

Invocation

Savitri

B H A V A N

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Study notes and Newsletter

February 2002

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*Her brow, a copy of clear unstained heavens,
Was meditation's pedestal and defence,
The very room and smile of musing Space,
Its brooding line infinity's symbol curve.
Amid her tresses' cloudy multitude
Her long eyes shadowed as by wings of Night
Under that moon-gold forehead's dreaming breadth
Were seas of love and thought that held the world;
Marvelling at life and earth they saw truths far.*

My SAVITRI Work with The Mother

by Huta

(continued from issue no.13)

It is well known that the Mother was a fine artist who excelled in drawing and sketching as well as oil-painting. When she started teaching me how to draw objects I realised how engrossed she would be when doing sketches.

While explaining Savitri to me and showing me the way to paint it, the Mother simply poured her heart out in expressing through a few strokes the whole vision of each selected passage.

On 18th July 1966 I went to the Mother for the Savitri work. After the work I told her, “Mother some people have said that you are preparing to go ...”

She laughed softly and answered :

Yes, people think like that. It is a falsehood. And a falsehood has no influence on the Truth. But the Truth has an influence on falsehood. Let them think as they like ...

I said, “Mother, somebody also asked me, ‘How can the Mother do sketches when her hands are shaky?’ Some others think you are suffering from paralysis. Everything is awful. These people are really ridiculous!”

The Mother replied with surprise :

Oh, but my hands are not shaky, and I am quite all right. You see, my child, ever since I retired people have started imagining all sorts of things. But it is a mistake. I do my work all the same.

In this context, I later asked the Mother, “If you kindly permit, I greatly wish to exhibit your sketches along with the paintings of *Savitri*. If you trust me, I shall have them best displayed.” She smiled sweetly and said :

Yes, I leave this matter to you. Do whatever you like.

I said joyously, “Mother I am honoured and happy. I am eager to show people these sketches, because some have thought that one of your hands was too shaky to draw anything. After seeing hundreds of your sketches they will realise that there is no shakiness in your hands.”

The Mother was extremely happy and caressed my cheeks. So along with the Savitri paintings, many of the Mother’s sketches were also exhibited.

Later, after the exhibition was over, the Mother was requested by Jayantilal and others to select some of her sketches and allow them to be printed. She laughed merrily and said to all of us :

Ah, you see, when good food is served we must not tell everybody how it was cooked. Similarly we must not print the sketches and disclose the secret of how the paintings were done. People must find that out by themselves.

Once the Mother told me :

The Supreme has the supreme humility, because He is everything.

After the exhibition, on March 8th 1967, the paintings were taken to two rooms in Golconde, according to the Mother’s wish.

Then on the morning of Friday January 8th 1999 I brought the *Savitri* paintings and their two huge cupboards to my place, because I was asked to do so by Mona L. Pinto. The paintings remained in Golconde for almost 32 years. Now these paintings have been entrusted to the Savitri Bhavan in Auroville, where they are being kept in safe storage until a proper art-gallery can be constructed, where they can all be on permanent display as the Mother wished.

*

During that time too, the Mother’s recitations were going on. For the paintings, the Mother had asked me to choose the passages from *Savitri* which could be pictured. I wrote these passages out with a felt-pen on big sheets of handmade paper, so that she could easily read the selected passages which corresponded to the paintings. As she read, I tape-recorded her

Recitations

recitations.

The Mother completed the recitations from the whole of *Savitri* towards the end of 1967.

Gradually I gave to Sunil-da copies of all the recordings of the Mother's recitations, so that he could compose the *Savitri* music, according to the Mother's wish.

Sunil-da told me :

Huta, now I will have to read the whole of Savitri in order to understand the epic and then compose the music. According to the Divine's inspiration, you know, it was my aspiration to compose Savitri music. If you would not have recorded the Mother's recitations and given me the tapes I could not have composed the music. And your tape-recording is very nice - like a professional one.

I replied, "Sunil-da, I am honoured! You are very kind and appreciative. You see, everything is decided and arranged by the Supreme Lord. We are his instruments. I am fortunate and very happy to be one."

*

The Mother wished slides to be made of the *Savitri* paintings, so that they could be shown at the Ashram theatre as part of the celebrations during Sri Aurobindo's Centenary Year, 1972. With Mother's blessings Richard Eggenberger (Narad) took up the work of preparing the slides from early 1971 onwards. He and his assistants finished taking slides of all of the *Savitri* paintings on 27.9.1971.

On 26.2.71 the Mother heard her own organ music along with her recitations. She liked it very much and fully approved of it to be used as an accompaniment throughout the slide shows. The Mother had given these names to her music:

Mystic Solitude, Quiet Power, Joy, Compassion of the Divine, Life in Eternity, Construction of the Future.

As for Sunil-da's *Savitri* music, the Mother arranged for it to be played in the Playground during the meditations on Thursdays and Sundays. In this connection she gave me a special blessings packet for Sunil-da. He was very pleased.

The Mother wished to know the exact date and time for showing in the Ashram theatre the slides of the Meditations on *Savitri* paintings along with her own organ music and her recitations, recorded by me, of *Savitri* passages which corresponded with the paintings, so that she would put her special Force and Light during the programme. The first show was on Friday, 25.2.72 at 8.30 pm. On 21.7.72 was the last one. People enjoyed the shows. The Mother did not want me to attend the shows. I obeyed her. Later the slide-shows were shown in Auroville also.

*

In 1967, after the display of *Savitri* paintings in the Ashram Exhibition Hall, when I asked the Mother about making a movie of the *Savitri* paintings, she held my right hand, shook it with a broad smile and said with a face full of enthusiasm :

Yes, my child, we shall collaborate!

Years passed. I was wondering about the movie. Now at last it seemed that the time had come to get the movie of the *Savitri* paintings made. On 6.2.1973 it was decided by the Mother that the movie would be made by Michel Klostermann of Germany. When he was in charge of film production in Auroville, the Mother gave the name "Filmaur" for his project. The Mother gave Michel and me beautiful leather-bound folders with Sri Aurobindo's and her own photographs.

She wanted her own organ-music to be played as a background during her recitations of the *Savitri* passages corresponding to the paintings. She also wished that the movie should be full of liveliness, vibrations and vividness.

On 19.5.73 I wrote a letter to the Mother.

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My dearest Mother

Michel has already started to make the movie of the Savitri paintings with your blessings. According to your instructions he will surely give to the paintings vividness, vibrations and liveliness while filming.

Your own organ-music and your recitations of Savitri passages will have stereophonic sound which will give a superb effect to the movie:

Meditations on Savitri

I pray you to make everything possible and done by your Force and Grace. Victory to the Supreme!

With love and kisses

Yours ever, Huta

She sent blessings packets through M. Andre.

Now Michel has fulfilled the Mother's wish by making the movie of all the *Savitri* paintings from Book One to Book Twelve. He has sent video cassettes of the movie to me, and to Shraddhavan for Savitri Bhavan, Auroville. [see the announcement on page 39 of this issue]

*

Meanwhile, a new work had started.

On the morning of 20th December 1967, the Mother saw me in her music-cum-interview room. She asked me :

Have you brought anything to show me?

I said, "Yes, Mother. Here is the file of four hundred and sixty-five passages from *Savitri* which you recited and which were put below the Savitri paintings when they were exhibited in February 1967.

Mother, will you please explain these passages to me, and allow me to take down your explanations of them on my tape-recorder as I have done with your recitations of the passages? Then surely people will understand the Savitri paintings more easily."

She concentrated for a moment or two, and then said enthusiastically :

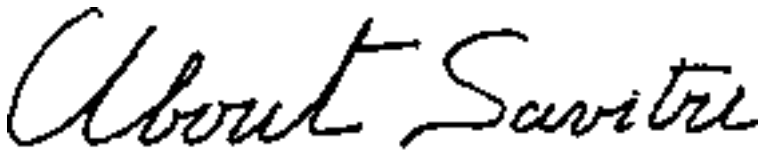
If I have to explain these passages, I would prefer to start from the very beginning and give a full explanation of the whole of Savitri.

In fact, this had already been planned in the Mother's Vision long ago, before I came to stay near her on 10th February 1955.

Once she revealed to a small group of sadhaks, soon after the first one-volume edition of *Savitri* was published in 1954 by the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education :

Savitri is occult knowledge and spiritual experience. Some part of it can be understood mentally - but much of it needs the same knowledge and experience for understanding it. Nobody here except myself can explain Savitri. One day I hope to explain it in its true sense.

On 18th January 1968 in the morning the Mother and I commenced our new work on *Savitri*. On 28th January the Mother gave it the name :



About Savitri

I used to write out the verses of *Savitri* from the 1954 edition on big sheets of hand-made paper for the Mother to read easily and then recite.

First I tried a running hand and copied her own handwriting. But it did not work. She could not read it. Then I tried to write the verses in bold letters. That too did not work. Then it struck me that I should write in clear letters like typescript. I rejected all the previous scripts and started all over again. This was certainly a time-consuming job, but it was worth all the trouble, so that the Mother could read them easily.

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The Mother recited and then gave her explanations of *About Savitri*. After the recitations she would go into a profound meditation for half an hour or sometimes even more. Then she gave the explanations, which were recorded by me and later transcribed.

On 7th March 1971 there was an awful noise during the recording, After the work the Mother said:

*But you alone will listen and transcribe from the recordings
- so it does not matter if I make a mistake or if there is a
noise.*

I said, “No, this won’t do, Mother, the whole world will hear all that you have recited and explained, so everything must be done as perfectly as possible.” She was very happy to hear this statement, for she was very particular.

When the transcript of each canto of Book One was completed and she had corrected it, I prayed to the Mother to sign on the last page of each of them, and she did so.

All the comments by the Mother are wonderful. Here I would like to present one of them, from Book One, Canto Three, which appeals to me very much. She recited this passage:

*Only a while at first these heavenlier states,
These large wide-poised upliftings could endure.
The high and luminous tension breaks too soon,
The body’s stone stillness and the life’s hushed trance,
The breathless might and calm of silent mind;
Or slowly they fail as sets a golden day.
The restless nether members tire of peace;
A nostalgia of old little works and joys,
A need to call back small familiar selves,
To tread the accustomed and inferior way,
The need to rest in a natural poise of fall,
As a child who learns to walk can walk not long,*

*Replace the titan will for ever to climb,
On the heart's altar dim the sacred fire.
An old pull of subconscious cords renews;
It draws the unwilling spirit from the heights,
Or a dull gravitation drags us down
To the blind driven inertia of our base.
This too the supreme Diplomat can use,
He makes our fall a means for greater rise.*

(P.34)

Her comment runs :

This is the great difficulty in the physical life. It is the strength of the old habit that pulls down the body to its old way. Then comes the struggle, and if the faith is sufficient, if the ardour for progress is there, then out of this fall we can rise to a higher receptivity and a better achievement.

In fact, there is nothing in this experimental life that is not meant to push the whole creation towards the luminous, marvellous Divine End that is promised to our effort and to our faith.

Never despair. Never lose courage. Never, never lose faith. The Grace is there and marvellously uses everything to reach, as quickly as possible, the Goal that is promised to our effort.

If we can enlarge our consciousness sufficiently, we see that even the apparent defeats are marvellous steps towards the final Victory.

As we went on, the Mother uncovered Sri Aurobindo's vision and hers of the New World, expressing the Supramental Light, Consciousness, Force and Delight. She disclosed their effect on the cells of the body. She took only the theme of *Savitri* as starting-point and, when the right time came, spoke about the action of the New Consciousness which had been manifesting since the beginning of the year 1969. [see *INVOCATION* no. 10 pp. 19-20]

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One day the Mother confirmed :

Now I have caught the exact thing regarding the work - now I know what Sri Aurobindo wants me to do.

On another occasion she said :

You see, Savitri is very good for me also, because while I read and recite, I do not think at all. I am only inspired. I need this experience.

I said, “Ah, Mother, you don’t need anything, because you are the Divine, aren’t you?”

She laughed softly and stated :

Yes, that I am, but this is physical (pointing to her body). And there is the physical world and it must be perfected. In fact, nothing is enough for me.

Then, on the following session of our *Savitri* work, she revealed :

The work is really very good. I like it. When I concentrate and go back to the Origin of the Creation, I see things as a whole in their reality and then I speak.

You see, each time when I speak, Sri Aurobindo comes here. And I speak exactly what he wants me to speak. It is the inner hidden truth of Savitri that he wants me to reveal.

Each time he comes, a wonderful atmosphere is created. I have read Savitri before but it was nothing compared to this reading.

On 29th March 1972 I offered to the Mother twelve copies of *About Savitri, Part One*, consisting of Book One, Canto One.

The Mother’s message for the book was :

Savitri

*The supreme revelation of
Sri Aurobindo's
vision.*



She gave me a copy and wrote on it :

*To Huta,
with love and appreciation
and blessings*

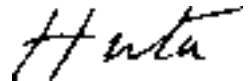
There are four parts of *About Savitri*. Two are already printed. The rest will be published in the course of time.

*

All can be done if the God-touch is there.

This is what Sri Aurobindo has written in *Savitri*, and how true it has proved! I am really happy to share this splendid gift with everybody, in Sri Aurobindo and the Mother's Light. My profound gratitude to Sri Aurobindo and the Divine Mother for their Grace and Love

(concluded)



The Day of Eternity

*From the talk by Chotte Narayan Sharma
at Savitri Bhavan on December 16, 2001*

Friends! Mother says,

In the eternity of becoming, each Avatar is only the announcer, the forerunner of a more perfect future realisation.

And yet men have always the tendency to deify the Avatar of the past in opposition to the Avatar of the future.

Now again Sri Aurobindo has come announcing to the world the realisation of tomorrow; and again his message meets with the same opposition as of all those who preceded him.

But tomorrow will prove the truth of what he revealed and his work will be done.

MCW 13:22

It is an ancient work. Sri Aurobindo himself says,

There are four very great events in history, the siege of Troy, the life and crucifixion of Christ, the exile of Krishna in Brindavan and the colloquy with Arjuna on the field of Kurukshetra. The siege of Troy created Hellas; the exile in Brindavan created devotional religion, (for before there was only meditation and worship,) Christ from his cross humanised Europe, the colloquy at Kurukshetra will yet liberate humanity. Yet it is said that none of these four events ever happened.

SACW 12:427

He himself says that it is a progressive change of human nature – a progressive mutation in psychology, in the form and in the life of man, so that we are progressively growing towards housing a greater consciousness, a more divine consciousness, a more luminous consciousness, a better consciousness.

But there is a question that every intelligent man must ask himself: “We are living in an age which is very singular - the world has shrunk into a small village, people are exploding atom and hydrogen bombs. Earth is shaking under the marching of mechanised armies of nations. The whole world is living from moment to moment without knowing what will happen tomorrow. At such a time how much value may be given to a poem, a book of verse? Writing poems, composing songs ... these are very ancient practices which man has been following from age to age. How much value can we give to *Savitri*? It is after all a poem, and a poem is not as boisterous, as worldshaking, as powerful as an atom or hydrogen bomb, or the greater glories that Science has been manifesting till today.” This is a question that we must ask. The answer is not very difficult to find, especially in India where we have been knowing from very beginning the truth that Mother has put it in such beautiful words :

*The greatest victories are the least noisy.
The manifestation of a new world is not proclaimed by beat
of drum.*

MCW 15:184

A scientist will tell us that nobody knows when the first streak of light and consciousness appeared in the vast materiality of the dark universe, or noted the date when the first ameoba was born. But nowadays almost everybody knows that the birth of the first ameoba was a very significant event and that the ameoba has eventually become the great-great-grandfather of an Einstein. Sri Aurobindo wrote *Savitri* without making any hubbub, without announcing by beat of drum, without any evidence of world-shaking force - and yet, the Mother has told us, this poem, *Savitri*, is a mantra that has the power to transform the whole world. This is something that has to be viewed from another standpoint, from another angle, another dimension.

You know that here we are extremely limited in our view of world and life. Our knowledge of the world is circumscribed by a three-dimensional frame. We see, we hear, we taste, we touch, and we think that this is the

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whole of life, all the world there is. But behind all this there is something else. In *Savitri* Sri Aurobindo puts it like this:

*... this enigmatic world
Which seems at once an enormous brute machine
And a slow unmasking of the spirit in things, ...*
(p. 154)

It looks like a brute machine, an enormously extended machine. And at the same time it is “*a slow unmasking of the spirit in things*”. This slow unmasking of the spirit in things is something that belongs to another dimension. It has taken Sri Aurobindo to point this out to us. The scientists are making their efforts to reveal the secrets of this universe and they have succeeded to a great extent. But to have given it an expression so compact, so simple and so effective is the work of Sri Aurobindo.

And you know, in doing so Sri Aurobindo is faced with a problem: to convince a three-dimensional attitude to the universal drama of the truth of the fourth dimension. That is Sri Aurobindo’s problem. That he had to do and he has succeeded with honours and distinction. How will I tell you? Now suppose somebody starts writing a poem, a life-story in poem form. Where will he begin? Of course, with the birth of the person, with the birth of the central figure; and he will go on describing how he grows, how he accumulates powers, capacities, how he becomes old and one day dies and the story comes to an end. But the thing is so different here. Sri Aurobindo has to tell a story that is not circumscribed by a three-dimensional conception. Where will he begin? To take another example, suppose you have to go to the Ganges, taken a dip in the Ganges, come back home and your friend asks you, “I want to go to the Ganges too. Will you tell me how to get there, how to begin?” You will say, “Just go and purchase a railway ticket and go to Allahabad, there is Triveni ...” For you yourself have gone to Triveni, so you will try to give your friend a complete picture of how you have taken a dip at Triveni. It is going to the Ganges and the experience of the Ganges, the experience of bathing in the Ganges, and it is 100% true, so far it goes. Somebody else has gone to Haridwar. He will describe how to get to

Haridwar. A third person has gone to Gomukh or Gangotri or somewhere else. Each of them will give a different description and they are all 100% correct. But suppose somebody comes along and tells you, "You want to see the Ganges? I can show you another picture of it." And he takes you 50,000 kilometres up into the sky, to where you see the earth as a globe; and from there he points out to you a small streak or line and in one glance you see both Gomukh and Ganga Sagar. That is a very different Ganges. But for this difference to be experienced, you have to rise 50,000 kilometres above the earth's surface.

And Sri Aurobindo is faced with still another problem. Suppose the same person asks, "What is Ganga?" and you have the capacity of taking him 50,000 years backwards or forwards in time, and you show him Ganga as it figures in the picture of time unfolding in eternity. How will he see it? He will see billions of tons of water as vapour in the sky, getting deposited on the head of the Himalayas, trickling down in small streams, then joining other streams, then becoming a broad river, and then at Ganga Sagar losing itself in the ocean, and then again water going up into the sky. Where is Ganga? This picture is extremely small. and yet it is the Ganga which has become a portion of universal life, of the universal drama. In this perspective Ganga is just a drop, something almost negligible. Sri Aurobindo has to do this same thing. In point of space, in point of time he has to speak about the mystery of the blossoming flower of creation, which has its start as well as its finish at the same moment, because it is global, it is spherical, it is not three-dimensional.

So you see where Sri Aurobindo begins: at "*the hour before the gods awake*" And who are the gods? The limited channels of creation. Sri Aurobindo has spoken of Varuna and Mitra and Aryaman and Surya and Savitri; of all those beings he has spoken very clearly in *The Secret of the Vedas*. He starts his poem at a moment when all those creative channels are still asleep, they have not yet been aroused from the womb of the Inane. In another poem he writes :

*It is He in the sun who is ageless and deathless,
And into the midnight His shadow is thrown;*

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*When darkness was blind and engulfed within darkness,
He was seated within it immense and alone.*

(‘Who’, SABCL 5:41)

Sri Aurobindo has gone into that immensity of the dark Inane and there he finds the Gods still sleeping, they have not been awakened. And then he creates an atmosphere where the first advent of the creative power has started working, the universe is slowly growing; and yet Sri Aurobindo has to follow a dimension where only one day is the Day of Eternity. Within one day’s time he shows us, not only the creation being initiated, but the whole material creation, the vital creation, the mind of man, the struggles of man, everything growing slowly, slowly, till we reach the modern stage when man is faced with the dark problem of dreadful Death. Oh! This is the problem, the line that is so carved, so imprinted on the destiny of man: Death. Death has to be overcome. Darkness has to be overcome. Imperfection has to be overcome.



C.N. Sharma speaking under the trees at Savitri Bhavan on December 16, 2001

Incapacity has to be overcome. Mortality has to be overcome. But this is not a fight where one will be defeated and another will be victorious. It is a gradual process of growth in which, because darkness doesn't have its own self-standing identity, darkness is merely the absence of light, and as darkness dissolves more and more, light appears, because light has a locus-standi. So that is how we find that the whole thing grows out of the Inane into something that is visible, something that we feel, something that we struggle for, something that we are aspiring for. Sri Aurobindo has to express this episode, which is world-wide and has world significance. Now you see how that is an altogether new effort, a new expression, a new manifestation of truth through words, which are very ancient things.

You may carry a dictionary but you can't carry *Savitri* in a dictionary. All the words are there in the dictionary, but *Savitri* is something very much beyond. The material universe becomes a living universe, a vibrant universe, a universe full of meaning and significance only when we have the understanding to see it. Otherwise matter is just matter. But to Sri Aurobindo, "*Matter is the Spirit's firm density.*" (Now Science is slowly moving in that direction. It seems to have lost its way as it has struck the vast mass of energy lying behind each atom. There they don't find the way, because all experiment and observation cease at the gateway itself - beyond there is no observation, or even if there is observation, it cannot be verified by material experiment.) That is how Sri Aurobindo has looked at the material universe; and what he tells about it is something that belongs to the future.

Mother has spoken of "the next future". You see, for 9 o'clock in the night, 10 o'clock is the future. But it is the same future, a dark future. But for 4 o'clock in the morning, 8 o'clock means a different future: the sun has come up, it is the next future. In *Savitri* Sri Aurobindo has spoken of this next future. He has exhausted evolution in its dark half '*apara prakriti*', and now he is speaking about initiating creation into the other half, that is the bright half. Sri Aurobindo has come announcing the realisation of the future, as the Mother says. And it is something spherical, something global, so the start and the end are at the same moment. It is something global which Sri Aurobindo has presented before

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us. It is a one day's story, but as the day ends and the moon appears in the sky, the night seems to be nursing a greater dawn. In the course of this poem, in the course of one day, a Sun has dawned that will never set: *Chiradinaya Din, Chiradinaya Surya*.

I may tell you that what Sri Aurobindo has done is the work of the last avatar. You must be remembering, in one of his poems he says,

*A little more and the new life's doors
Shall be carved in silver light
With its aureate roof and mosaic floors
In a great world bare and bright.*

*I shall leave my dreams in their argent air
For in a raiment of gold and blue
There shall move on the earth embodied and fair
The living truth of you.*

(‘A God’s Labour’, SABCL 5:102)

We are not yet living truths. Our bodies are “*clay images of unborn gods*”. The unborn god is wearing this body. But for that a divine transmutation has to take place. Sri Aurobindo has taken up this transformation, and it is only through this transformation that the entire earth can be lifted up beyond this darkness, beyond this ignorance, beyond this lower hemisphere, into the higher hemisphere.

Just behind us, there is the material construction called the ‘Matrimandir’. I can read out a part from *Savitri* where Sri Aurobindo has given a very graphic description of the Matrimandir and its message, its significance. Because this passage relates to Aswapati, and Sri Aurobindo in the form of Aswapati is doing Tapasya to get into the other half, just getting beyond this lower hemisphere, out of this mental consciousness into the Supramental of which he is the avatar and he therefore is the last avatar. We have the tradition of ten Avatars and in the ten avatars, Sri Aurobindo happens to be the last avatar. He says :

*I have been digging deep and long
Mid a horror of filth and mire*

*A bed for the golden river's song
A home for the deathless fire.*

(‘A God's Labour’, SABCL 5:99)

and:

*Nothing is hid from my burning heart;
My mind shoreless and still;
My song is rapture's mystic art,
My flight immortal will.*

(‘The Blue Bird’, SABCL 5:104)

And he has spoken of how the creation is to be lifted up into a sphere of knowledge, light, delight.

I will just read out the portion, how graphically Matrimandir had been pictured by Sri Aurobindo, because Sri Aurobindo happens to take his station, not in the lower hemisphere, but high up in the ether that leads directly to Sachidananda.

Aswapati has shot up beyond this lower hemisphere into the vast ether which opens out towards the supreme height.

Alien now seemed that dim far universe,

(the universe that lies below his feet)

*Self and eternity alone were true.
Then memory climbed to him from the striving planes
Bringing a cry from once-loved cherished things,
And to the cry as to its own lost call
A ray replied from the occult Supreme.
For even there the boundless Oneness dwells.*

(in the lower hemisphere also the boundless Oneness dwells)

To its own sight unrecognisable,

(where God sits alone, as if not knowing himself)

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*It lived still sunk in its own tenebrous seas,
Upholding the world's inconscient unity
Hidden in Matter's insentient multitude.
This seed-self sown in the Indeterminate
Forfeits its glory of divinity,
Concealing the omnipotence of its Force,
Concealing the omniscience of its Soul;*

(we have concealed all our omnipotence and omniscience.)

*An agent of its own transcendent Will,
It merges knowledge in the inconscient deep;
Accepting error, sorrow, death and pain,
It pays the ransom of the ignorant Night,
Redeeming by its substance Nature's fall.
Himself he knew and why his soul had gone
Into earth's passionate obscurity
To share the labour of an errant Power
Which by division hopes to find the One.*

(This is the character of mind.)

*Two beings he was, one wide and free above,
One struggling, bound, intense, its portion here.
A tie between them still could bridge two worlds;
There was a dim response, a distant breath;
All had not ceased in the unbounded hush.
His heart lay somewhere conscious and alone
Far down below him like a lamp in night;
Abandoned it lay, alone, imperishable,
Immobile with excess of passionate will,
His living, sacrificed and offered heart
Absorbed in adoration mystical,*

(It is a mystical adoration as you sit alone in Matrimandir, rapt in that silence.)

*Turned to its far-off fount of light and love.
In the luminous stillness of its mute appeal
It looked up to the heights it could not see;
It yearned from the longing depths it could not leave.
In the centre of his vast and fateful trance
Half-way between his free and fallen selves,
Interceding twixt God's day and the mortal's night,
Accepting worship as its single law,
Accepting bliss as the sole cause of things,
Refusing the austere joy which none can share,
Refusing the calm that lives for calm alone,
To her it turned for whom it willed to be.*

It willed to be for *Matri* - the Mother Principle which is the principle of creation and the principle that will transform this lower creation into the higher one.

*In the passion of its solitary dream
It lay like a closed soundless oratory
Where sleeps a consecrated argent floor
Lit by a single and untrembling ray
And an invisible Presence kneels in prayer.
On some deep breast of liberating peace
All else was satisfied with quietude;
This only knew there was a truth beyond.
All other parts were dumb in centred sleep
Consenting to the slow deliberate Power
Which tolerates the world's error and its grief,
Consenting to the cosmic long delay,
Timelessly waiting through the patient years
Her coming they had asked for earth and men;
This was the fiery point that called her now.*

Matrimandir is for the realisation now, not for hereafter. Sri Aurobindo has again and again emphasised that.

*Extinction could not quench that lonely fire;
Its seeing filled the blank of mind and will;
Thought dead, its changeless force abode and grew.
Armed with the intuition of a bliss
To which some moved tranquillity was the key,
It persevered through life's huge emptiness
Amid the blank denials of the world.
It sent its voiceless prayer to the Unknown;
It listened for the footsteps of its hopes
Returning through the void immensities,
It waited for the fiat of the Word
That comes through the still self from the Supreme.*

(p. 331 – 333)

As you meditate there in that rapt stillness you are just waiting to hear the transformative word from the Supreme.

So you see, Sri Aurobindo has given us the mantra of Transformation. He has forged something that is like a huge sketchmap of future development, he brings a future realisation before us and all humanity. His message is a message of hope for all mankind. And it is not just a message and important words spoken out. It is the living seed that is cast into the soil that human nature still is; and humanity is waiting to see its fruition. The seed has been cast, it is growing. We are all very fortunate to have been here, gathered in this vibrant atmosphere. We are just opening our consciousness, opening our lives. We may not know it consciously but our bodies are open to these things and they vibrate with these vibrations. And they are cancelling so many things that indelibly imprint themselves on others who are living in ignorance outside. For us it is a very great opportunity; and what Sri Aurobindo has done for us, we shall take through years and years and years till eternity in future, it will slowly reveal itself and we cannot be grateful enough for what he has done for us. Thank you.

Reading Savitri for Progress and Delight

*Talk by Shraddhavan on August 18, 2001
at Sri Aurobindo Centre for Advanced Research,
Pondicherry*

Friends, it's a great honour for me to be invited to speak to you about *Savitri* and I would like to invoke the presence of the Mother and the Master to be with us and give their illumination during our time together.

Although I am happy to be here, I face you with some trepidation, because this is actually the first time that I will be addressing a large group of informed Aurobindonians like this. In fact I feel very hesitant to speak about *Savitri* at all. As Ananda mentioned when introducing me, my speciality has been reading, and I am going to cheat a little and spend the last portion of our time together simply reading. The title given for this talk is 'Reading *Savitri* for Progress and Delight' and I hope that together we can make a brief survey of different approaches to reading *Savitri*.

Most of you must be familiar with the words of Mother on this topic. She told Norman Dowsett, here in the Ashram, in the 1960s I believe:

For the opening of the psychic, for the growth of consciousness, and even for the improvement of the English it is good to read one or two pages of Savitri each day.

And I am sure that many of you here, like Aurobindonians all over the world, are following that practice of reading one or two pages of *Savitri* every day individually at home, as a meditation for yourselves with the aspiration that it will assist you towards opening of the psychic and the growth of consciousness.

But while this is a practice for individual concentration, more and more groups are taking up the practice of reading *Savitri* together, whether regularly or on special occasions. This practice has been going on in Auroville since the very early days there. The Mother gave blessings to several different people to read aloud to groups there regularly. One of those was our friend

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'Narad' – the Mother gave him that name in 1972 - an Aurovilian from America, a singer and poet, and a gardener. He was looking after the Matrimandir Plant Nursery, and in that beautiful garden he used to read from *Savitri* every Sunday morning to a small gathering. Another was Shyam Sunderji, the Mother's Secretary for Auroville. I remember that at a very difficult time in Auroville's history some of us used to gather at his house at 8 every evening and he would read, and what a help and strength that was to us at that time.

It was shortly afterwards that I made a first experiment at the request of a group of friends, of reading *Savitri* with them for the improvement of English. I am continuing that now at Savitri Bhavan with people who feel a deep inner attraction to *Savitri*, but who for various reasons like to have some help with understanding Sri Aurobindo's vocabulary and sentence structure, and with correct English pronunciation. We read about a page each time. I read first to give the pronunciation, then we go through the passage again to look at difficult words, understand the sentence construction clearly, get an idea of the surface meaning; and then each of the students has a chance to read for improving their pronunciation. I find that my early students from those first classes in the 1980s have amply rewarded my hopes that by learning English through *Savitri* they would gain a mastery of the English language in its richest scope. I remember one of those students in the beginning complaining, "Well, we are reading poetry and Sri Aurobindo, and it's all very inspiring. But for the work that we are doing we need a lot of legal and commercial vocabulary, and how are we going to get that?" It was amusing for us all to see how Sri Aurobindo answered him, because the passage we read that day - I think it was in Canto 4 of Book One - was full of exactly this kind of vocabulary. We find that, just as it is said of the ancient Indian epic that what is not in the *Mahabharata* is not in the world, the same can be said about *Savitri*. The whole universe with all its planes is there, all human experience is there, and the whole width and depth and richness of the English language is there. But of course this approach, of reading *Savitri* for the improvement of English, benefits people when they have some inner opening, inner response to it. Then what happens is that the lines that we read together and that they read again for themselves sink very very deep into the consciousness and there they do their work - a work that includes building up connections in the physical brain that enables them at a later stage to gain a spontaneous understanding and mastery of the language. I have seen this process take effect many times, but as I say it works for those

in whom there is a soul response to *Savitri* - and that is the theme I will be coming back to again and again this morning.

Another way of reading *Savitri*, which I believe is practised in many groups, particularly perhaps here in India, is as a kind of sacrifice: to read the whole of *Savitri* from beginning to end; this is usually done during a particular period of special days. A practice of continuous reading, sometimes for 24 hours a day, covering the whole of *Savitri*. In Auroville too we have observed such a practice; for example, during the month of February 2000 which had 29 days. Starting on the first day of that special month, people met regularly, reading for an hour or an hour and a half each day to complete the reading of the whole poem during that one month period. At a normal reading speed it takes about 40 hours to read all the 49 cantos.

I know some individuals who make this their daily practice: starting at the beginning and reading a canto or half a canto every day till they reach the end and then starting at the beginning again, and in that way they have gone through the whole of *Savitri* many times. When this is done in groups there's really no doubt that by this going through the whole sound-body of the epic from beginning to end aloud, there must be built up a very strong force field of vibrations. It is definitely of benefit to the people who participate in it. But again I would say that the effect or benefit of this sacrifice will be richer to the extent that the reading is done with understanding and above all with soul surrender. It shouldn't become a mere ritual. Sri Aurobindo's mantric lines, repeated one after the other, will always have their power; but the power will be much greater if the mind can participate, and the will and the heart.

I have also heard of some groups who select one line that seems to have a particular mantric power and then within the group they chant that line many times. They concentrate on that one special line, and try to take its vibrations deep into themselves. Again I am sure that this is very beneficial to those who practice it. In that way the words enter very deeply into the consciousness. There they resonate and do their work, and perhaps not just the surface meaning but the deeper meaning and the deeper vibrations may reveal their full depth to those who undertake this exercise if it is done with self-dedication, with a true aspiration to internalise the heart of the meaning, not just as a mere repetition.

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At another end of the spectrum of possible approaches to *Savitri*, we can say there would be the aesthetic approach, the approach of enjoying it for its poetic beauty. I met a gentleman a couple of months ago, who told me, “We have faith in Sri Aurobindo, but it is so difficult to understand his books. We tried with *The Life Divine*, we tried with *The Synthesis of Yoga* but we found them so difficult. But when we read *Savitri*, even though we don’t understand, we get many pictures, many inner experiences, all kinds of inner movements.” So this poetic appeal, the beauty and suggestiveness of *Savitri* might be one reason why *Savitri* has overtaken *The Life Divine* as Sri Aurobindo’s “bestseller”. It used to be that everybody who wanted to make an attempt to come close to Sri Aurobindo would buy *The Life Divine* – perhaps feeling that even if they didn’t manage to read it at least they had it, and that maybe one day they will read it. So I’m told that now *Savitri* has taken this position. More and more people are feeling that although *Savitri* is such an immense ocean of mysteries, they can dip their toes in it, even if they can’t yet swim and revel in its deeper waves.



Shraddhavan at SACAR, August 18, 2001

Of course, this kind of poetic appreciation will be enhanced by some natural capacity to respond to poetry and by some knowledge about poetry. Sri Aurobindo has provided us, in this one poem, with supreme examples of all the different types of poetry that poetry-lovers relish. There is wonderful nature poetry in *Savitri*. There are wonderful passages of lyrical love poetry in *Savitri*. There is masterly sustained narrative and story-telling in certain sections of *Savitri*. There is supreme philosophical poetry carrying profound knowledge to satisfy our thought capacity. As he has shown in all his poetical output, Sri Aurobindo is the supreme Master of every range of poetic expression. And here in his masterwork, which he spent so many years of his life perfecting, he has enormously expanded the capacities of the English language and created a whole new subtle rhythm to carry all these many different kinds of poetic tones. There is no other poet in English who has the same special music which is characteristic of *Savitri*. This is something that should be appreciated by all lovers of poetry, lovers of English literature.

But we find that the academics in the universities in England, the professional poetry specialists, have not opened up to this. They have not yet accorded Sri Aurobindo the recognition that he deserves as the supreme poet in the English language. This is because he is breaking new ground, using techniques that they are not familiar with, and above all because they lack the soul response that would enable them to enter into that new thing that he is doing. So this particular delight is open to only to those whose souls are touched by Sri Aurobindo and his poetic expression.

The true role of all art, Sri Aurobindo tells us, is to go beyond the appearances and surfaces of things and to reveal something of their deeper truth and power. The true artist is one who is able to reach the higher levels of his aesthetic being and there gain access to those tracts of glorious beauty and power which have not yet been reached by nature's evolutionary process, which are still lying waiting for us in the future. And one thing that the true artist can do is to go behind the surface into those subtle planes, those higher planes, and bring forms from there closer to our human consciousness. This is so whether he is working with painting, sculpture, music or through words. And when we respond to those artistic creations, we are also participating in that movement of bringing those beings and those possibilities from higher and more beautiful worlds closer to our human world. This is the true role

of the artist, and the deepest value of Art.

Perhaps you know about the work that the Mother has done with Huta, of capturing certain images from selected passages of *Savitri* in painting. At that time she told Huta, “These are beings. It is not just paint on canvas.” Through this conscious work that they have done together or that the Mother did through Huta’s hands, beings and vibrations from those other worlds have been fixed in physical form. This immense work allows a very great enrichment of our understanding and appreciation of *Savitri*, and we feel deeply honoured by the fact that those paintings have now been given into the care of Savitri Bhavan. At the moment they are in storage with us, but we hope the day will come when we will be able to have them all on permanent exhibition as the Mother had wished. Then not only will they continue to do their work of radiating those subtle levels of consciousness into the human atmosphere, but we will all have permanent access to them. This will be a very very great enrichment and mark the fulfilment of part of our dream for Savitri Bhavan from the very beginning. We never dared to speak about this dream. but there was the hope that if we could create the proper place perhaps one day they would come to us. And now that they have been given into our care, we look forward to the day when we will have the very special art-gallery where they can all be on permanent display in ideal and very secure conditions, to enhance our ever-deeper contact with the marvel that is *Savitri*.

If we move on from the aesthetic aspect, the aspect of artistic beauty and its power, another approach to *Savitri*, and another part of our work at Savitri Bhavan, lies in the realm of study. For there is not only the physical body of this poem with its sound, its rhythms, not only the beautiful images which can delight our sense of aesthetic beauty, it also contains and carries, translated into terms that human minds can access, Supreme Truths. Sri Aurobindo has brought those high truths close to us, in such a way that our minds can get some small touch of those higher truths through the evocative work that he has done with mantric language. This intellectual understanding is not the whole of the story. It will not be possible even to grasp it, unless, as with the other kinds of enjoyment, there is a soul opening. But the intellect, the mind, is the highest level that has so far been established in natural evolution. We human beings carry that power. Sri Aurobindo has emphasised

that the mind is not to be left out, in fact it is to be made an instrument of the future development. So reading *Savitri* with as much intellectual understanding as we can manage enables us to enter more deeply into what Sri Aurobindo is saying there; enjoying as fully as possible all the allusions that he makes to different literatures to enrich his poem, or even just having a general understanding of the development of the poem – all this can help us very much. So we make a place for that kind of approach too in our programmes at Savitri Bhavan, and we are very grateful to all the guest speakers who have come and shared with us their insights and the fruits of their sacrifice of *Savitri*-study.

Let us just review these different ways of reading.

Perhaps that first kind, where the emphasis is on faith and devotion rather than understanding, we can call ‘bhakta reading’. We concentrate and aspire that illumination shall come, and we get the benefit of the sound values whether we read aloud or silently to ourselves. In this connection two things are important: with all poetry it is true, but it is particularly and specially true with Sri Aurobindo’s poetry that the sound values of the words and rhythm are so important in the whole effect that it is advisable to read aloud if possible, even when we are reading alone, to ourselves. And if there are reasons why you can’t read out loud, then at least try to read it word by word at the aloud reading pace, sounding each word in your mind, in order to get as much as possible the value of each word, each line.

I have also heard of people who write out passages from *Savitri* in a similar spirit. I believe our elder brother Madhavji Pandit has advised some people that if their mind is troubled, if they are finding it difficult to concentrate, then to sit down and write out a page or two from *Savitri*. I can personally vouch for the fact that this does produce a special quality of concentration, for we are involving our body in the concentration. I know of one artist who used to come here to Pondicherry - a wonderful artist from Holland. With immense concentration he has written out the whole of *Savitri* on a single large sheet of our Ashram handmade paper, writing and writing again and writing over and over again. I haven’t seen that sheet of paper, I would like to see it. It must be charged with immense energy. So we could say that this is a kind of ‘bhakta approach’.

Then there is this aesthetic approach we spoke of, the enjoyment of beauty

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at different levels; and thirdly the intellectual level where we study and try to absorb through our minds as best we can, as much as possible of what is Sri Aurobindo is communicating.

There are two other approaches I would like to mention. One perhaps you may know of. The Mother has mentioned that *Savitri* is an ideal book to consult for guidance from our higher and innermost being. We can use it as an "oracle". If we have some problem we want to receive guidance about we can start by putting our question to the Divine, with some concentration. If we like we may write it down, for it is important to formulate our question as clearly as possible. Then we take up the book and, still with concentration, open it. We may do this with closed eyes, and with the left hand to avoid too much interference from our normal active everyday mentality. Then we open our eyes and see the lines before us. In them there is likely to be some message that comes to us from our own true highest being, a message which our soul can recognize. Perhaps many of you might have had this experience and can confirm it.

In this connection I would also like to mention the role of translations. I met a lady the other day who told me that from the first time that she opened *Savitri*, she felt that it represented her own soul speaking to her. Now this is a very remarkable experience, considering that she read *Savitri* in a German translation. And ever since then, her contact to *Savitri* has been through this German translation - which informed people consider to be unsatisfactory in many respects. This proves, I think, that what we contact most deeply in *Savitri* is the subtle truth in it, the power behind, and that the words on the page are just a help and a channel for that. You may know that the Mother herself has translated quite large passages of *Savitri* into French, and that she concluded that it is impossible, that *Savitri* cannot be translated. - there is no way to do it and she was not at all satisfied with her translation. Nevertheless when people approached her and said, "You know, I really feel the urge to translate *Savitri* into my own language", normally she encouraged them. Because this was a way for them to bathe in the atmosphere of *Savitri*, to come into contact with it in a very special close relationship. So while I think we have to say that probably all translations cannot but fail to carry the whole of *Savitri*, this is no reason for not attempting them and they may be helpful. Translations have their role to play, both in helping people towards an intellectual

understanding and, as we've seen in the case of that German lady, some kind of direct soul contact may become possible through the channel of an translation, even though it is imperfect.

But we shouldn't consider any of these translations as definitive, just as we shouldn't consider any of our readings and understandings and interpretations as definitive. There is a passage in *Savitri* where Sri Aurobindo warns us against tying up the sacred book in silken strings of interpretation, saying, "It means this, it doesn't mean anything else". Whatever intellectual interpretation we may give to *Savitri*, it still has resonances which lie far beyond our interpretations and which can awaken new understandings in our minds and new movements in our beings. So we should be very careful about this. Now it is early days, for the time being perhaps we are not really in danger of this. But there is a possibility that in the future certain interpretations might become fixed and accepted. We should beware of any rigidity of this kind.

All this amounts to saying that behind these various different kinds of approach and response lies the deeper response of our souls. If that is missing, the continuous reading becomes just a ritual, aesthetic appreciation may hardly be possible, study and intellectual understanding runs the risk of becoming stereotyped. What truly attracts us to *Savitri*, what truly prompts us to read this book as a means of progress, is the delight of the soul. Its delight in recognising, expressed in perfectly appropriate images, rhythms, word-music, its own beauty - the soul's own beauty, its own depth, its own diversity, its own knowledge, its own native atmosphere.

Savitri deserves a type of reading that would give us all these things: the power of the words and the rhythm, the sound power, the mantric effect, the aesthetic delight, the intellectual illumination and the conscious soul thrill. The soul thrill is behind all those other forms of delight, but we would get most delight and most progress if we could come into conscious contact with that soul thrill.

Now it so happens that the Mother has mentioned, in connection with listening to her music, a method that might help us towards that integral kind of reading. She said that when we are listening to her organ music, we shouldn't just be hearing the harmony with our surface ears. We should try to quieten our whole being, making it as still as possible, and then listen to her music from the deepest heart centre, in such a way that the movements

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and notes of her music would seem to be taking place within our own consciousness, as if we ourselves are creating that music, playing that music. This is a kind of listening through identification. Of course to start with, it will be only an imaginative identification; but this may lead us to a deeper state of identification with the inner movement of the music. This has a resemblance too to the way that Mother said that she and Huta approached the painting work. First they would read the passage, the Mother would read out the passage. If we hear those recordings which Huta made, around which Sunil-da has composed his Savitri music, we can notice with what concentration the Mother has read those passages. After the reading they concentrated in silence. Whatever image came up then, the Mother would describe it to Huta, giving her instructions how to paint it; and Huta had to go home and complete the canvas. So, if you like, we can make a kind of experiment together, trying to read and listen to *Savitri* in this way, in this state of inner concentration.

Before we try that, I would like to say that every single one of Sri Aurobindo's books, all his writings, every little letter, is a window onto a vast coherent body of Truth; and because of the process by which he has written, all of them are charged with the plenary power of his consciousness. This is what attracts us to Sri Aurobindo's writings. I recall one friend in Auroville, who described to me how *The Life Divine* came into his hands: he said he couldn't put it down for three weeks. He said he was just totally absorbed in *The Life Divine*. He felt he was swimming in an ocean of delight and consciousness. Other people can tell how a single sentence in a brief letter has been enough to change their lives. Even his books like *The Human Cycle* or *The Ideal of Human Unity*, which are addressed more to the reason and the intelligent will, are carrying an immense charge of soul-electricity from far beyond the mind. This is true of all his writings, but nevertheless the Mother has given a special place among the whole body of Sri Aurobindo's works to *Savitri*, calling it "*The supreme revelation of Sri Aurobindo's vision*". So what is this specially illuminating and uniquely delightful quality and power of this work? My answer for myself is that *Savitri* is integral in its appeal to all the different planes of our being, of our capacity of response and appreciation, and it is of course integral in its scope. You know that the Mother has said that "*He has packed the entire universe into one book*". You also know, I am

sure, that Sri Aurobindo spoke of himself as primarily a poet. I think he would have been a remarkable poet even if he had never taken up first politics and revolution, and then yoga. I think we would still have heard his name as a figure in English literature. Having devoted himself to an immense spiritual realisation, through *Savitri* he consciously took up the work of giving expression in poetry to whatever higher levels of consciousness he was able to securely achieve. And he went on successively revising as more and more capacity of expression became available to him. In this immense work he has surely succeeded in doing what he said the mantra must do. In *The Future Poetry* he writes :

The Mantra is the word that carries the godhead in it or the power of the godhead, can bring it into the consciousness and fix there it and its workings, awaken there the thrill of the infinite, the force of something absolute, perpetuate the miracle of the supreme utterance.

CSWA 26:313

This is what he has done in *Savitri*.

That is why I would request you to join me in this little experiment and indulge me in my delight in reading *Savitri*. I would like to read the first four pages of Book One Canto One, "The Symbol Dawn". And I would request you to try to do this quietening of the consciousness, listening from the deepest inmost centre and trying to follow from there, through identification, the movement of dawning which is described in these four pages, the movement from the dark resistance of our normal material consciousness, to the first quiver of aspiration, then the response of the divine light, becoming gradually a beautiful magical dawn and finally the full light of consciousness.

News of Savitri Bhavan

Calendar of Events

December 2001 to February 2002

December

The highlight of this month was the visit by Chotte Narayan Sharmaji on Sunday December 16th, when a wonderful psychic atmosphere reigned beneath the trees in our garden as he spoke movingly on *Savitri*. Extracts from his talk appears on pages 14-24 of this issue, but they unfortunately cannot fully convey the sweet experience we shared. On Sunday December 30th there was another of our monthly “Remembering the Mother” programmes. These are always warm and inspiring occasions, and this one was no exception.

This month saw too the beginning of a series of Saturday afternoon programmes intended especially for people who are preparing to join Auroville - although everyone is welcome to attend. The first gathering focussed on the Charter of Auroville, the second on the Mother's text "A Dream", the third was a talk about the lives and work of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Due to very heavy rain, only a few people were able to attend, but those who did so appreciated it so much that a repeat was requested. The fourth session, on Saturday December 29, was led by Kailash Jhaveri from the Ashram, who gave an introduction to the Yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

January

Throughout the month of January we had an exhibition of extraordinarily beautiful photographs of the sacred mountain of Arunachala, taken by Dev Gogol who is a resident of the Sri Ramana Ashram in Tiruvannamalai.

On the afternoon of Saturday January 12 there was workshop led by Richard Pearson from the Ashram school entitled “Exploring the Five Senses”. On the other Saturday afternoons, the special programmes continued with a repeat of the presentation on the Life and Work of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, a talk on “Human Unity” by Dr. Ananda Reddy, and a session on “The Spiritual Significance of Flowers” in which Richard shared his deep knowledge of the names given by the Mother to flowers.

There was another inspiring gathering for “Remembering the Mother” on Sunday January 20th.

February

The Saturday afternoon programmes continue, with one special programme in Tamil, at which our elder brother S. Mahalingam will read from his translations of the Mother's talks, and answer questions. Special programmes are also planned for the Mother's Birthday on February 21st and the birthday of Auroville on February 28th. Throughout this month there is an exhibition of reproductions of Huta's "Meditations on Savitri" paintings for Book Seven, The Book of Yoga, Cantos One, Two and Three. It is planned to show the paintings for Book Seven Cantos Four, Five and Six during March and April 2002.

In addition to these special events, our regular courses continue as follows :

REGULAR COURSES

Sundays	morning	<i>Savitri</i> Study Circle	10.30 - 12.00 am
	evening	<i>The Human Cycle</i> (with Kittu Reddy)	5.00 - 6.30 pm
Mondays		Cultivating Concentration (Dr. Jai Singh)	5.30 - 6.30 pm
Tuesdays		The Mother's <i>Entretiens</i>	5.00 - 6.00 pm
		<i>The Synthesis of Yoga</i>	6.00 - 7.00 pm
Wednesday	morning	English through <i>Savitri</i>	6.30 - 7.30 am
	evening	<i>The Life Divine</i> (with Dr. Ananda Reddy)	6.00 - 7.30 pm
Thursdays		<i>The Human Cycle</i>	5.30 - 7.00 pm
Fridays		Cultivating Concentration (led by Dr. Jai Singh)	5.30 - 6.30 pm

Savitri Bhavan office hours are 9 -12 am and 2-30 - 5 pm every day except Sunday; and the Reading Room remains open to 7.30 pm every weekday. Any readers of INVOCATION who are staying in the area are most welcome to join any of these activities, and particularly our core activity, the Sunday morning Savitri Study Circle.

Some of our readers have been asking for more information about the progress of our Construction Programme. We plan to provide a detailed presentation in the April 2002 issue of INVOCATION.

Announcement

The Ascent of Sight in Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri* by Jugal Kishore Mukherjee

*Published by the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education,
Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry September 2001*

This is an illuminating and original study of *Savitri*, by a highly respected author who has been a lover and student of Sri Aurobindo's revelatory epic for more than 50 years. Since 1967 he has also been guiding in-depth study of the poem with a number of senior students in his capacity as a teacher in the Higher Course at the SAICE. In this monograph he explores the multitude of different types of sight and vision described in *Savitri*, taking as a starting point the line: "*A progress leap from sight to greater sight.*" The book costs Rs. 70 and can be obtained through SABDA.

Now available from Savitri Bhavan

The following recordings are available for audio-cassette, audio CD, or as MP3 files on CD

Savitri reading. *We are preparing a complete recording of the entire text of Savitri, read by Shraddhavan. At present about 20 hours of recitation are available: Book One, Cantos 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5; Book Three, Cantos 1, 2, 3, 4; and Book Two, Cantos 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.*

Guest speakers at Savitri Bhavan. *Each talk is about one hour. Speakers include Nirodbaran, Arabinda Basu, the late Udar Pinto, Dr. Mangesh Nadkarni, R.Y. Deshpande, Dr. Ananda Reddy, Sraddhalu Ranade, C.V. Devan Nair, and more...*

If you would like to obtain any of these, please contact us for full details at the address given on the front & back inside covers.

“Meditations on Savitri” videos

Savitri Bhavan has now been given responsibility for Indian distribution of the video films of the “Meditations on Savitri” paintings made by Huta under the Mother’s guidance from 1961 to 1967, covering the whole of Savitri. These films were prepared, with the Mother’s blessings, by Michel of Filmaur. Twelve videos cover all the 468 paintings of the series, along with the Mother’s readings of the selected passages recorded by Huta, and the Mother’s own organ music. We are authorised to distribute copies of these videos in India only. People in other countries who would like to obtain copies may contact:

*Filmaur Multimedia
Danziger Str. 1
D 82131 GAUTING
GERMANY
Phone +89 850 85 55
Fax +89 850 91 78
e-mail filmaur@mirapuri-enterprises.com*

About Savitri Bhavan

We dream of an environment in Auroville

that will breathe the atmosphere of Savitri

that will welcome Savitri lovers from every corner of the world

that will be an inspiring centre of Savitri studies

that will house all kinds of materials and activities to enrich our understanding and enjoyment of Sri Aurobindo's revelatory epic

that will be the abode of Savitri, the Truth that has come from the Sun

We welcome support from everyone who feels that the vibration of Savitri will help to manifest a better tomorrow.

Savitri Bhavan is a project of SAIER (Sri Aurobindo International Institute of Educational Research). Donations by cheque or draft may be made payable to 'SAIER' and sent with a covering note specifying that the amount is meant for Savitri Bhavan. You may also specify whether you would prefer your donation to be used for construction or activities. Contributions from within Auroville may be made through the Auroville Financial Service, account no. 230247.

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Savitri
is a Mantra
for the transformation
of the world

The Mother