest Mother,

I had a talk with Roger regarding my house and the Matrimandir. Shyam Sunder also was present. Roger is willing to give a location to my residence in the Matrimandir area – nearest the Matrimandir. But Roger is anxious and would like to know clearly and precisely the work I am expected to do by the Divine Mother as the guardian of the Matrimandir. Then and then only Roger can proceed further and can plan out everything accordingly. Roger said that there are many things which are to be done in the Matrimandir as it is a very huge thing.

- 1. Control of visitors – (as The Mother has said that the admission will be restricted).*
- 2. Information of the work in the Matrimandir itself when it is ready.*
- 3. Cleaning and maintenance.*
- 4. Priestess of Matrimandir – That is just to watch and see!*

Finally, Roger said that everything would be possible for him to arrange once my work as guardian would be decided by the Divine Mother, and he is ready to do exactly according to The Mother's Will.

Roger is going to Paris on Saturday, so it is very important that he should know as soon as possible regarding the matter so that he could do the needful by working out everything according to Your instructions.

Indeed, I too am wondering what work I shall have to do over there. Nevertheless, whatever You have willed for my soul and its aspiration, let it be done. And I will with all my heart carry out Your command in all Truth and Love.

With love and kisses.

Huta

* * *

10 May 1973

Note written after a conversation

Original language: French

Sources: Roger's personal archives

[After meeting Mother,
Roger wrote down⁶:]

u Mer. le 1^{er} mai . 73
au sujet UTA. Dans les premiers
temps ~~de~~ du Matrimandir il était
prévu de placer une maison pour elle
dans les jardins autour du Matrimandir.
Mais il y a des siècles, la conception
du Matrimandir a maintenant changé
alors
- c'est encore possible
très bien alors. ce qu'elle doit faire
des clefs du Matrimandir! C'est ça, c'est très bien

Seen Mother on 11th May 1973.

Concerning Huta.

During Matrimandir's early days, it was foreseen to locate a house for her in the gardens around Matrimandir; but this was centuries ago. Matrimandir's conception is now entirely changed. So?⁷

Roger: *It is still possible.*

Very good. What she should do?

I do not know, we shall see.

Roger: *The keys of Matrimandir!*

That's it, it is very good.

*

Reported

Original language: English

Sources: MMTL, p. 32; The Spirit of Auroville, p. 163

[Vasudha told Huta that Mother said to Roger in front of her:]

She [Huta] will keep the keys of the Matrimandir. She will open and close the Matrimandir, and she will also see whether everything is all right in the Matrimandir.

* * *

⁶ Au sujet d'Huta. Dans les premiers temps du Matrimandir il était prévu de placer une maison pour elle dans les jardins autour du Matrimandir. Mais il y a des siècles, la conception du Matrimandir a maintenant changée alors...

C'est encore possible.

Très bien alors. Ce qu'elle doit faire. J'en sais rien. On verra.

Les clefs du Matrimandir! C'est ça, c'est très bien.

⁷ It is not clear whether Mother or Roger said these three lines.

11 May 1973

Reported

Original language: English

Sources: The Spirit of Auroville, pp. 163-64

[Huta writes that the next day she went to Mother and expressed her profound gratitude, and prayed to her to make her worthy of the Supreme Truth, in her Light and Love. Huta adds that Mother went into a trance for a brief while and then pressed her hands. She concludes by saying that she left with mixed feelings.]

*

[Huta reports that in the evening she asked Vasudha to read again to Mother the letter she had sent her on 28th March. As a result, Vasudha came to her house with Mother's blessing packet and told Huta: "Huta, you know, the Mother cannot see properly and cannot possibly write to you, because she is too weak. She listened attentively to your letter which I read to her loudly. Then she went into a trance for a long time. After that she asked me to give you her blessing packet and convey this message to you":]

I know this. Tell her that this is better like that. My love and blessings are always with her.

[Vasudha added: So, Huta, Mother has granted your prayer.⁸]

[Huta writes: "My eyes were filled with tears of relief and gratitude. I felt that my whole being was free"; she adds that she never uttered a word of her release to people concerned, her own people and her friends. She concludes by saying that she watched and waited for the proper time to act.⁹]

* * *

26 May 1973

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: The Spirit of Auroville, p. 168

[Shyam Sunder writes to Huta:]

Dear Huta,

...

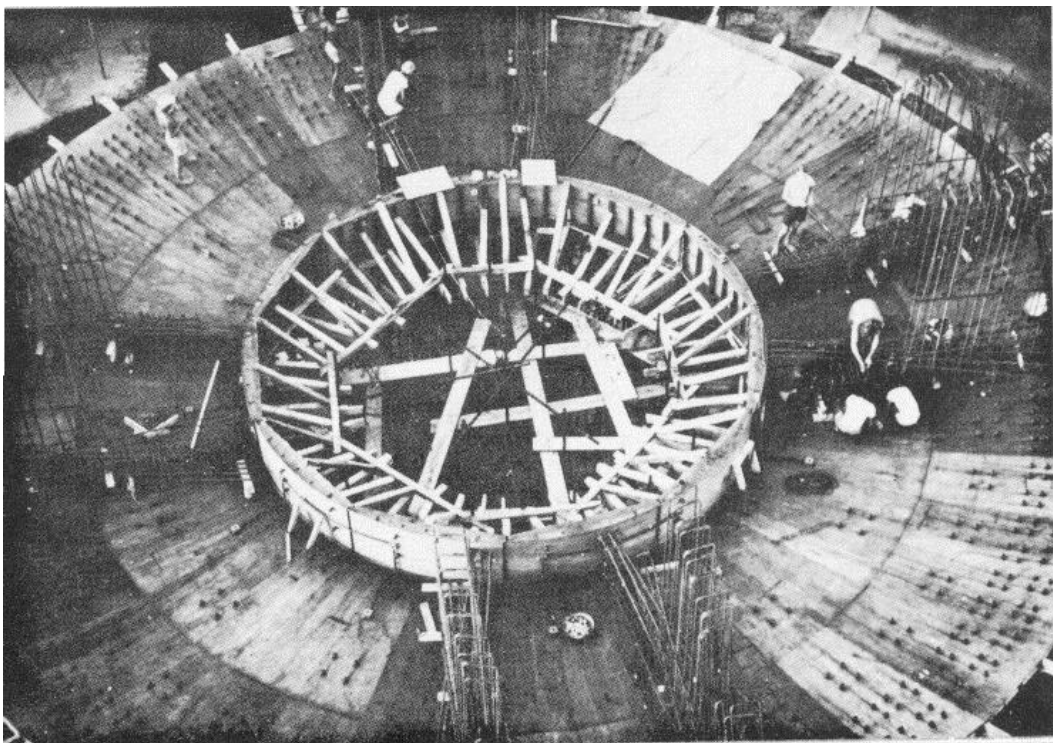
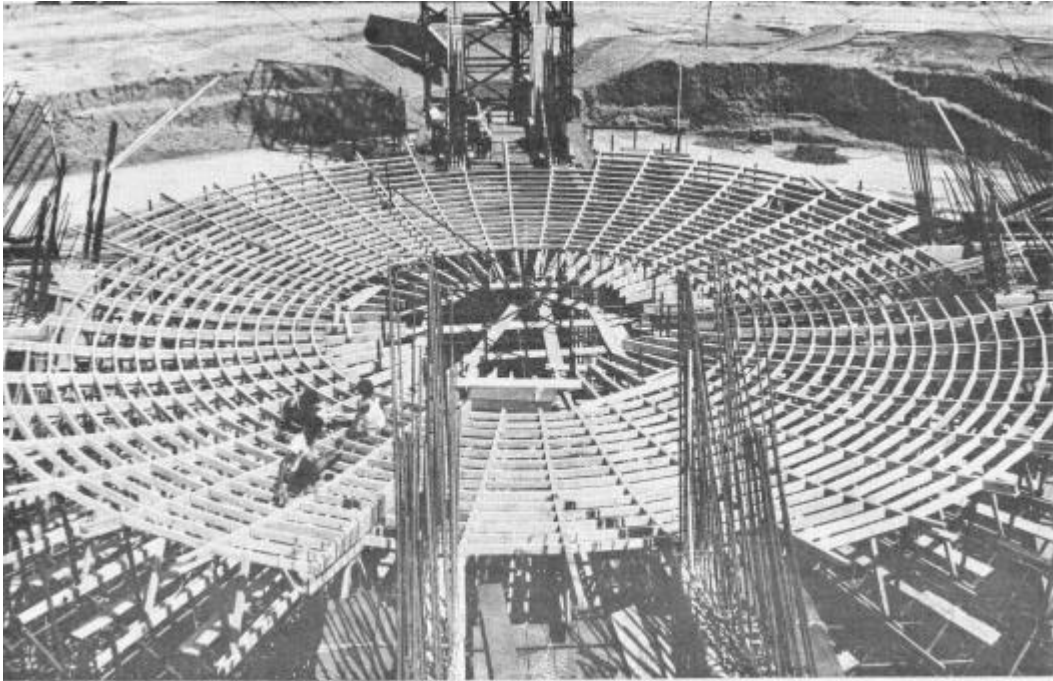
The architectural tangle about the construction of Matrimandir is not yet solved. It seems that something will happen soon. I am praying for it.

Shyam Sunder

* * *

⁸ Of being relieved from the guardianship of Matrimandir.

⁹ Huta kept quiet for more than 20 years before informing all those concerned that her house wasn't needed any more. It is only in the nineties that she came out publicly about her resignation in an article in *Mother India*.



Work progressing on the shuttering of the 1st slab, which joins the 4 pillars

* * *

June 1973

Excerpt from a book

Original language: English

Sources: *Auroville, the first six years*, by Savitra, p. 85

[Savitra's description of the concreting:]

Temporary propping towers of reinforced concrete emplaced on pillars for rigid supports of extending ribs until skeletal structure is self-supporting by means of 1st and 2nd level tie-slabs.

Hoist towers, resembling launch towers, erected beside pillars to provide scaffolding for ribs and winch to lift materials. Tower 17 m. above ground, 9 m. below ground.

Tubular scaffolding support for 1st level slab under assemblage. 8 km of pipe. 6,000 joint clips used on 280 vertical props to support calculated 400-ton load, of lower region of sphere.

New workshop (200 m²) constructed for new tools and machinery.

* * *

7 September 1973

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: *The Spirit of Auroville*, p. 168

[Letter from Shyam Sunder to Huta:]

Dear Huta,

Yesterday evening we were at the Matrimandir but it was not possible to see your place with Roger. Sorry. Roger is leaving on 10th for three weeks.

Shyam Sunder

* * *

22 October 1973

Letter

Original language: English

Sources: *The Spirit of Auroville*, p. 168

[Letter from Shyam Sunder to Huta:]

Dear Huta,

Today I went with Roger to Matrimandir. An architect [Vikas] is working for finding the exact spot for your construction. As soon as it is done I will see it and tell you about it. The design also is starting.

Shyam Sunder

* * *

September 1973

Excerpt from a report pertaining to Matrimandir

[Narad believes that this report was drafted by Roger's office. In any case, in 2002 he wrote to a friend that it is on this report that he based his work in the gardens.]

5. The First Concept¹⁰

What the Mother has said about the gardens?

The Matrimandir Gardens comprise two distinct but interrelated areas, the central thirteen gardens of the Matrimandir Area, and the Outer Gardens which surround the Matrimandir Area, in a ring approximately 100 meters wide. These Outer Gardens, though defined and contained by the encircling urban area, extend into the urban area, penetrating it on the ground, through and over the buildings. The continuity of form and movement into the urban area, and the penetration of the urban area into the Outer Gardens, make the two interdependent. Furthermore, this interpenetration extends right through the urban area to its outside perimeter, where the city will be bounded by a green belt, thus creating the possibility of the continuity of trees and water from outside, through the city, to the centre, with opportunity to move, by boat maybe, or on foot, right through the city without leaving the shade of trees or the water.

It becomes evident that there are three related areas:

- 1. **The Matrimandir Area**, with only the Banyan Tree, and the thirteen gardens which will contain a constantly changing array of flowers, set inside an oval sculpted as shown in Figure 2, like concentric waves of moulded earth around the Matrimandir. The area is formalistic (twelve radiating paths from the centre-piece, The Matrimandir; concentric paths and wave-form land shaped to give exclusive predominance to the Matrimandir).*
- 2. **The Outer Gardens**, containing and defining the Matrimandir Area, encircling it with water and trees so that it forms an island. This outer garden area will be informal, natural but controlled in its planting. The Water body will be a circular progression of space, now narrow like a stream or canal, now wide like a lake, with islets, and overhanging trees. The overall effect of form, created by the trees, their varying height and colours and forms, and by the shaping of the earth to form artificial hills and valleys, modest in scale but significant in effect, will be to contain the Matrimandir Area within a saucer, and thereby heighten its emphasis like a pearl in a shell.*
- 3. **The area adjacent to buildings**, both those of the perimeter of the Outer Gardens, and where the gardens penetrate the urban area, in which the trees, and water soften the edges of the buildings, weaving through the urban space, over it and into it. This, in effect, concerns the whole of the landscaping of the urban area, whose architectural design cannot be conceived in isolation of the landscaping.*

This area is not dealt with in this report, although suggested treatment of this landscaping is discussed.

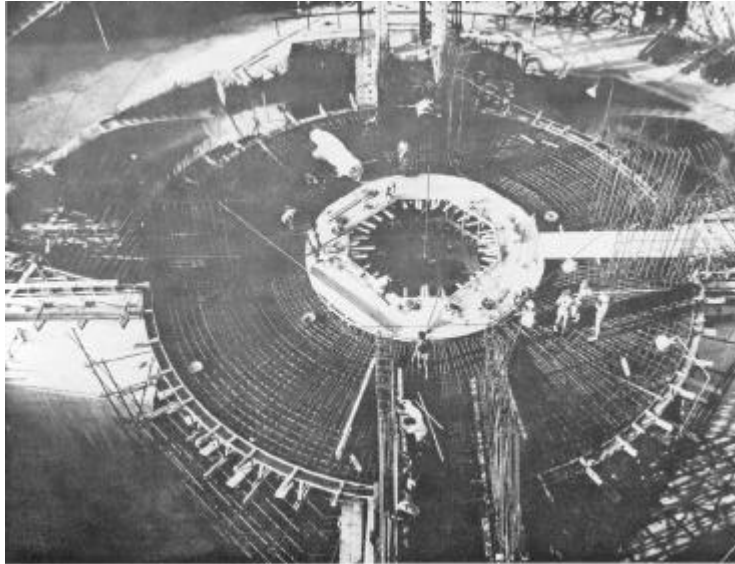
* * *

¹⁰ As said, this page is part of a much longer report. "First concept" seems to imply that there were other concepts.

11 November 1973

Sources: *Matrimandir*, Auropublications, p. 55

[The steel reinforcement was laid and concreting of the 1st slab of the sphere and the summits of the four pillars begins with a meditation and goes on for six days during monsoon season.]

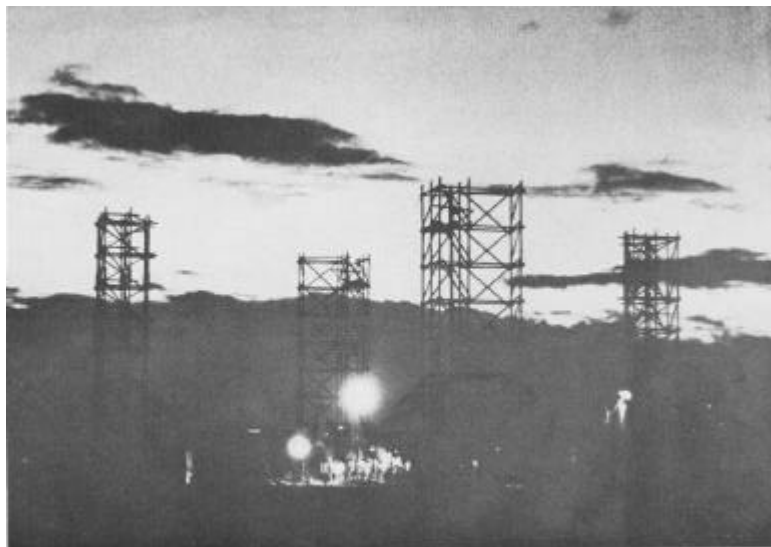


* * *

17 November 1973

Sources: *Matrimandir*, Auropublications, p. 56

[This monumental concreting is completed at the West pillar summit at 7.25 p.m. Mother leaves Her body at 7.25 p.m. – exactly at the same time.]



* * *