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 [Arimdam, 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 Peace[1] *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. Let us also note that it will take a year for Mother to take the decision to build Matrimandir.

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.

* * *

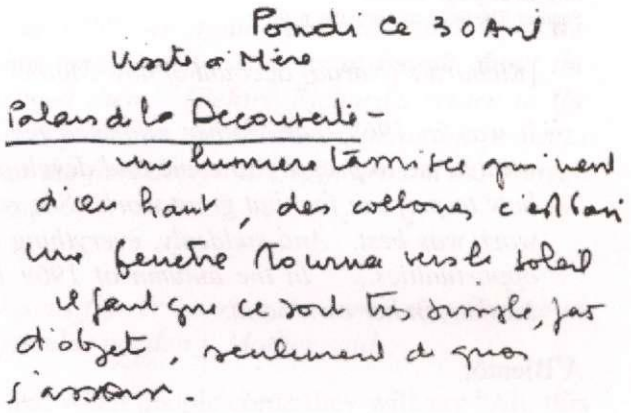
[2] According to Roger's notes, in 1969, he was in Pondicherry until February 19th and expected to be back on 23rd if sufficient land had been bought. His last notes during this period end on February 13th and resume on April 25th.

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 Palace[3]
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.



* * *

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 [Udar] 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

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 architect[8], 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] Note that Mother was under the impression that Paolo was an architect; which is not true. He is 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 land[9]. 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 idea[10], 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 plant[11], 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 sunlight 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...

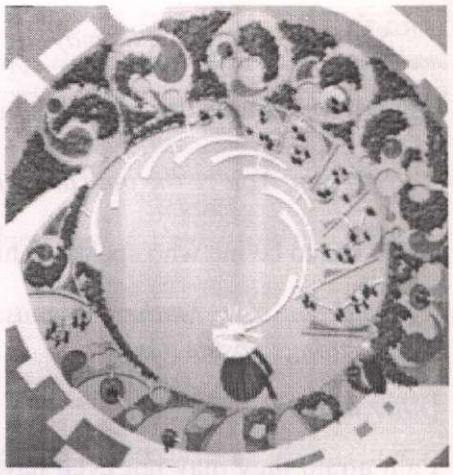
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[9] Indeed, it is only after the Foundation Stone Ceremony (21.02.71) that the required land will be purchased.

[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, as we have already seen, 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] Note that this means that there is no need to build 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 garden[15]: 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.

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[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 a l'autre rive. Et l'autre rive serait entièrement des jardins tout autour. Et ces jardins… nous avons pensé a 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 a coté)... de cette chose et avec l'arbre, le Banian qui est là. C'est celà 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] Inner Garden = Garden on the island. Mother had indeed asked Narad to start working on the "Garden of Unity".

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 while Roger stayed and worked on the design of Matrimandir. Within less than 3 months, Roger will come up with 5 models and Mother selected one of them.

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:*]

~~Vu Mère~~

Note à Mère du 1 janvier ~~70~~

Mère m'a dit avec précision ce matin
Je veux te dire aujourd'hui quelque chose
sur Auroville -
J'ai depuis quelque temps clairement
la devant mes yeux, la vue du centre -
Il y a une grande surface couverte
avec quatre colonnes assez hautes 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 ~~avant tout~~, l'argent
ne viendra que lorsque cela sera construit -
Il suffirait si l'on pouvait de construire
que l'intérieur ~~soit fait~~, à l'extérieur après
à l'intérieur il n'y aurait
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 des 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

Saw Mo

Note to Mother dated 1 January 70

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 columns[1], 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 <u>think</u> about it?

* * *

[1] Note that two days later, on Jan. 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 day[2] 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*].

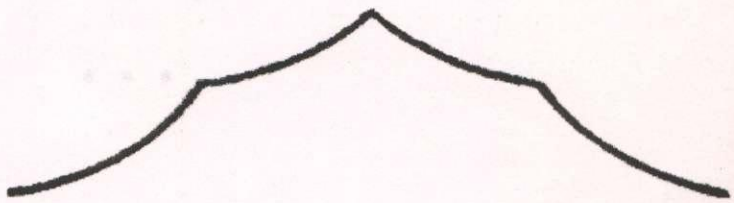
Satprem: Maybe you should tell Paolo about it?

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 concentrate[3].
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 a 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" atmosphere[4].
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 a fait dans l'atmosphere «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[5] and it was then that The Mother asked me to start Sri Aurobindo's Action[6]. 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[7] and so I feel that there is a strong connection between the two.

It was on the 3rd January, 1970 that Mother spoke of the great vision She had to Roger[8], 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 <u>exactly</u> 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.

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[5] Udar is mistaken, this descent took place exactly one year earlier, on New Year's night 1969.
[6] "Sri Aurobindo's Action" was registered as a "Society" on 17th June 1970.
[7] From Mother's conversation with Satprem on 3rd, it would seem that Mother had this vision during the night of 2nd.
[8] 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 outside[9].

*

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 question[10] *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.*[11]

With regard to the Dome itself, The Mother said very definitively that it must be a Gold Dome. It seems that in the Auroville Committee[12]*, 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.*

* * *

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[9] This point refers to a debate that was raging in 1977 about the dimensions of the Chamber.

[10] 17 years after the event, 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.

[11] This does not seem very plausible as explained in the compiler's "Study of Matrimandir's Inner Chamber".

[12] 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 and its golden discs.

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 will Roger present on 24th March 1970 four models (out of five), which are neither domes, nor golden?

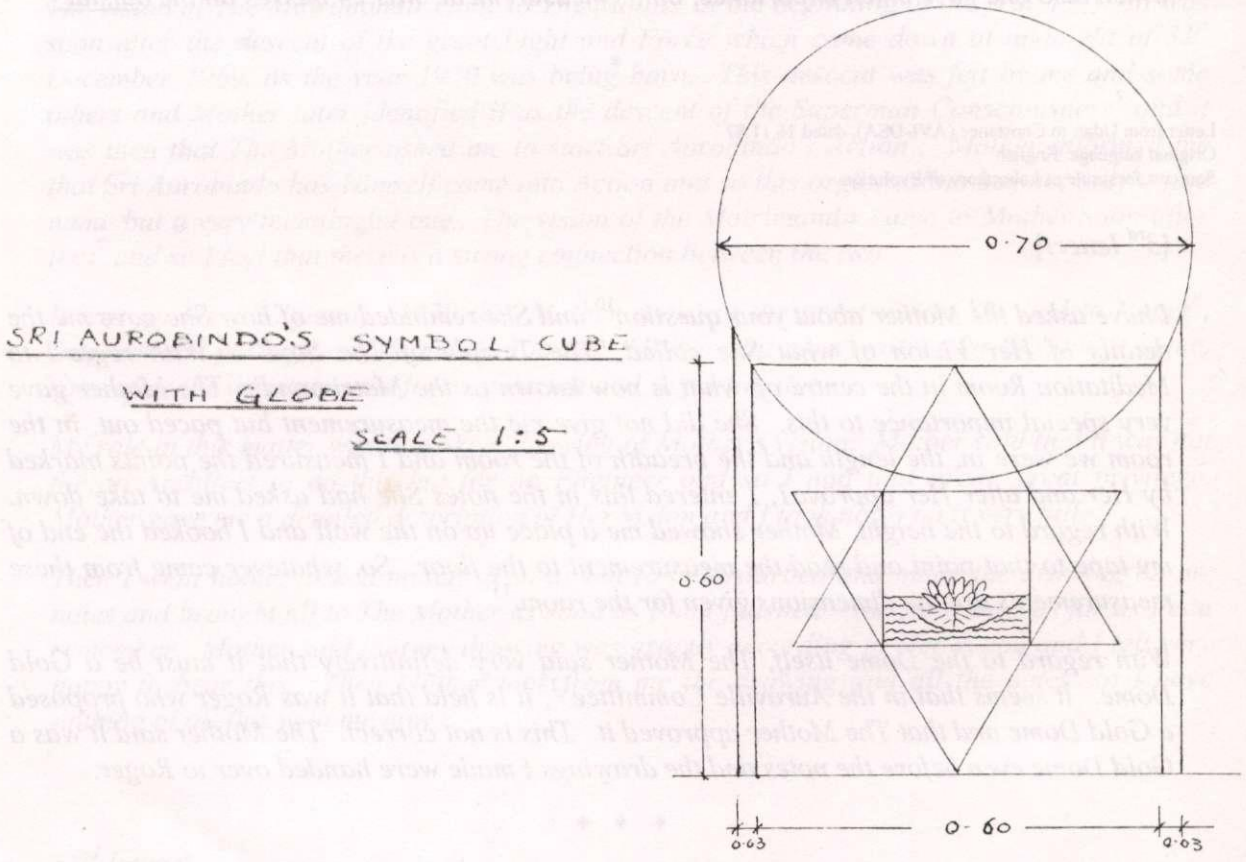
Plans

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*[13] *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.*[14]]



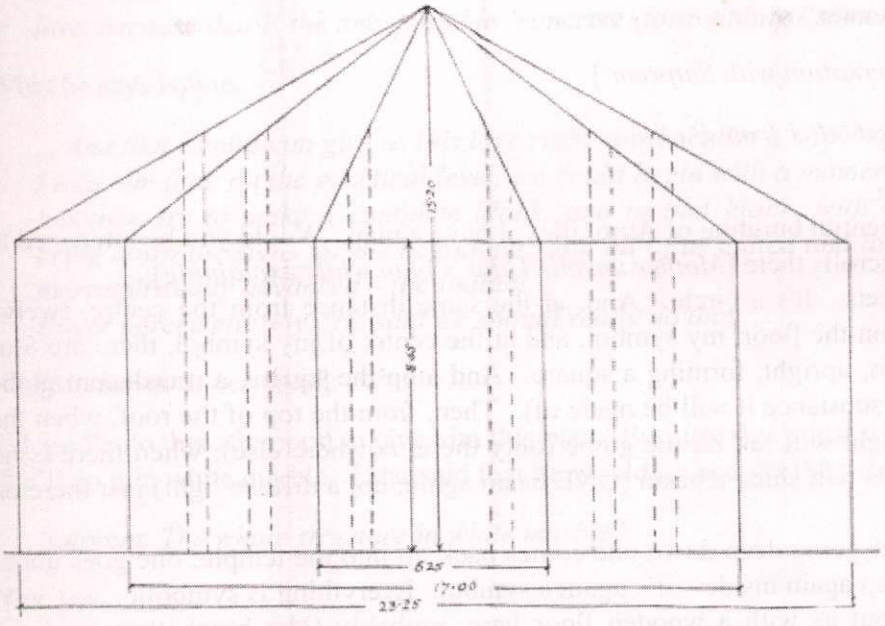
[13] The Symbol of Sri Aurobindo drawn here by Udar (obviously by mistake) was in-use from 1933 to 1962. Udar should have drawn the modified symbol – in-use since 1964.
Note that this drawing does not show at all which areas of the cube one can see-though.

[14] Readers interested to know more about Udar's drawings can refer to the compiler's "Study of Mother's Known Words pertaining to Matrimandir's Inner Chamber".

MATRIMANDIR

ELEVATION

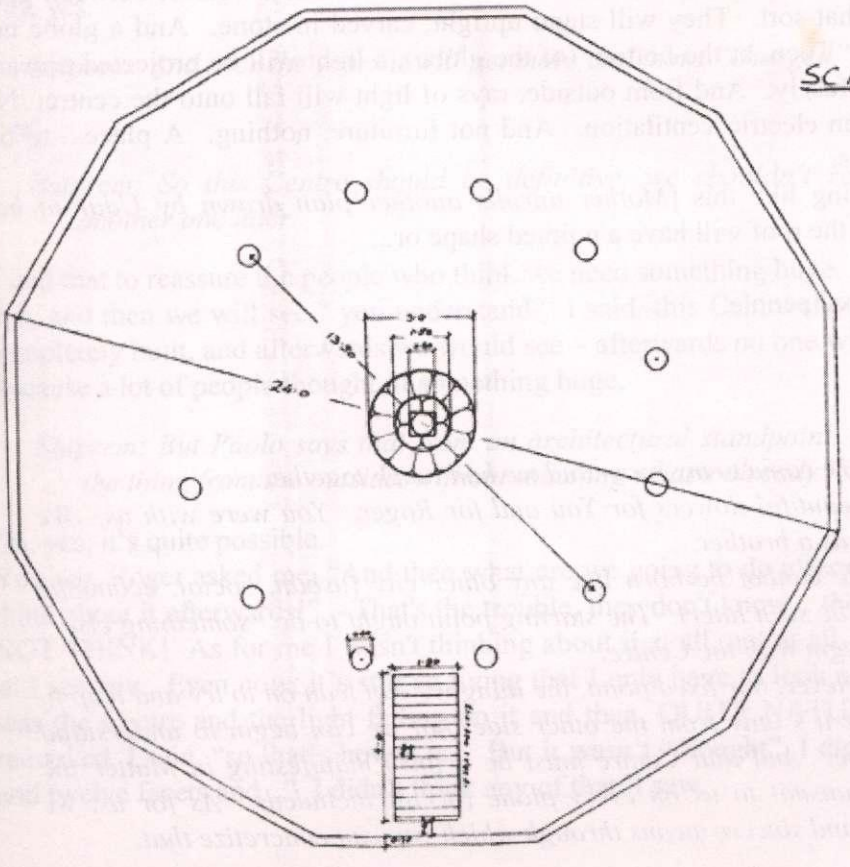
SCALE 1:50



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 island[15]...

* * *

[15] 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?

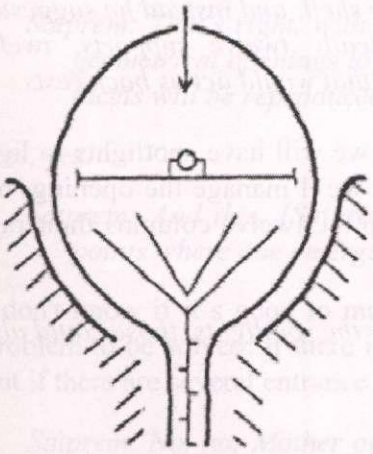
Satprem: I had a visit from Paolo and Nata... There are two things. But first there is the plan of the Centre – to be precise, of the outside of the Centre.

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.

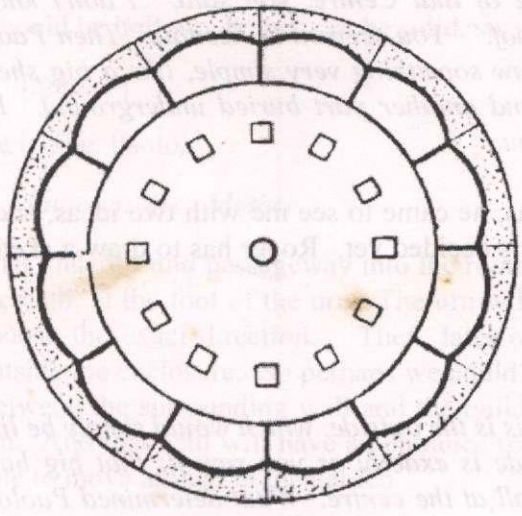
Ah! Paolo told him! Ah, that's why.

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 globe[16]*. But could some more distance be kept for the outer circle? The plan has 24 m in diameter, and 15.20 meters in height.*

[16] 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 apart[17].

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?"

[17] 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 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.

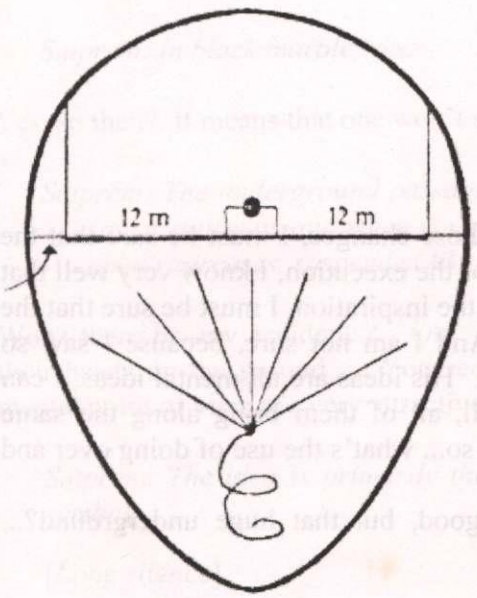
Satprem: His idea was to reproduce Brahman's egg – you know, the primeval egg – so that the temple would represent the primeval egg.

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 high[18]. 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.

[18] Mother is mistaken here. 15.20 metres is the height mentioned on Udar's drawing and She just said it correctly.

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 walls[19].

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 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

[19] 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 Sinh, 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*]

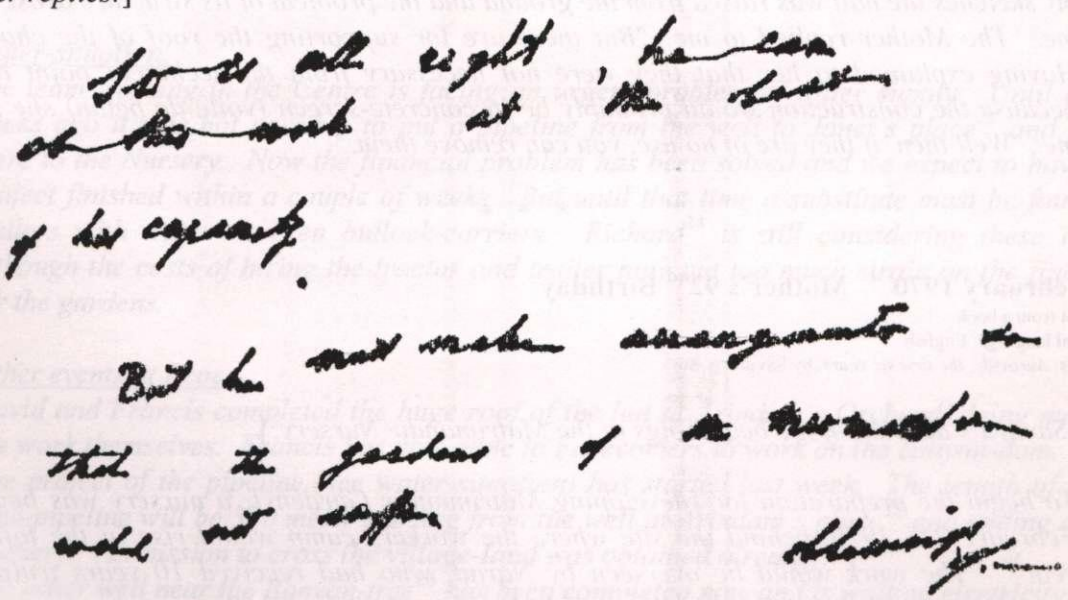
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January 1970
Letter
Original language: English
Sources: facsimile at AV Archives; The Spirit of Auroville, p. 93

[*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:*]



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 year[20]*. 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.*[21]

* * *

[20] This particular site was chosen because it was the only plot with trees (i.e. mango and jack-fruit trees) in the area.
[21] 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 hut[22]*, 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 place[23] *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. Richard*[24] *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 place[25] *and ending at the Nursery. Permission to cross the village-land was obtained already.*
The other well near the Banyan-tree[26] *has been completed now and is waiting electricity.*

---

[22] Howard will be later known as Amrit.
[23] At that time, Janet's place was where the Orchids are now in Matrimandir Nursery.
[24] This Richard will be later known as Narad.
[25] 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.
[26] This well which was dug in the future "Garden of Unity" is still in use.

Four newcomers arrived lately at Peace. Eduard and Joscilyn[27]*, 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.

* * *

January- February 1970
Newsletter to friends
Original language: English
Sources: facsimile at AV Archives;

[*Second part of the newsletter dated 3rd April 1970, written to friends by Richard and Anie Eggenberger; the first part of which we reproduced in this document at the date 18th December 1969 and the third part at the date 3rd April 1970:*]

On January 17th we brought a new force of work to the Center which had fallen somewhat into a state of inertia and neglect. We began by weeding, grading and leveling the area around the rock garden, grading the embankment and filling in the holes created through erosion during the monsoon. Between that time and the February 28th celebration, we planted approximately 10,000 cuttings of "Sri Aurobindo's Compassion" (Portulaca) which are thriving beautifully but must be watered everyday, by hand, as there is no other method for supplying water to that area at the moment.

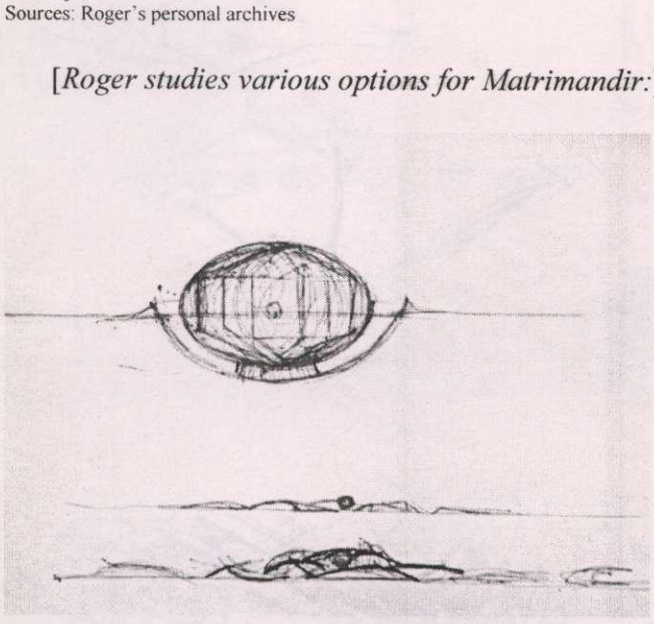
One evening before a UNESCO official [Mme. Herzog] was to arrive, Richard was told that the amphitheater must be graded and leveled by the next morning at l0.00, so he and a crew of workers worked an all-night shift to prepare the area for her visit. The section around the urn was painted an earth color and the amphitheater was completed. The result was an overnight miracle. For February 28th we secured around 60 potted plants which were arranged free form around the banyan tree for that day. Afterwards they were moved to the nursery which we set up just prior to the 28th. Also during this time the Geological Survey of India was at the Center for about 3 weeks boring a well at a site designated by Mother. Each day Richard made about twelve trips, by tractor, to the well at "Arindam" supplying them with barrels of water as they used a type of pressed mud to bore the well. The project was completed and water was struck at a depth of 500', yielding about 5,000 gallons per hour. We await the installation of electricity at the center as this pump will be generated by electrical power.

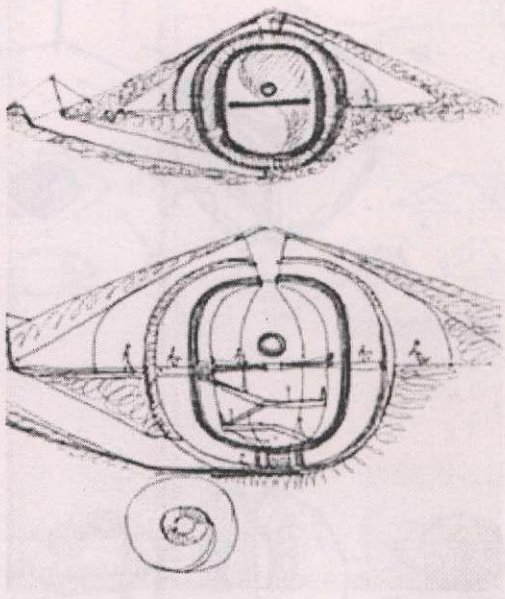
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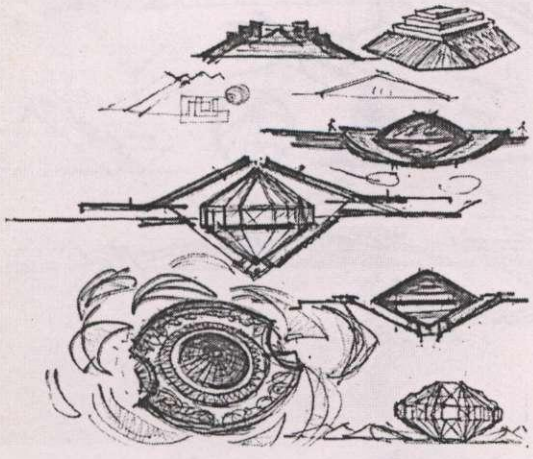
[27] These two names are spelled like this by Anie.

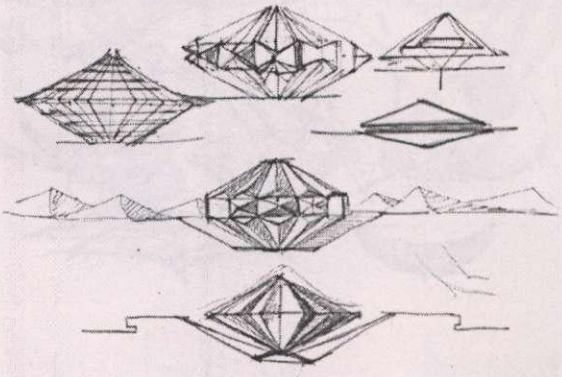
Early 1970
Sources: Roger's personal archives

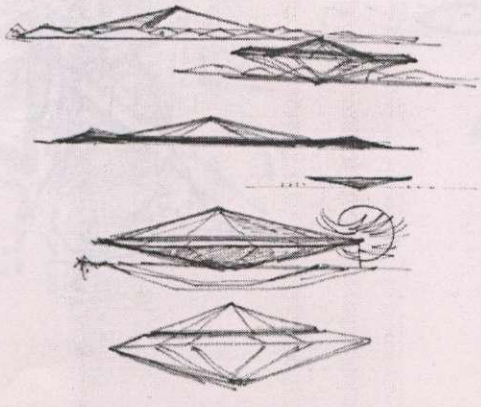
[*Roger studies various options for Matrimandir:*]

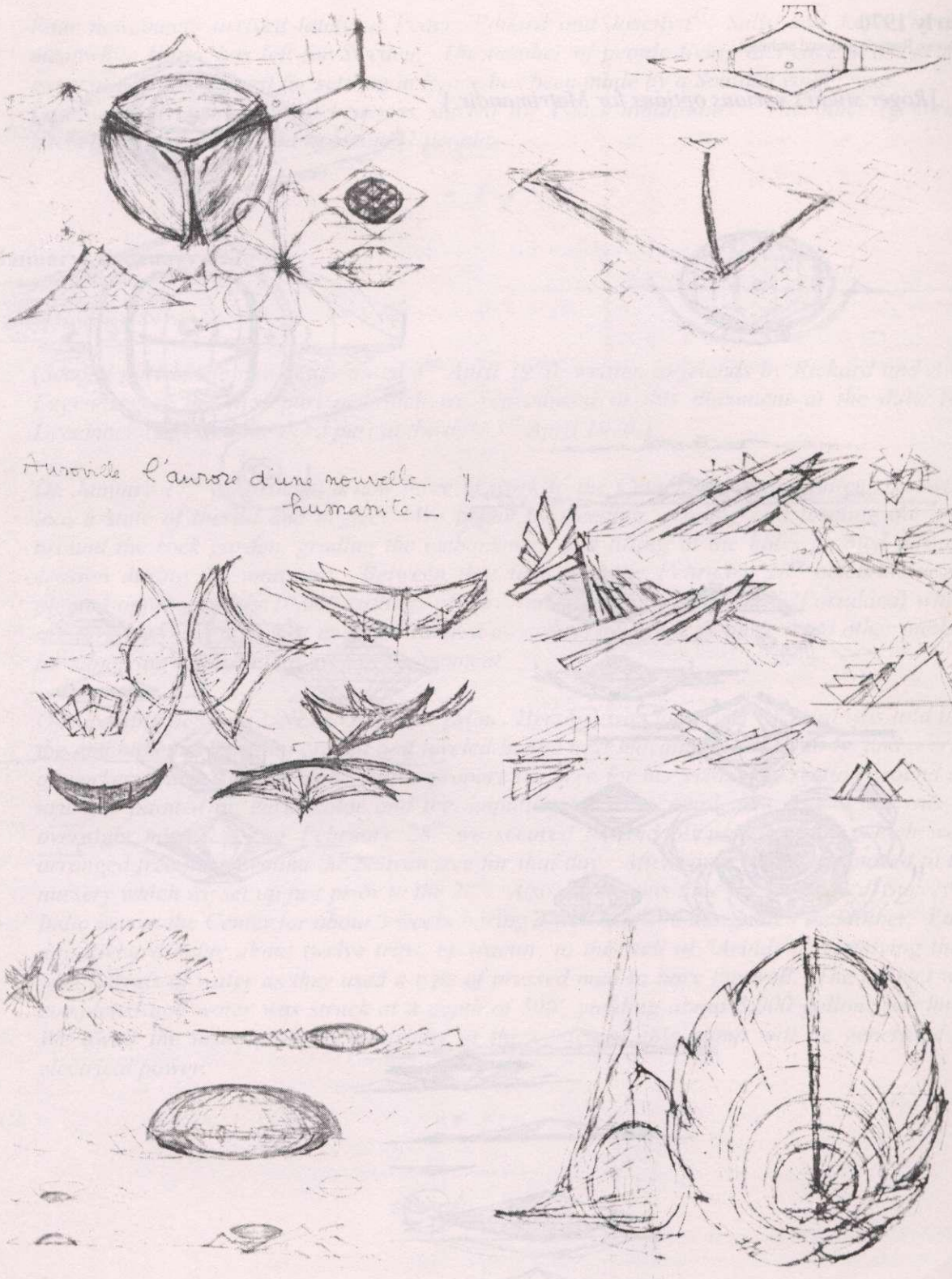


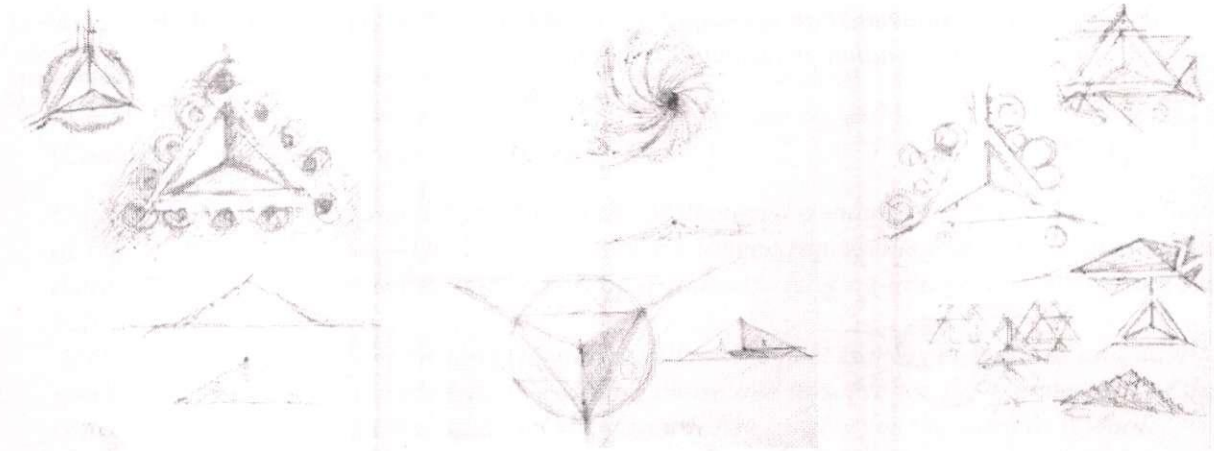


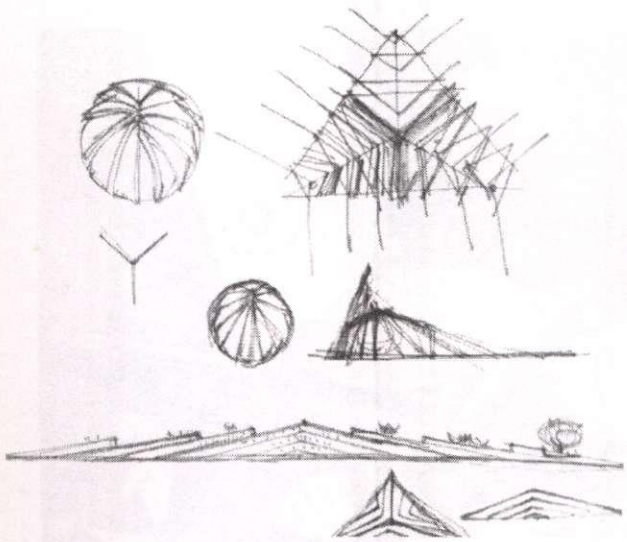


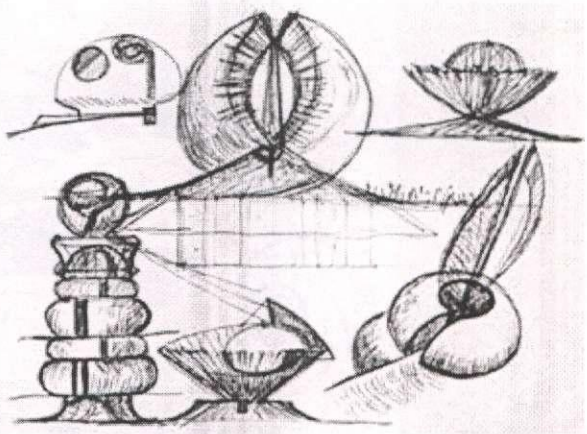


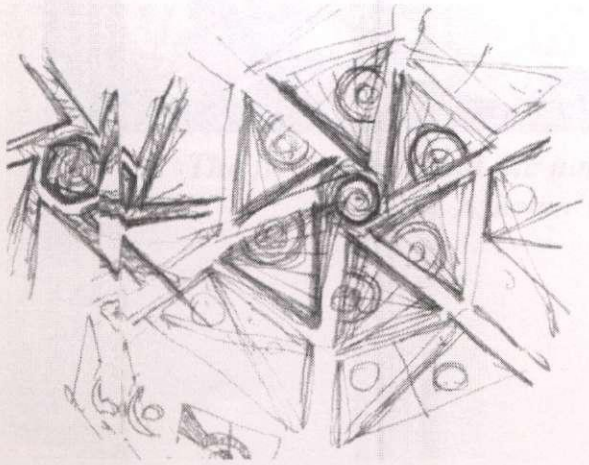


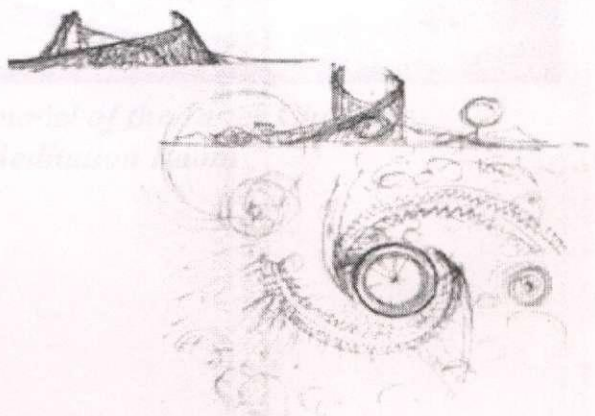

Aurore l'aurore d'une nouvelle humanité !



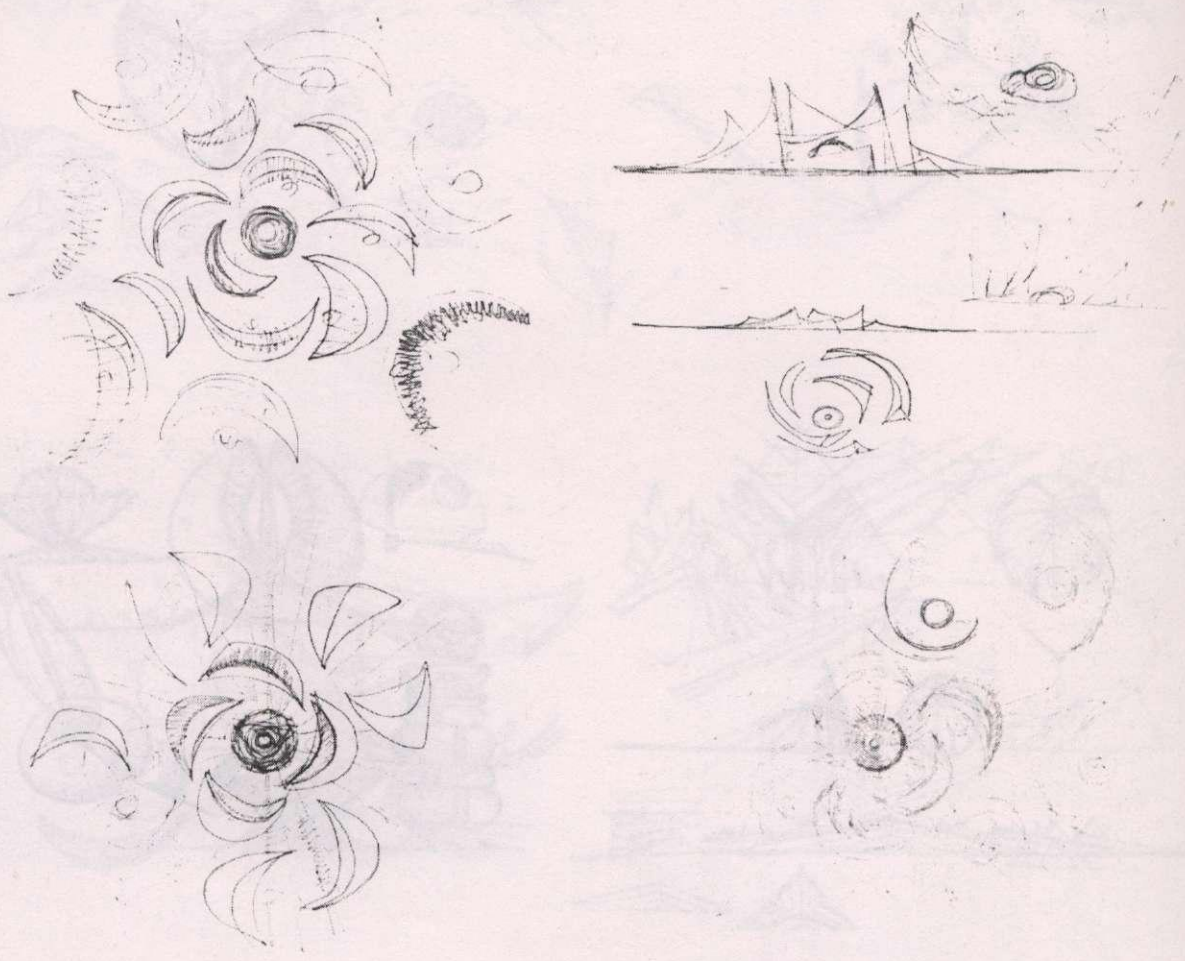








[*Roger's studies the immediate surroundings of Matrimandir. One can already see that he tries to bring some dynamic movement in the gardens.*]



* * *

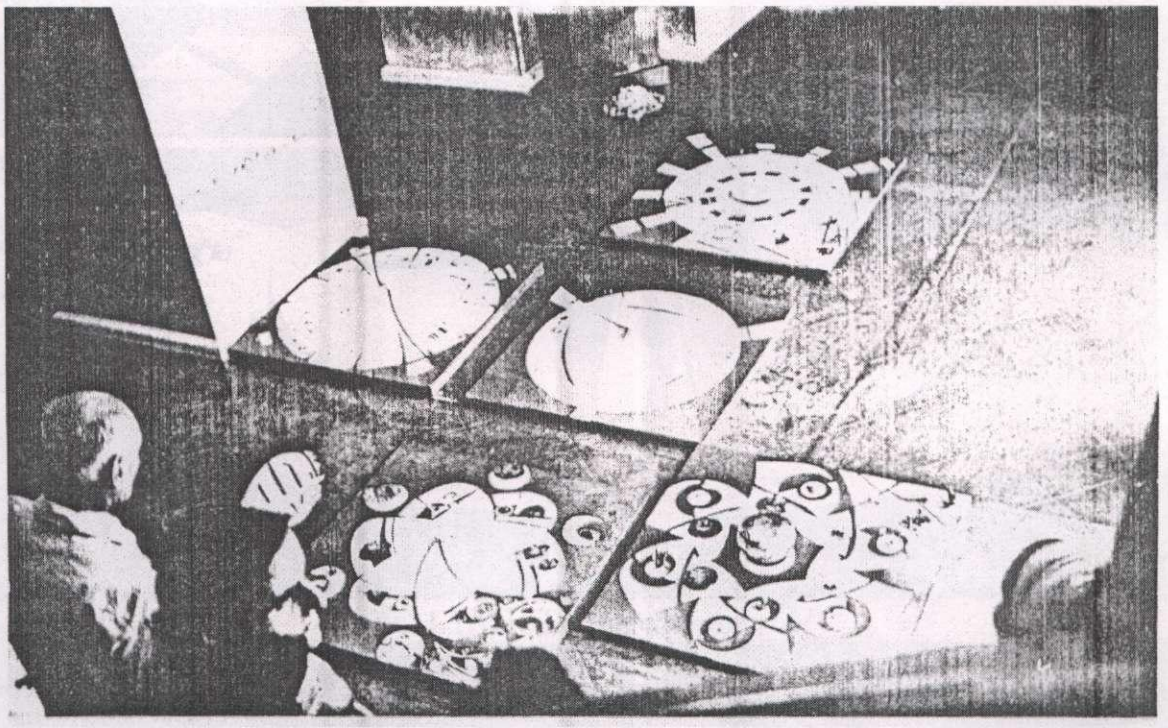
24 March 1970 Roger's 47th birthday Approval of Matrimandir's design

Letter
Original language: French
Sources: Gazette Aurovilienne Vol. V, July 77

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

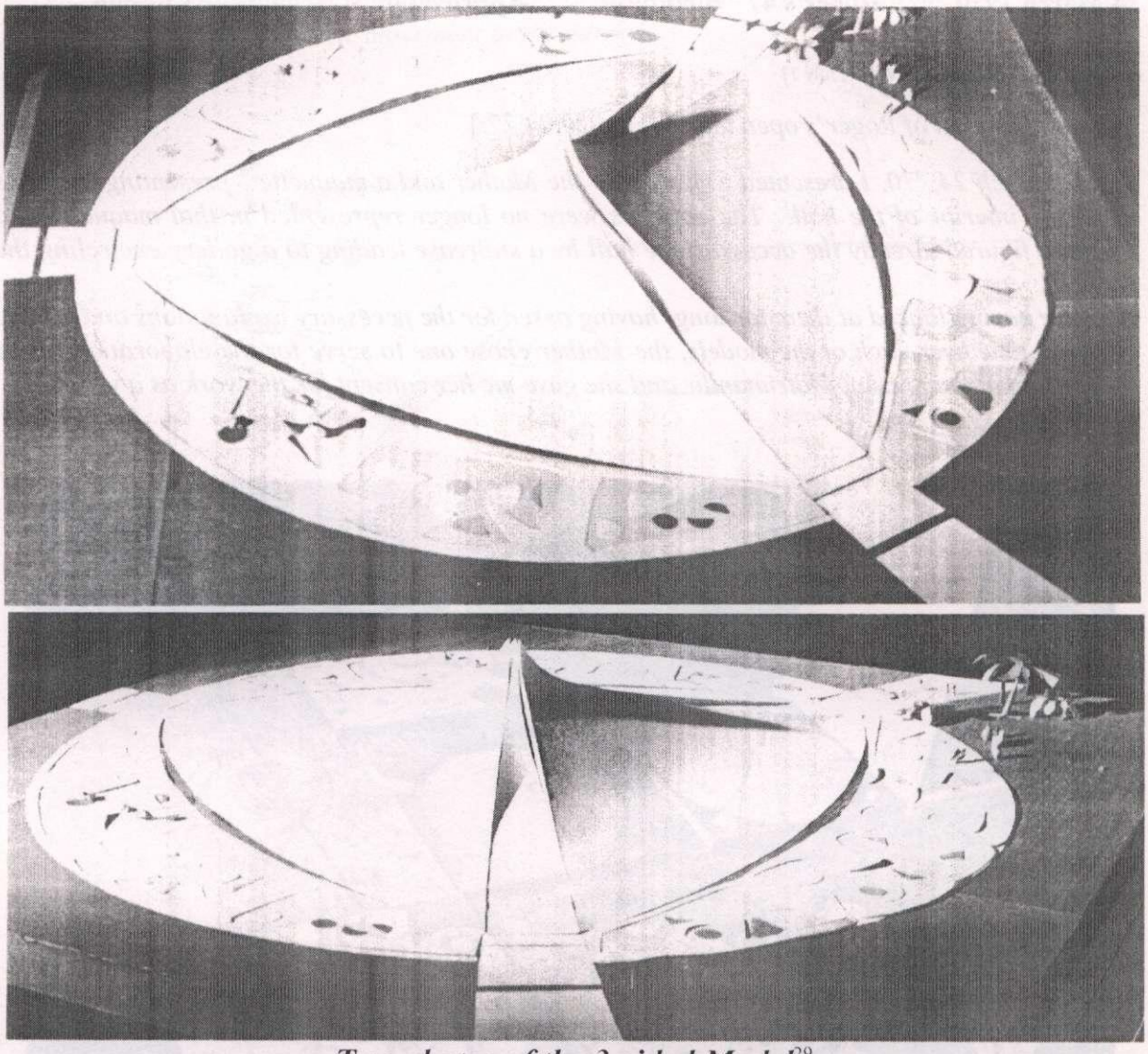
On March 24, '70, I presented 5 models to the Mother and a maquette[28] *presenting the lines of the interior of the hall. The columns were no longer represented in that maquette and there figured already the access to the hall by a staircase leading to a gallery encircling the hall.*
After having looked 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.

*



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

[28] "Maquette" = French for "model". As Mother had described the Chamber, it was possible to make a model of it. As can be seen in the Roger's studies (presented in previous pages), the same Inner Chamber was to be housed in each one of these 5 different models of the outer structure.



Two photos of the 3-sided Model[29]

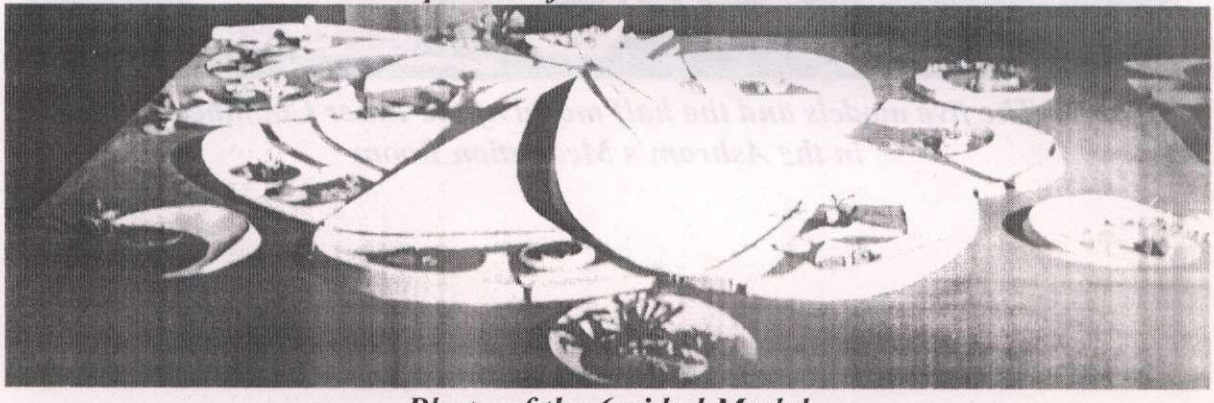
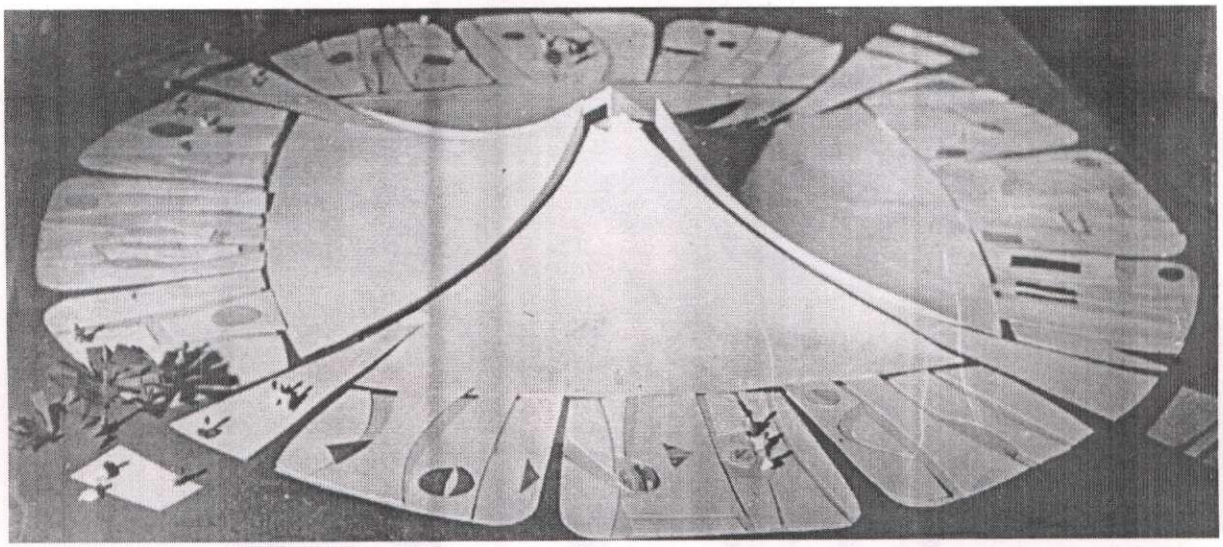
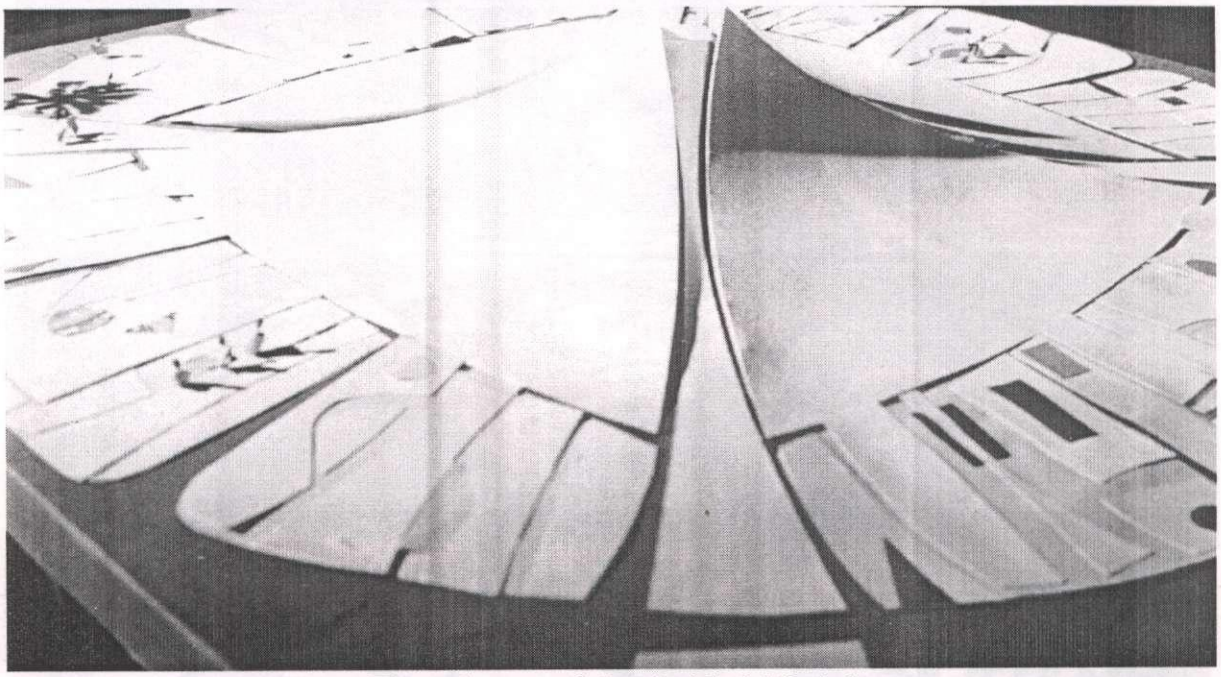


Photo of the 6-sided Model

[29] André Hababou was accompanying Roger when he presented these models to Mother. He remembers that Mother rejected one of them (this one?) saying, "One should not walk on Matrimandir".





Two photos of the 4-sided Model

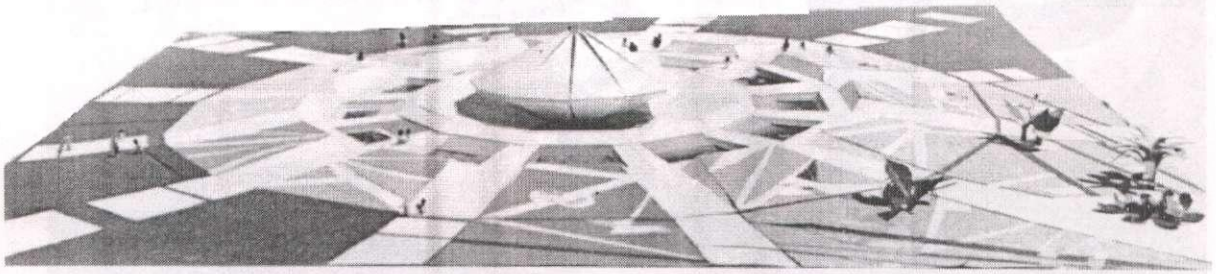
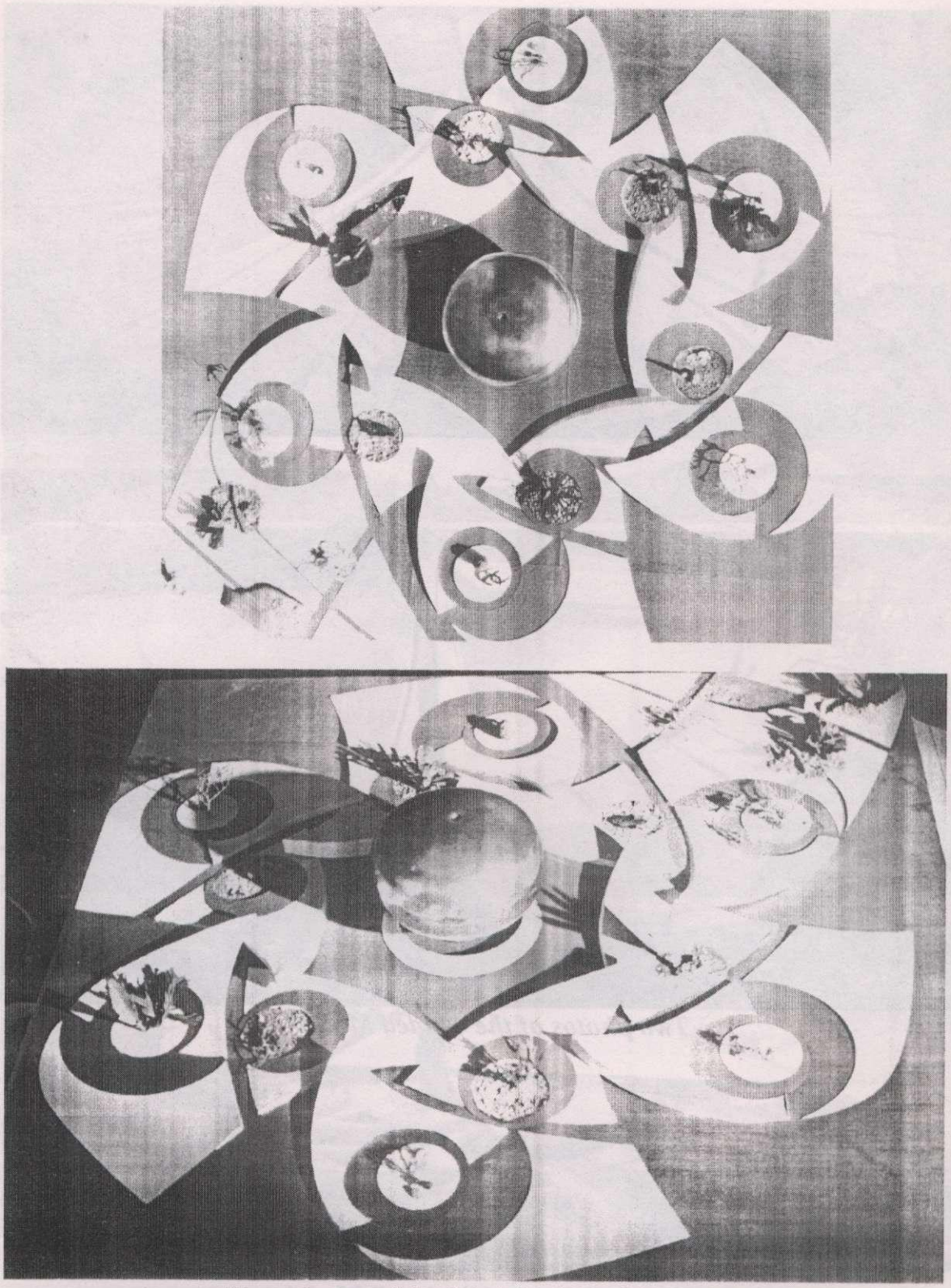
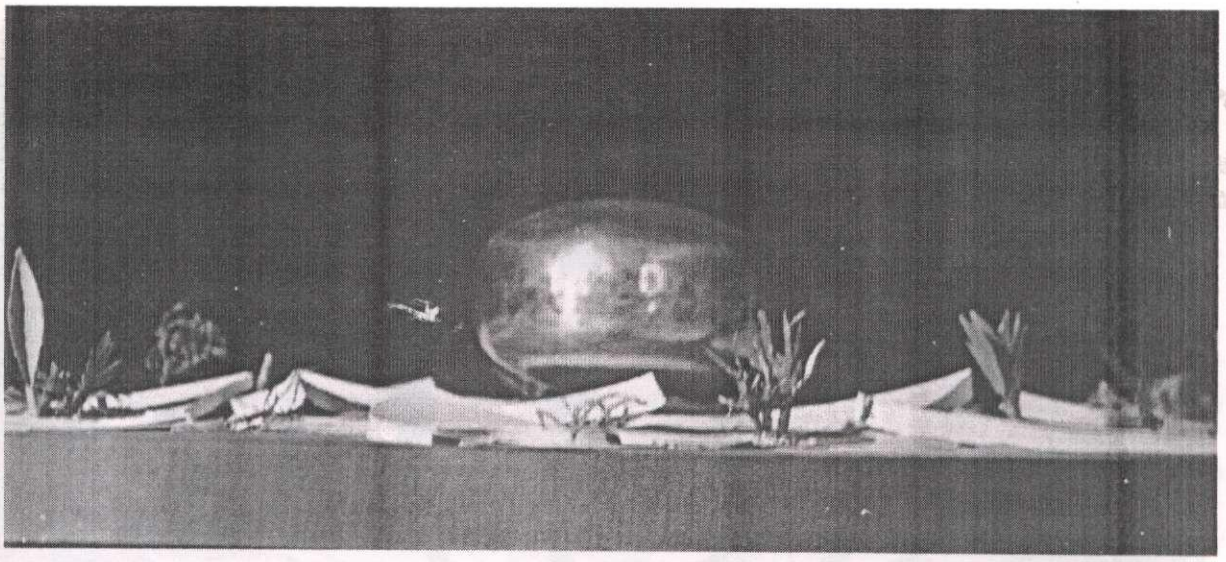
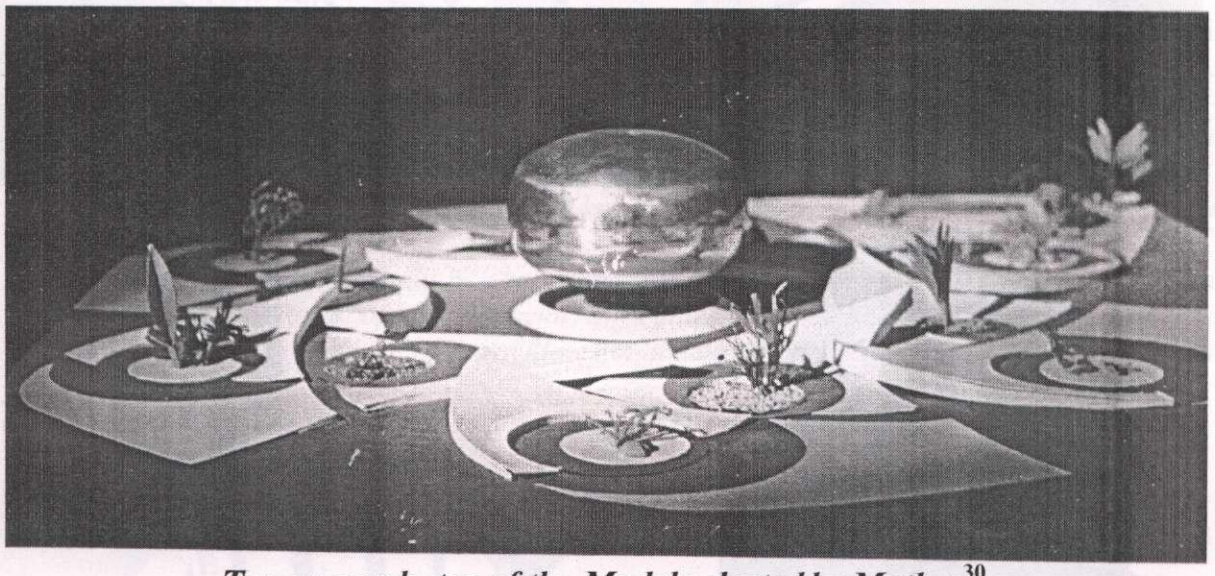


Photo of the "Polyhedron" Model



Two photos of the Model selected by Mother





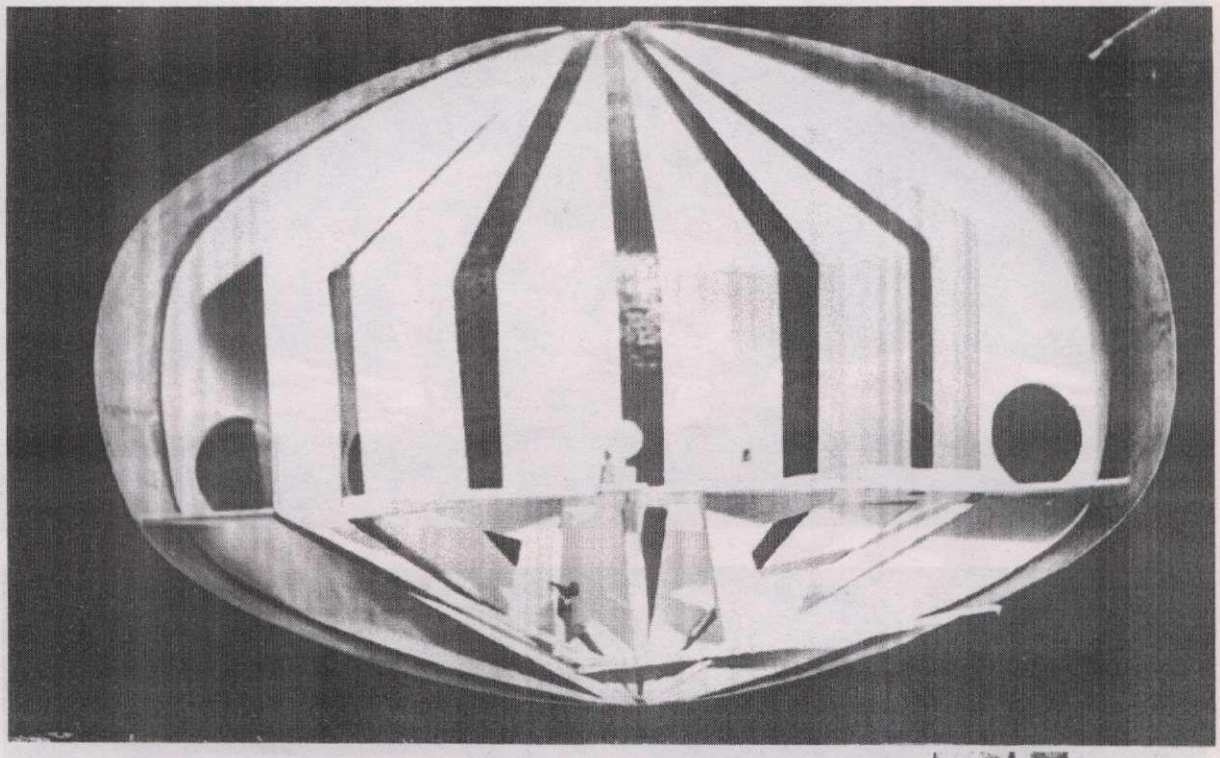
Two more photos of the Model selected by Mother[30]

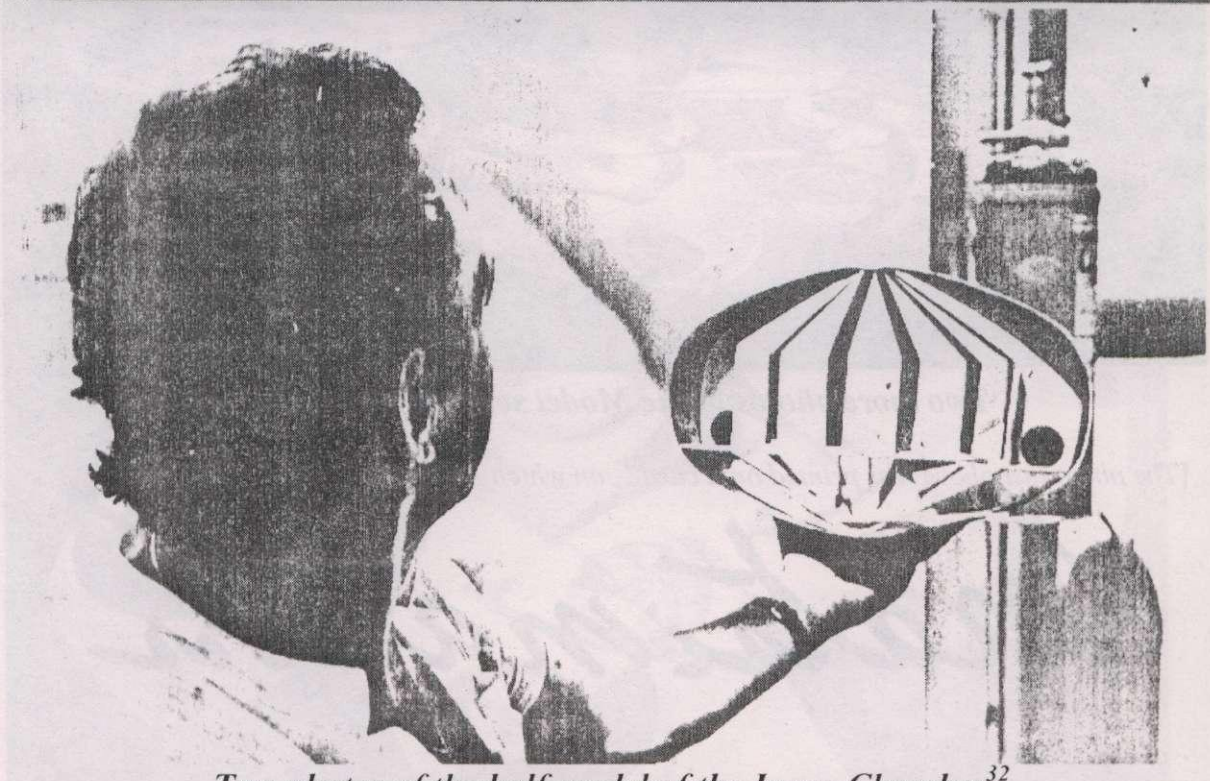
[*The photo just above was printed on a card*[31]*, on which Mother wrote:*]

matrimandir

[30] A small shiny brass pot was used to represent Matrimandir.

[31] 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 Chamber[32]

* * *

[32] 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.[33]
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.

* * *

[33] Huta made several minor changes in her letter while reproducing it in "The Spirit of Auroville".

3 April 1970
Newsletter to friends
Original language: English
Sources: facsimile at AV Archives;

[*Third part of the newsletter written to friends by Richard and Anie Eggenberger; the first part of which we reproduced in this document at the date 18th December 1969 and the second part at the date of February 1970:*]

For about five weeks our greatest concentration of energy has gone into the nursery; building wooden flats, three-tiered shelves for holding pots and flats, mixing soils, painting with coal tar to protect against ants, termites and other pests with which we are constantly plagued. We have planted banana trees, hybrid melons, papaya seeds (65% germination) cherimoya seeds, titonia, marigold and an herb garden of mint, basil, chives and dill. We are unable to plant anything more as the water situation is very bad at present. Our only source of water has been two small barrels a day brought in by bullock cart. All of the above mentioned plants, seeds, seedlings, etc. must be watered, daily, by hand, which is a time consuming and strenuous job. However, we are at the moment digging a pipe line from the well at "Arindam" to Janet's hut and on to the nursery. We also conducted an experiment of composting and mulching the mango trees on the land with straw mulch. Trenches of about l' depth were dug around the trees and the mulch filled in. The area was heavily watered and the trees have gone for one month without water and have not dried out. The trees absorb the existing moisture as is needed. Soil tests were also given by the Government of India and the report revealed that the soil is a1most completely depleted of' every nutrient.

At the nursery site Richard has designed a lovely patio of native red brick surrounded by many graceful, cool ferns. Comfortable seating has been arranged as we want people to be able to sit and relax and absorb the atmosphere and the powers emanating from the plant and flowers and trees. As is always the situation, our work force in the first few days was good. However, due to hard work, many have dropped away and for many weeks the work was done solely by Richard, myself and Howard Iriyama, a Japanese-American boy. Howard has a natural love and feel for the plants and has worked steadily, throughout, with an inspiring, selfless devotion. He has never refused to do any of the most strenuous of tasks, and has done on many occasions the work which would normally require two men. Mother gave him blessings to live at the nursery site. He took the foundation of a hut that belonged to Constance and with some help he has constructed one of the most beautiful huts in all of Auroville. There is such a feeling of peace, beauty and simplicity. We have had some bad encounters along the way with village people and their goats, but for the most part they have at times joined in the work with a real spontaneous joy. We have tried not to hire anyone, but would rather do the work ourselves as Mother has requested. At present we now have with us a Dutch boy named Dick and an extraordinary Tamil boy named Radhakrishna. He is an extremely refined and intelligent boy and is one of the few who is working there according to the Auroville system. He receives no pay and works from early morning to late evening. Richard has taught him to drive the tractor and we are helping him to learn English. He takes his lunch with us and we teach him what we can. In the beginning we sent a letter to the Mother asking if we should send names of those wishing to work with us for

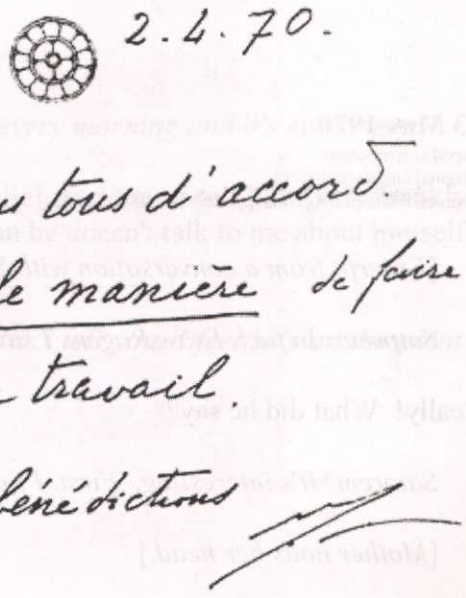
Her permission. Her answer was "If people are sincerely wanting to work in harmony and collaboration, there is no need of asking my permission."

The Mother has granted us a small monthly working fund which, due to our constant expansion, will not continue to serve us too much longer. There are many needs which are absolutely essential for this work in order to realize her vision and to bring it into full manifestation. The following is a list of these needs. A copy has also been sent to Navajata. We are very grateful for the interest you have shown.

* * *

2 April 1970
Message
Original language: French
Sources: facsimile at AV Archives; MoA, p. 43; CWM, XIII, p. 211; AMW, p. 305

[*Message given to Roger:*]



You must all agree.
That is <u>the only way</u> to do good work.
With my blessings

* * *

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.

* * *

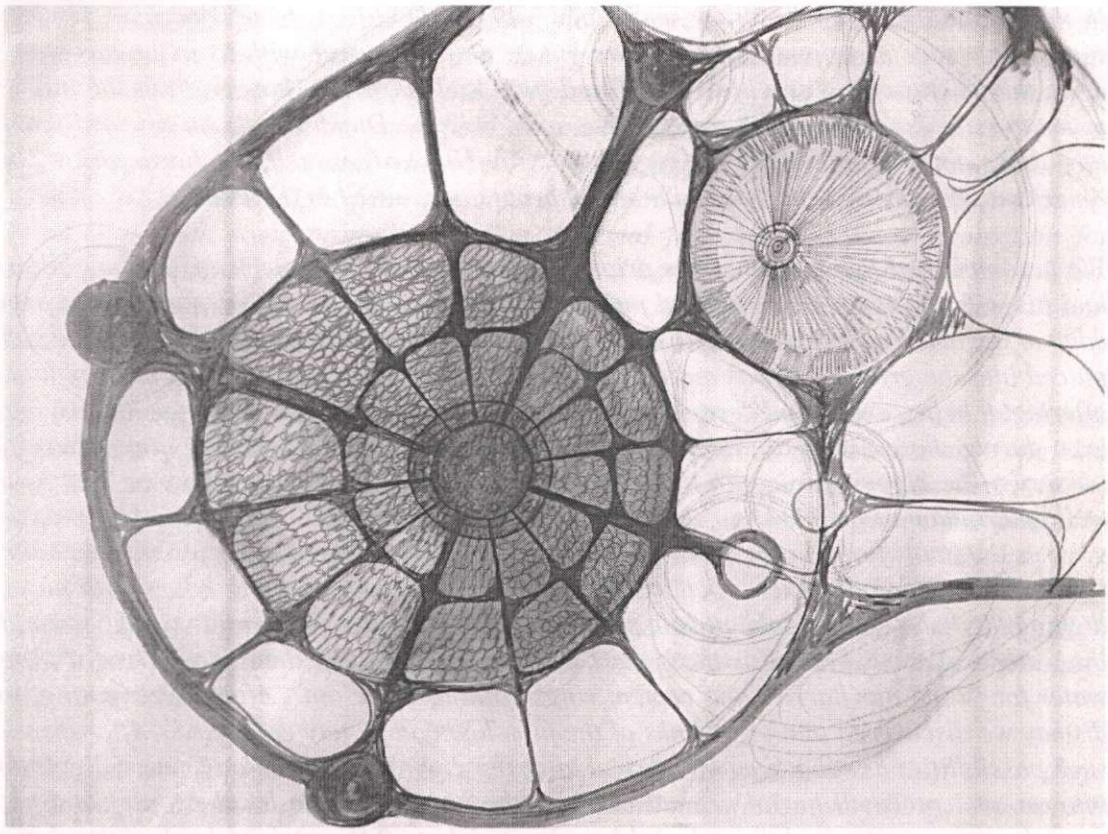
10th June 1970

[*Mother finishes working with Tara on Her commentaries of Sri Aurobindo's "Thoughts and Aphorisms". From now onwards, Tara together with Richard and Narad will assist Mother in the thorough revision of Lizelle Raymond's Flower book.*
From June 1970 to April 1972, Mother will see hundreds of flowers, change some names, confirm others and name flowers She hadn't yet named. Mother will also give a commentary for each one of the flowers (except for the last one: "Controlled Power"). Téhmi does the translation into English and the next day, She checks certain translations in cases of new flowers.
The book "Flowers and Their Messages" will be published in August 1973 by Auropress, at Auroville. This is the last book on which Mother worked.
By revising this book, naming new flowers and giving a commentary for each flower, Mother obviously enriched the dictionary which enables us to understand better the messages and teaching of flowers. Flower games have thus become much more interesting.]

* * *

Second half of 1970

[*One of Roger's studies that will lead to the Oval Island:*]



* * *

29 June 1970
Newsletter to friends
Original language: English
Source: facsimile at AV Archives

[*2nd Newletter from Anie Eggenberger to friends:*]

Promesse, Aurovi11e
June 29, 1970

Report: Matrimandir Gardens

It is now more than two months since the first report was written as to the progress of the Matrirnandir gardens and much has developed in the intervening weeks. To date nothing concrete has begun toward the design and execution of the Garden of Unity (the garden with which the Mother had asked us to begin our work) due to the fact that all the land covering that area has not yet been purchased, nor has the electricity which we were promised last February been installed as yet. This latter inconvenience means that there is still no water it the center and consequently prevents any further planting in the vicinity of the urn and the

banyan tree. However, much work has been accomplished at the nursery in preparation for the main gardens and we have made many experiments which have proved to be quite valuable to the work.

In the beginning of April Mother sent a new worker, Don Cox, from America. He has had some experience as a landscape foreman but is, now no longer with us as he has started to drive the tractors for Auroville. The Tamil boy, Radhakrishna, has also left the nursery in order to gain experience in Auro Garage, and Dick, the Dutch boy is on a world tour. We now have four people working regularly with Howard, myself, Richard and Jean, an American girl who previously lived in the Ashram and worked in the Press.

We accomplished much in the days prior to the brief visit of [American] Ambassador Olds and his wife on April 11th. Richard purchased sod from the botanical garden and from the edge of the brick patio extending to the incline where Howard built a stone wall, the sod was placed into the ground. It was quite an event and many village men joined in a spontaneous offering of help as most had never seen this type work done before. The grass is thriving now even during these weeks of intense heat and lends a cool and refreshing atmosphere to the nursery. The biggest project in the month of April was the laying of the pipe line from the well of Arindam to the nursery. Janet paid for the pipe from the well to her hut and Mother gave us the funds for the remainder of the pipe for covering the area between Janet's hut and the nursery. The Tamil men, Richard, Howard and Dick worked long hours with picks, etc. digging the holes. Finally the plastic pipe was glued piece by piece, laid into the ground and the water was turned on. For three days it worked beautifully, then as we were waiting for water for filling our barrels and cement rings nothing came out. After investigating, to our dismay we discovered that eight links of the pipe had completely collapsed. After dismissing such possibilities as sabotage (we learned after the digging began that we were digging right into an ancient Tamil burial ground much to the chagrin of the local people) and melting from the sun, we surmised that when the pump was shut off the rushing back of the water had created a vacuum and ultimately we found many links of faulty pipe which had been unable to withstand the pressure that had cracked irreparably from the strain. After weeks of inconvenience and stalling from the pipe company in Madras, an air bleed valve was installed as well as a non-return valve. The pipe is in good working condition and recently we purchased more cement rings for increased water storage. We have all begun to grow accustomed to such occurrences in Auroville, however, as it seems the simplest (sometimes the biggest as in the case of the dam at Forecomers) experiments that one would be able to undertake and complete so easily and with precision in the outside world seem to become monumental problems here. Whatever the situation may be, our position must be to refuse the attempt of the hostile forces to gain control and to continue to persevere in our work. We are given constant encouragement by the Mother and just recently She sent us a beautiful red and white double hibiscus which She has named "faith". We have planted many hot weather annuals such as Amaranthus, Helianthus, Rudbeckia, Zinnias, Marigolds, Four-o-clocks, Coreopsis and many others. Just recently we grew a beautiful light green zinia never before shown to Mother. We sent a flower to Her and She named it "Spontaneous Endurance". In our Herb garden we have transplanted the Sweet Basil and it is now tall and wonderfully aromatic. We have grown very close to the plants and at times they even talk to us. One evening as I lay resting at Promesse the basil appeared before my eyes as in a vision. It was

very very unhappy and appeared to be crying. When I told Richard he said that he had also seen it. The next day we discovered that the plants had not been weeded and were being suffocated by weeds. In the course of the work we have had many such experiences. We have also much lemon grass which not only makes an excellent tea but is also a useful plant for the prevention of soil erosion. In the; field between Howard's hut and Janet's hut we have started a large flower garden for gathering bouquets, etc. We have already transplanted Zinnias (Endurance) and Hollyhock (Offering) and will transplant many others when they are ready. In the same field we are building a lattice area which will be covered with creepers and vines and which will be used for providing an ideal condition for our hibiscus with filtered light from the vines. In another area of the land we are building a shade area with some propylite shading material from the U.S. as a protection for our seedlings against the monsoon winds and rain. A compost pit has also been completed. We are planting almost every day now and the number of plants which we now have in our care has quadrupled since we started the nursery just four short months ago.

We are having many problems with the balance of nature on the land as the black ants and termites carry off all our seeds and eat into our plants, wood and almost anything else they touch. A coconut fiber basket left out at night is shrapnel by morning. The squirrels are also a great nuisance and must be kept under control, but we believe that these and all other problems will be annihilated by the new force and consciousness entering the land.

Some of the village children went out and gathered many tiny seedlings of Casuarina trees and helped us to plant them. We will set them out to be used as wind breaks when they grow to a larger size.

In March we planted many seeds of Hybrid melons from America. Just when they were beginning to blossom a cow came in, unnoticed and ate almost everything. This was before we had put up our fencing. Miraculously, though, they came up again as strong as ever and we are now enjoying a bountiful harvest. We are able to send a melon every few days to the Mother and Francoise makes juice of them for Her which She drinks in the afternoons. We also have shared them with many other Aurovilians and many friends in the Ashram and many have also gone to Auroville prosperity. Our mango harvest was not too productive but we shared what we had among the nursery workers, friends and have made some jars of jam. The jack-fruit was exceptional this season and were given to Auroville prosperity.

The young papaya seedlings are now transplanted into pits and we have given many to Shyama and Frederick, Constance, Bob and Deborah, Dawn and Arindam and to some of the people from Aspiration who work with us. Brigitt, Jean-Christophe, Bernard and Fabienne and Christopher have come several times and Sebastian and Rafael, who are in charge of Francoise's garden at State House have also come to help and learn. It is a great joy for us to be able to give in this way and to share with others as we believe this to be in the true spirit of Auroville.

We have also started some watermelon seeds from America and some Indian brinjal. We will plant more vegetables when cooler weather comes. The Los Angeles, California group has been wonderful about sending seeds to us and in collecting valuable and interesting

literature on gardening. My Mother has also sent vegetable seeds from the South which thrive very well here. A few weeks ago Carmen Neville end Suresh Hindocha gave us some lovely p1ants. The wife of the Director of the Bombay Branch of State Bank of India has also sent plants through Kishorilal.

At the nursery one day during a time when Richard and I were away, and only Howard and Radhakrishna were there, a goat came in and started eating the flowers. As is the practice in Auro-orchard and elsewhere, Howard and Radhakrishna took the goat end tied it up in order to teach the young goatherd a lesson. The boy, obviously frightened by the idea that his father would scold him, went to his village and told that Richard had beaten him and stolen is goat. Unknown to us as we sat eating our lunch at Promesse, a plot was brewing in the village. The boy's father, an interpreter and two men from the village descended upon Richard en masse when we returned to the nursery. They were threatening to burn down Auroville and were prepared to begin with Howard's hut and go on from there. While the boy went on lying relentlessly, they ranted and raved that flowers have no purpose and that they do not have any use as they do not feed their starving people, so what did it matter that they had been eaten by the goats. After some time the boy confessed that he had fabricated the story and the thing was then settled. The Tamils are quite emotional people at times and melodramatic but tend to overcome their animosity quickly. For the most pert we have an excellent relationship with the villagers and they have given us many helpful hints about and through the knowledge and experience handed down to them through the centuries.

At times the sky and the land are almost overwhelming in their beauty and often in the evenings we sit and marvel at the magnificence of the Indian sunsets. Each one is to unique and casts its awn particular farm and hue each evening. From the patio we can see the Cassia Fistula (Mother calls it Imagination) tree with its yellow blossoms full and cascading one side toward the nursery and on the other side toward the rood. When the wind blows are graced by its gentle and lovely fragrance. But the land can be as harsh as it is beautiful and winds of cyclonic proportions lifted Howard's roof off one afternoon and serious floods resulted. Cement was given by the Mother to reinforce the foundation.

We have all gone through some rough moments in the sun and heat and all have had mild sunstroke, liver problems and bouts with amoebas, but we go on joyfully amidst the difficulties owing that Her help is always there and that the work will be accomplished through faith and love.

Very little is given for the gardens at present and our working fund remains at a mere Rupees 150 per month. Mother has approved a separate account for the Matrimandir Gardens and we believe when people become awakened to the meaning of these gardens and the deep significance that they will give to the city of Auroville and to all mankind, not only from the standpoint of aesthetic beauty but by the inner force and power that will emanate from them as they surround and embrace the Shrine of the Divine Mother, then we will be confident at the money which is necessary to finance such a project as this will flow, without reserve, from hearts touched by the Vision of the future which They have placed before us.

Anne Eggenberger

* * *

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":*[34]]

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?

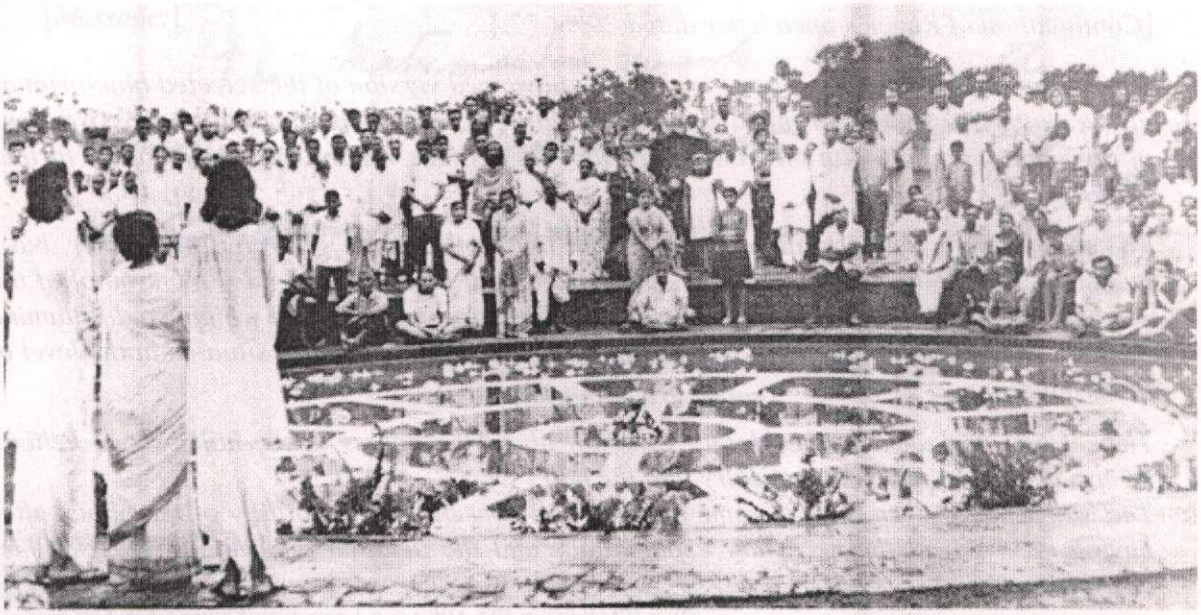
Like the Auroville flower. But I DELIBERATELY chose it as the Auroville flower because of that. And I have the impression that that's the supramental colour: when I see beings of the supramental, they are... not exactly this colour... It's not like a flower, it's like flesh. But it's like that [*Mother indicates the colour of the flower*].

* * *

[34] 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 pond*[35]*:*]

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.

The 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.

* * *

[35] 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

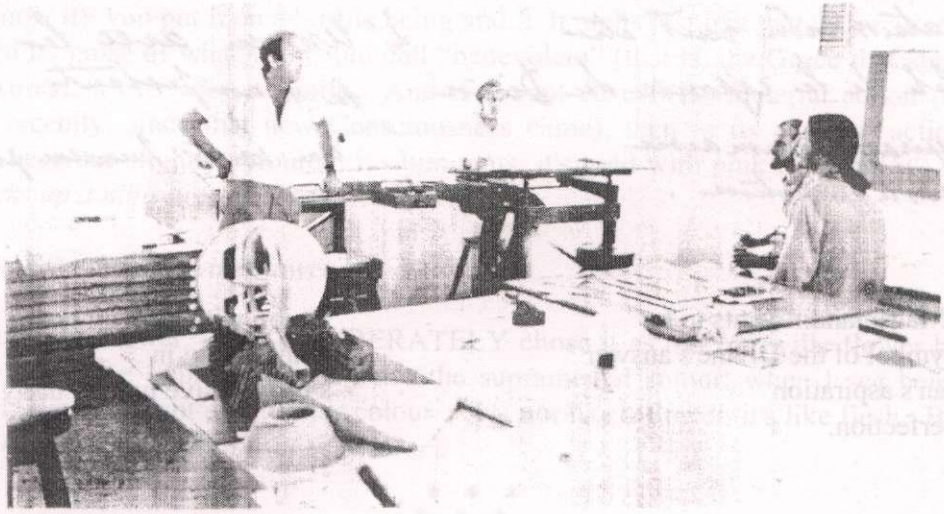
[*Continuation of Roger's open letter dated 20.04.77:*]

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

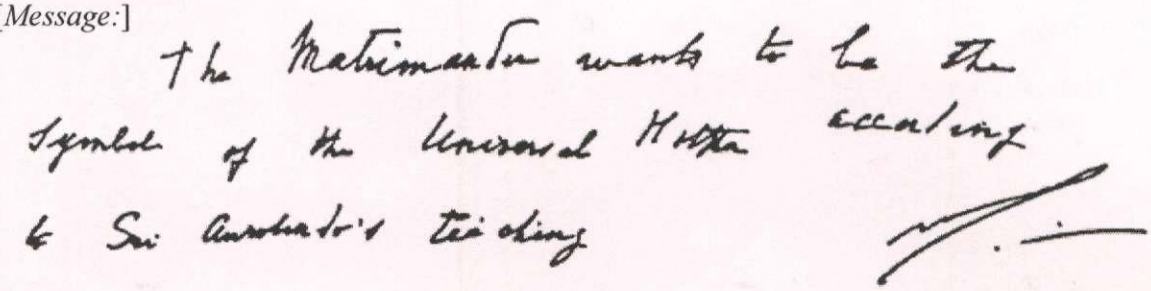
Roger in his office with a model of Matrimandir[36]

* * *

[36] 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.

* * *

15 November 1970
Message
Original language: French
Sources: MoA, p. 4; Gazette Aurovilienne, I, p. 3; CWM, XIII, p. 229; AMW, p. 358

[*Message*[37]*:*]

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.

* * *

[37] Any information regarding this important message would be welcome as the facsimile has not been found.