



All India Magazine
March 2020

Unity in Diversity

Cover picture: Holi

Holi is a festival of colours depicting unity in diversity. The story of Krishna from which Holi (The Indian festival of colours) originated is symbolic of the One Divine playing with Nature in all her diverse moods and colours.

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Unity in Diversity

Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face. — Sri Aurobindo

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Editorial note: If battle and wars are a present reality, unity of mankind is a future inevitability. This is so because the world is a secret unity deep within while outside we see differentiation and separateness. This differentiation are also part of the grand purpose. It is to create Unity in diversity. But just as the greatest wars are fought within our inner spaces against the forces of greed and hatred and fear so too the secret of Unity is discovered as we unify our own being. This issue is dedicated to this theme of Unity in Diversity.



All here shall be one day her sweetness' home,
All contraries prepare her harmony;
Towards her our knowledge climbs, our passion gropes;
In her miraculous rapture we shall dwell,
Her clasp shall turn to ecstasy our pain.
Our self shall be one self with all through her.

Savitri, p. 314

Sri Aurobindo

The Mother's Agenda for Earth and humanity

The general aim

The general aim to be attained is the advent of a progressing universal harmony.

The means for attaining this aim, in regard to the earth, is the realisation of human unity through the awakening in all and the manifestation by all of the inner Divinity which is One.

In other words, — to create unity by founding the Kingdom of God which is within us all.

This, therefore, is the most useful work to be done:

(1) For each individually, to be conscious in himself of the Divine Presence and to identify himself with it.

(2) To individualise the states of being that were never till now conscious in man and, by that, to put the earth in connection with one or more of the fountains of universal force that are still sealed to it.

(3) To speak again to the world the eternal word under a new form adapted to its present mentality.

It will be the synthesis of all human knowledge.

(4) Collectively, to establish an ideal society in a propitious spot for the flowering of the new race, the race of the Sons of God.

*

Two processes

The terrestrial transformation and harmonisation can be brought about by two processes which, though opposite in appearance, must combine — must act upon each other and complete each other:

(1) Individual transformation, an inner development leading to the union with the Divine Presence.

(2) Social transformation, the establishment of an

environment favourable to the flowering and growth of the individual.

Since the environment reacts upon the individual and, on the other hand, the value of the environment depends upon the value of the individual, the two works should proceed side by side. But this can be done only through division of labour, and that necessitates the formation of a group, hierarchised, if possible.

Threefold action

The action of the members of the group should be threefold:

(1) To realise in oneself the ideal to be attained: to become a perfect earthly representative of the first manifestation of the Unthinkable in all its modes, attributes and qualities.

(2) To preach this ideal by word, but, above all, by example, so as to find out all those who are ready to realise it in their turn and to become also announcers of liberation.

(3) To found a typic society or reorganise those that already exist.

A Twofold labour

For each individual also there is a twofold labour to be done, simultaneously, each side of it helping and completing the other:

(1) An inner development, a progressive union with the Divine Light, sole condition in which man can be always in harmony with the great stream of universal life.

(2) An external action which everyone has to choose according to his capacities and personal preferences. He must find his own place, the place which he alone can occupy in the general concert, and he must give himself entirely to it, not forgetting that he is playing only one note in the terrestrial symphony and yet his note is indispensable to the harmony of the whole, and its value depends upon its justness.

CWM 2: 49 – 50

The Mother

Unity within Oneself

The way to establish unity and homogeneity in our being

Keep the will firm. Treat the recalcitrant parts as disobedient children. Act upon them constantly and patiently. Convince them of their error.

In the depths of your consciousness is the psychic being, the temple of the Divine within you. This is the centre round which should come about the unification of all these divergent parts, all these contradictory movements of your being. Once you have got the consciousness of the psychic being and its aspiration, these doubts and difficulties can be destroyed. It takes more or less time, but you will surely succeed in the end. Once you have turned to the Divine, saying, "I want to be yours", and the Divine has said, "Yes", the whole world cannot keep you from it. When the central being has made its surrender, the chief difficulty has disappeared. The outer being is like a crust. In ordinary people the crust is so hard and thick that they are not conscious of the Divine within them. If once, even for a moment only, the inner being has said, "I am here and I am yours", then it is as though a bridge has been built and little by little the crust becomes thinner and thinner until the two parts are wholly joined and the inner and the outer become one.

CWM 3: 6-7

The Mother

Healing Division and Disorder

True harmony

There is only one true harmony and that is the supramental — the reign of Truth, the expression of the Divine Law. In the Supermind, therefore, chance has no place. But in the lower Nature the supreme Truth is obscured: hence there is an absence of that divine unity of purpose and action which alone can constitute order. Lacking this unity, the domain of lower Nature is governed by what we may call chance — that is to say, it is a field in which various conflicting forces intermix, having no single definite aim. Whatever arises out of such a rushing together of forces is a result of confusion, dissonance and falsehood — a product of chance. Chance is not merely a conception to cover our ignorance of the causes at work; it is a description of the uncertain *melée* of the lower Nature which lacks the calm one-pointedness of the divine Truth. The world has forgotten its divine origin and become an arena of egoistic energies; but it is still possible for it to open to the Truth, call it down by its aspiration and bring about a change in the whirl of chance. What men regard as a mechanical sequence of events, owing to their own mental associations, experiences and generalisations, is really manipulated by subtle agencies each of which tries to get its own will done. The world has got so subjected to these undivine agencies that the victory of the Truth cannot be won except by fighting for it. It has no right to it: it has to gain it by disowning the falsehood and the perversion, an important part of which is the facile notion that, since all things owe their final origin to the Divine, all their immediate activities also proceed directly from it. The fact is that here in the lower Nature the Divine is veiled by a cosmic Ignorance and what takes place does not proceed directly from the divine knowledge.

That everything is equally the will of God is a very convenient suggestion of the hostile influences which would have the creation stick as tightly as possible to the disorder and ugliness to which it has been reduced. So what is to be done, you ask? Well, call down the Light, open yourselves to the power of Transformation.... It is the struggle between the old and the new that forms the crux of the Yoga; but if you are bent on being faithful to the supreme Law and Order revealed to you, the parts of your being belonging to the domain of chance will, however slowly, be converted and divinised.

CWM 3: 163-64

Step back and reflect

Did you ever have spontaneously — spontaneously without effort — the perception that you had made a mistake? I am not speaking of an external reaction that gives you a knock, wakes you up suddenly and you say: “Oh my God, what have I done?” I am not speaking of that. When you do a thing, feel a thing, when you say a thing — take simply the petty quarrels like those I hear about at least a dozen of them a day (at least), idiotic, (I wonder how, having one’s reason, one can quarrel about such things), well, at the time you utter those words that should not be uttered, that are simply silly, do you see that you are truly stupid — not to say anything worse — spontaneously?... You always give an excuse. You have always the feeling that the other person is wrong, and that you are right and that, indeed, he must be told that he is wrong, yes? Otherwise he would never know it! Isn’t that so? I am putting the thing rather glaringly, as though under a small microscope, so that it may look a little bigger. But it is like that. And so long as it is like that, you are a million miles away from the true consciousness. When you are unable immediately, instantaneously to step back, put yourself in the place of the other person,

understand why he has this feeling, have a glimpse of your own weakness, compare the two and come to the conclusion: “Well, it is that, that’s the true thing”, it means that you are still very far behind. When you are able to do it spontaneously, instantaneously, when it does not take time, when it is a natural movement, then you may feel satisfied that you have made a little progress....

CWM 5: 63–64

Understand instead of arguing

If you are beginning an argument, keep quiet immediately, instantaneously. You must be silent, say nothing at all, and then try to see the thing as the other person sees it — that won’t make you forget your own way of seeing it, not at all! but you will be able to put both of them together. And you will truly have made progress, a real progress.

It is the same for everything. In all that you do together with others, if you do not agree, take it as a divine Grace, a marvellous opportunity given you to make a progress. And it is simple: instead of being on this side, you are on the other; instead of looking at yourself, you enter the other person and look. You must have just a little bit of imagination, a little more control over your thoughts, over your movements. But that is not very difficult. When you have tried it out a little, after a while you find it very easy.

You must not just look and then make a mental effort, telling yourself: “Why is it like this and like that? Why does he do that? Why does he say that?” You will never arrive at anything. You won’t understand, you will imagine all kinds of explanations which will be worthless and teach you nothing at all except to tell yourself: “That person is stupid or else wicked”— things that lead nowhere. On the other hand, if you only make that little movement, and instead of looking at him as an object quite alien to you, you try to enter within, you enter within, into that little head that’s before

you, and then, suddenly, you find yourself on the other side, you look at yourself and understand quite well what he is saying — everything is clear, the why, the how, the reason, the feeling which is behind the whole thing....

CWM 5: 219–20

Developing tolerance

Many miseries and misfortunes in the world would disappear if people knew the relativity of knowledge, the relativity of faith, the relativity of the teachings and also the relativity of circumstances... to what extent a thing is so relatively important! For the moment it may be capital, it may lead you to life or to death — I am not speaking of physical life and death, speaking of the life and death of the spirit — but this is for the moment; and when you have made a certain progress, when you have grown a few years older from the spiritual point of view, and you look back on this thing, this circumstance or idea which perhaps has decided your life, it will seem so relative, so insignificant to you... and you will need something much higher to make new progress.

If one could always remember this, well, one would avoid much sectarianism, much intolerance, and annul all quarrels immediately, because a quarrel means just this, that one thinks in one way and the other in another, that one has taken one attitude and the other another, and that instead of trying to bring them together and find out how they could be harmonised, one puts them over against each other as one fights with one's fists. It is nothing else.

But if you become aware of the complete relativity of your point of view, your thought, your conviction of what is good, to what an extent it is relative in the march of the universe, then you will be less violent in your reactions and more tolerant. Here we are.

CWM 6: 358–59

Try to understand others

You have never tried to enter another person's consciousness to know exactly what is going on there? Not projecting your consciousness into someone else, because then you find yourself inside him and this is not interesting — but entering into relation with his consciousness which is within him, for example when, for one reason or another, you don't see things eye to eye; one sees them in one way, the other in another. If people are reasonable they do not quarrel. But if they are not reasonable, they begin quarrelling. Then, instead of quarrelling, the best thing to do is to enter into the other's consciousness and ask yourself why he says things like that, what is it that pushes him to do this or say that? What is the inner reason, what is his vision of things which makes him take this attitude? It is extremely interesting. If you do this, immediately you stop being angry. First thing: you can no longer be angry. So this is already a great gain. But also, if the other continues being angry, it has no effect on you.

And then, later, one can try to identify oneself more perfectly and prevent the movements of division and deformation and stop quarrels. Very useful.

CWM 6: 424–25

The propagandist spirit

If you arrive at the conception of the world as the expression of the Divine in all His complexity, then the necessity for complexity and diversity has to be recognised, and it becomes impossible for you to want to make others think and feel as you do.

Each one should have his own way of thinking, feeling and reaction; why do you want others to do as you do and be like you? And even granting that your truth is greater than theirs — though this word means nothing at all, for, from a certain point of view all truths are true; they are all partial, but they are true because they

are truths but the minute you want your truth to be greater than your neighbour's, you begin to wander away from the truth.

This habit of wanting to compel others to think as you do, has always seemed very strange to me; this is what I call “the propagandist spirit”, and it goes very far. You can go one step further and want people to do what you do, feel as you feel, and then it becomes a frightful uniformity.

CWM 8: 105

Mind your own business

I can assure you that there comes a time when one no longer feels any necessity at all, at all, of convincing others of the truth of what one thinks.

When someone criticises what I am, the truth I am realising, when others criticise...

You may politely tell him, “Mind your own business.” But you must leave it at that. You want to convince someone who criticises that he is wrong to criticise? — The more you tell him, the more will he be convinced that he is right!

CWM 8: 106

The world is a mirror

When something in a person seems to you completely unacceptable or ridiculous — “What! He is like that, he behaves like that, he says things like that, he does things like that” — you should say to yourself, “Well, well, but perhaps I do the same thing without being aware of it. I would do better to look into myself first before criticising him, so as to make sure that I am not doing the very same thing in a slightly different way.” If you have the good sense and intelligence to do this each time you are shocked by another person's behaviour, you will realise that in life your relations with others are like a mirror which is presented to you so

that you can see more easily and clearly the weaknesses you carry within you.

In a general and almost absolute way anything that shocks you in other people is the very thing you carry in yourself in a more or less veiled, more or less hidden form, though perhaps in a slightly different guise which allows you to delude yourself. And what in yourself seems inoffensive enough, becomes monstrous as soon as you see it in others.

Try to experience this; it will greatly help you to change yourselves. At the same time it will bring a sunny tolerance to your relationships with others, the goodwill which comes from understanding, and it will very often put an end to these completely useless quarrels.

CWM 10: 21-22

One can live without quarrelling

One can live without quarrelling. It seems strange to say this because as things are, it would seem, on the contrary, that life is made for quarrelling in the sense that the main occupation of people who are together is to quarrel, overtly or covertly. You do not always come to words, you do not always come to blows — fortunately — but you are in a state of perpetual irritation within because you do not find around you the perfection that you would yourself wish to realise, and which you find rather difficult to realise — but you find it entirely natural that others should realise it.

“How can they be like that?...” You forget how difficult you find it in yourself not to be “like that”!

Try, you will see.

Look upon everything with a benevolent smile. Take all the things which irritate you as a lesson for yourself and your life will be more peaceful and more effective as well, for a great percentage

of your energy certainly goes to waste in the irritation you feel when you do not find in others the perfection that you would like to realise in yourself.

You stop short at the perfection that others should realise and you are seldom conscious of the goal you should be pursuing yourself. If you are conscious of it, well then, begin with the work which is given to you, that is to say, realise what you have to do and do not concern yourself with what others do, because, after all, it is not your business. And the best way to the true attitude is simply to say, "All those around me, all the circumstances of my life, all the people near me, are a mirror held up to me by the Divine Consciousness to show me the progress I must make. Everything that shocks me in others means a work I have to do in myself."

And perhaps if one carried true perfection in oneself, one would discover it more often in others.

CWM 10: 22-23

Universalise your consciousness

First of all you must know what I have just told you, that you are a part of the whole, that this whole is a part of a greater whole, and that this greater whole is a part of a still greater whole, right up to its forming one single totality. Once you know that, you begin to become aware that in reality there cannot be any separation between you and something greater than you of which you are a part. This is the beginning. Now, you must come to the point not only of thinking this but of feeling it and even living it, and then the wall of ignorance tumbles: one feels this unity everywhere and realises that he is only a more or less fragmentary part of a whole much vaster than he, which is the universe. Then one begins to have a more universal consciousness.

CWM 7: 233

The Mother

Rediscovering Oneness

The illusion of separate personality

You must go deep, deep within, and find the eternal essence of your being to know the creative reality in yourself. And once you have found that, you will realise that it is one single thing, the same in all others, and so where is your separate personality? Nothing's left any longer.

Yes, these are recording and reproducing instruments, and there are always what might be called distortions — they may be distortions for the better, they may be distortions for the worse, they may be fairly great changes; the inner combinations are such that things are not reproduced exactly as they passed from one to the other because the instrument is very complex. But it is one and the same thing which is moved by a conscious will, quite independent of all personal wills.

When the Buddha wanted to make his disciples understand these things, he used to tell them: every time you send out a vibration, a desire for example, the desire for some particular thing, your desire starts circulating from one person to another, from one to another across the universe and will go right round and come back to you. And as it is not only one thing but a world of things, and as you are not the only transmitting centre — all individuals are transmitting centres — it is such a confusion that you lose your bearings in there. But these vibrations move about in a single, absolutely identical field; it is only the complication and interception of the vibrations which give you the impression of something independent or separate.

But there's nothing separate or independent; there is only *one* Substance, *one* Force, *one* Consciousness, *one* Will, which moves in countless ways of being.

And it is so complicated that one is no longer aware of it, but

if one steps back and follows the movement, no matter which line of movement, one can see very clearly that the vibrations propagate themselves, one following another, one following another, one following another, and that in fact there is only one unity — unity of Substance, unity of Consciousness, unity of Will. And that is the only reality. Outwardly there is a kind of illusion: the illusion of separation and the illusion of difference.

CWM 8: 52–53

The law of contagion and interchange

It is not very difficult to discern; even when one is very young, even when one is a child, if one pays attention, one becomes aware of this. One lives amidst constant collective suggestions, constantly; for example, I don't know if you have been present at funerals, or if you have been in a house where someone has died — naturally you must observe yourself a little, otherwise you won't notice anything — but if you observe yourself a little, you will see that you had no special reason to feel any sorrow or grief whatever for the passing away of this person; he is a person like many others; this has happened and by a combination of social circumstances you have come to that house. And there, suddenly, without knowing why or how, you feel a strong emotion, a great sorrow, a deep pain, and you ask yourself, "Why am I so unhappy?" It is quite simply the vibrations which have entered you, nothing else.

And I tell you it is easy to observe, for it is an experience I had when I was a little child — and at that time I was not yet doing conscious yoga; perhaps I was doing yoga but not consciously — and I observed it very, very clearly. I told myself, "Surely it is their sorrow I am feeling, for I have no reason to be specially affected by this person's death"; and all of a sudden, tears came to my eyes, I felt as though a lump were in my throat and I wanted to cry, as though I were in great sorrow — I was a small child — and

immediately I understood, “Oh! it is their sorrow which has come inside me.”

It is the same thing for anger. It is very clear, one receives it suddenly, not even from a person, from the atmosphere — it is there — and then all of a sudden it enters you and usually it gets hold of you from below and then rises up and pushes you, and so off you go. A minute earlier you were not angry, you were quite self-possessed, you had no intention of losing your temper. And this seizes you so strongly that you can't resist — because you are not sufficiently conscious, you let it enter you, and it makes use of you — you... what you call “yourself”, that is to say, your body; for apparently (I say apparently) it is something separate from your neighbour's body. But that is only an optical illusion, because in fact all the time there are what may be called particles, even physical particles, like a sort of radiation which comes out of the body and gets mixed with others; and because of this, when one is very sensitive, one can feel things at a distance.

CWM 8: 53–55

Oneness is not sameness

As for treating everybody in the same way, it is a worse confusion still! It is the kind of confusion one makes when one says that the Divine must treat everybody in the same way. So it would not be worth the trouble to have diversity in the world, not worth the trouble of not having two identical individuals; for this contradicts the very principle of diversity.

You may — or you ought to if you can't — aspire to have the same deep attitude of understanding, unity, love, perfect compassion for all that is in the universe; but this very attitude will be applied to each case in a different way, according to the truth of that case and its necessity. What could be called the motive or rather the origin of the action is the same, but the action may even be

totally and diametrically opposite in accordance with the case and the deeper truth of each case. But for that, precisely, one must have the highest attitude, the most profound, the most essentially true, that which is free from all outer contingencies. Then one can see at every minute not only the essential truth but also the truth of the action; and in each case it is different. And yet, what we may call “feeling” — though this is an inadequate word — or the state of consciousness in which one acts, is essentially the same.

But this cannot be understood unless one enters the essential depth of things and sees them from the highest summits. And then it is like a centre of light and consciousness high enough or deep enough to be able to see all things at the same time, not only in their essence but in their manifestation; and although the centre of consciousness is one, the action will be as diverse as the manifestation is diverse: it is the realisation of the divine Truth in its manifestation. Otherwise it would be doing away with all the diversity of the world and bringing it back to the essential unmanifest Oneness, for it is only in the non-manifestation that the One is manifested as the One. But as soon as one enters the manifestation, the One manifests as the multiplicity, and multiplicity implies a multitude of actions and ways.

So, to sum up: the choice must be made without care for the consequences, and the action must be performed in accordance with the truth of the multiplicity in the manifestation.

CWM 8: 407-08

Oneness in Dynamic Force

There is a dynamic force which moves all things, and when you become conscious of it, you see that it is one single Force which moves all things; and as you become conscious, you can even follow its movement and see how it works through men and things.

From the minute you become conscious of the Unity — unity

of Force, unity of Consciousness and unity of Will — well, you no longer have the perception which makes you quite separate from others, so that you do not know what goes on in them, they are strangers to you, you are shut up as it were in your own skin, and have no contact with others except quite externally and superficially. But this happens precisely because you have not realised in yourself the perception of this oneness of Consciousness, Force and Will — even of material vibrations.

It is the complexity which makes this perception difficult — for our faculties of perception are quite linear and very one sided; so when we want to understand, we are immediately assailed by countless things which are almost inconsistent with each other and intermix in such an intricate way that one can no longer make out the lines and follow things — one suddenly enters a whirlwind.

CWM 8: 55-56

Secret oneness

Sweet Mother, here it is written: “All are linked together by a secret Oneness.”

Ibid., p. 98

What is this secret Oneness?

It is precisely the divine Presence.

Because the Divine is essentially one, and yet He has subdivided Himself apparently in all beings, and in this way recreated the primordial Oneness. And it is because of this divine Oneness — which, however, appears fragmented in beings — that the Unity is re-established in its essence. And when one becomes conscious of this, one has the joy of the consciousness of this Oneness. But those who are not conscious — what they miss is the joy of consciousness. But the fact remains the same.

Sri Aurobindo says: the Oneness exists; whether you are aware

of it or not, it exists, in reality it makes no difference; but it makes a difference to you: if you are conscious, you have the joy; if you are not conscious, you miss this joy.

But how can a sacrifice be made when one is unconscious?

It is made automatically.

Whether you know it or not, whether you want it or not, you are all united by the divine Presence which, though it appears fragmented, is yet One. The Divine is One, He only appears fragmented in things and beings. And because this Unity is a fact, whether you are aware of it or not doesn't alter the fact at all. And whether you want it or not, you are in spite of everything subject to this Unity.

This is what I have explained to you I don't know how many times: you think you are separate from one another, but it is the same single Substance which is in you all, despite differences in appearance; and a vibration in one centre automatically awakens a vibration in another.

CWM 8: 75-76

Re-establishing unity and oneness

If one did not carry the Divine within oneself, in the essence of one's being, one could never become aware of the Divine; it would be an impossible venture. And then if you reverse the problem, the moment you conceive and feel in some way or other, or even, to begin with, admit that the Divine is in you, as well as you are in the Divine, then already this opens the door to realisation, just a little, not much — slightly ajar. Then if later the aspiration comes, the intense need to know and to be, then that intense need widens the opening until one can creep in. Then when one has crept in, one becomes aware of what he is. And that's exactly what Sri Aurobindo says, that one has forgotten, that due to this separation of Sat, Chit, Ananda, forgetfulness comes, forgetful-

ness of what one is; one thinks oneself to be somebody, you see, anyone at all, a boy, a girl, a man, a woman, a dog, a horse, anything at all, a stone, the sea, the sun; one believes oneself to be all this, instead of thinking oneself the One Divine — because, in fact, if one had continued thinking oneself the One Divine, there would have been no universe at all.

That was what I wanted to tell him (*indicating a child*), that this phenomenon of separation seems to be indispensable for a universe to be there, otherwise it would always have remained as it was. But if we re-establish the unity, after having made it pass through this curve, you see, if we re-establish the unity, having benefited from the multiplicity, the division, then we have a unity of a higher quality, a unity which knows itself instead of the unity which doesn't have to know itself, for there's nothing which may know the other. When the Oneness is absolute, who can know the Oneness? We must at least be able to have an image, an appearance of something which is not it in order to understand what it is. I believe that this is the secret of the universe. Perhaps the Divine wanted really to know Himself, so He threw Himself out and then looked at Himself, and now He wants to enjoy this possibility of being Himself with the full knowledge of Himself. This becomes much more interesting.

CWM 7: 236-37

A cure for inner confusion and disorder

We can never know things even with the widest vision: we can know things only very partially — very partially. So our attention is drawn this way and that, and still other things are there. By giving great importance to things dangerous and harmful, you only add strength to them.

When you are assailed by the vision of such disorder and confusion, you have to do only one thing, to enter into the con-

sciousness where you see only *one* Being, *one* Consciousness, *one* Power — there is only a single Unity — and all this is taking place within this Unity. And all our insignificant visions and knowings and judgments and... all that is mere nothing, it is microscopic in comparison with the Consciousness presiding over All. Therefore, if one had the least sense of the reason why separate individualities existed, one would see that it was only for allowing aspiration, the existence of aspiration, of this movement of self-giving and surrender, trust and *faith*. And it is this that is the very reason why individuals were built up; and then, for you to become that in all sincerity and intensity... it is all that is needed.

It is all that is needed, it is the *only* thing, the only thing that stays; all the rest... phantasmagoria.

CWM 11: 184-85

The Mother

Live constantly in the presence of the Divine; live in the feeling that it is this presence which moves you and is doing everything you do. Offer all your movements to it, not only every mental action, every thought and feeling but even the most ordinary and external actions such as eating; when you eat, you must feel that it is the Divine who is eating through you. When you can thus gather all your movements into the One Life, then you have in you unity instead of division.

CWM 3: 23-24

The Mother

Collective Yoga

Types of collectivities and the Gnostic community

if we take as an example a religious community — are symbolised by the monastery building, identical clothes, identical activities, even identical movements — I'll make it more clear: everybody wears the same uniform, everybody rises at the same hour, eats the same things, offers the same prayers together, etc., there is a general uniformity. And naturally, inside, there is a chaos of consciousnesses, each one going according to its own mode, for this uniformity which goes as far as an identity of belief and dogma, is an altogether illusory identity.

This is one of the most usual types of human collectivity: to be grouped, linked, united around a common ideal, a common action, a common realisation, but in a completely artificial way. As opposed to this, Sri Aurobindo tells us that a true community — what he calls a gnostic or supramental community — can exist only on the basis of the inner realisation of each of its members, each one realising his real, concrete unity and identity with all the other members of the community, that is, each one should feel not like just one member united in some way with all the others, but all as one, within himself. For each one the others must be himself as much as his own body, and not mentally and artificially, but by a fact of consciousness, by an inner realisation.

That means that before hoping to realise this gnostic collectivity, each one should first become — or at least begin to become — a gnostic being. This is obvious; the individual work should go on ahead and the collective work should follow; but it so happens that spontaneously, without any arbitrary intervention of the will, the individual progress is controlled, so to speak, or held back by the collective state. Between the individual and the collectivity there is an interdependence from which one can't totally free oneself,

granting that one tries. And even a person who tried in his yoga to liberate himself totally from the terrestrial and human state of consciousness, would be tied down, in his subconscious at least, to the state of the mass, which acts as a brake and actually *pulls* backwards. One can try to go much faster, try to drop all the weight of attachments and responsibilities, but despite everything, the realisation, even of one who is at the very summit and is the very first in the evolutionary march, is dependent on the realisation of the whole, dependent on the state of the terrestrial collectivity. And that indeed *pulls* one back, to such an extent that at times one must wait for centuries for the Earth to be ready, in order to be able to realise what is to be realised.

And that is why Sri Aurobindo also says, somewhere else, that a double movement is necessary, and that the effort for individual progress and realisation should be combined with an effort to try to uplift the whole mass and enable it to make the progress that's indispensable for the greater progress of the individual: a mass-progress, it could be called, which would allow the individual to take one more step forward.

CWM 9:141-42

The power of Collective congregations

There is also the collectivity formed by individuals who have gathered together around an ideal or a teaching or an action they want to carry out, and who have an organising link between them, the link of the same purpose, the same will and the same faith. These can gather in a methodical manner to practise common prayer and meditation, and if their aim is high, their organisation good, their ideal powerful, through their prayers or meditations these groups can have a considerable effect on world events or on their own inner development and collective progress. These groups are necessarily far superior to others, but they don't have

the blind strength of the mobs, the collective action of the crowd. They replace this vehemence, this intensity by the strength of a deliberate and conscious organisation.

At all times there have been on earth groups organised in this way. Some of them have had a historical life, a historical action in the world, but as a rule they have not succeeded better with the crowd, the mass, than exceptional individuals. They have always been suspected and subjected to attacks, persecutions, and often they have also been dissolved in a very brutal, obscure and ignorant way.... There were those semi-religious, semi-chivalric groups, gathered around a belief or rather a creed, with a definite aim, which have had a very interesting history in the world. And certainly, they have done much for collective progress through their individual effort.

There is an ideal organisation which, if fully realised, could create a kind of very powerful unity, composed of elements all having the same aim and the same will and with enough inner development to be able to give a very coherent body to this inner oneness of purpose, motive, aspiration and action.

At all times centres of initiation have tried this, more or less successfully, and this is always mentioned in all occult traditions as an extremely powerful means of action.

If the collective unit could attain the same cohesion as the individual unit, it would multiply the strength and action of the individual.

Usually, if several individuals are brought together, the collective quality of the group is much lower than the individual value of each person taken separately, but with a sufficiently conscious and coordinated organisation, it would be possible, on the contrary, to *multiply* the power of individual action.

CWM 9: 369-70

A collective yoga

“Often he (the sadhak) finds that even after he has won persistently his own personal battle, he has still to win it over and over again...” Then does this mean that others profit by his sadhana?

You understand, it’s like that for everyone.

If there was only one, it could be like this: that he alone could do it for all; but if everybody does it... you understand...

You are fifty persons doing the Integral Yoga. If it is only one of the fifty who is doing it, then he does it for all the fifty. But if each one of the fifty is doing it, each doing it for all the fifty, he does it actually for one person alone, because all do it for all.

The work is more complicated, it is more complete, it asks for a greater power, a greater wideness, a greater patience, a greater tolerance, a greater endurance; all these things are necessary. But in fact, if each one does perfectly what he has to do, it is no longer only one single person who does the whole thing: not one single person who does it for all, but all now form only one person who does it for the whole group.

This ought to form a kind of sufficient unity among all those who are doing it, so that they no longer feel the distinction. This is indeed the ideal way of doing it: that they now form only one single body, one single personality, working at once each for himself and for the others without any distinction.

Truly speaking, it was the first question which came up when I met Sri Aurobindo. I think I have already told you this; I don’t remember now, but I spoke about it recently. Should one do one’s yoga and reach the goal and then later take up the work with others or should one immediately let all those who have the same aspiration come to him and go forward all together towards the goal?

Because of my earlier work and all that I had tried, I came to

Sri Aurobindo with the question very precisely formulated. For the two possibilities were there: either to do an intensive individual sadhana by withdrawing from the world, that is, by no longer having any contact with others, or else to let the group be formed naturally and spontaneously, not preventing it from being formed, allowing it to form, and starting all together on the path.

Well, the decision was not at all a mental choice; it came spontaneously. The circumstances were such that there was no choice; that is, quite naturally, spontaneously, the group was formed in such a way that it became an imperious necessity. And so once we have started like that, it is finished, we have to go to the end like that....

CWM 7: 408-09

A representative group

One can reach, alone and solitary, his own perfection. One can become in one's consciousness infinite and perfect. But when it is a question of a work, it is always limited.

I don't know if you understand me well. But personal realisation has no limits. One can become inwardly in himself perfect and infinite. But the outer realisation is necessarily limited, and if one wants to have a general action, at least a minimum number of physical beings is needed.

In a very old tradition it was said that twelve were enough; but in the complexities of modern life it doesn't seem possible. There must be a representative group. Which means that... you know nothing about it or you don't imagine it very well, but each one of you represents one of the difficulties which must be conquered for the transformation. And this makes many difficulties! (*Mother laughs*) I have written somewhere... I have said that, more than a difficulty, each one represents an impossibility to be solved. And it is the whole set of all these impossibilities which can be trans-

formed into the Work, the Realisation. Each case is an impossibility to be solved, and it is when all these impossibilities are resolved that the Work will be accomplished.

But now I am more gentle. I take away “impossibility” and put “difficulty”. Perhaps they are no longer impossibilities.

Only, from the beginning, and still more now that our group has grown so considerably, each time someone comes to tell me, “I come for *my* yoga”, I say, “Oh, no! Then don’t come. It is much more difficult here than anywhere else.” And the reason is what Sri Aurobindo has written here.

If someone comes to tell me, “I come to work, I come to make myself useful”, it is all right. But if someone comes and says, “I have many difficulties outside, I can’t manage to overcome these difficulties, I want to come here because it will help me”, I say, “No, no, it will be *much* more difficult here; your difficulties will increase *considerably*.” And that is what it means, because they are no longer isolated difficulties; they are collective difficulties.

So in addition to your own personal difficulty you have all the frictions, all the contacts, all the reactions, all the things which come from outside. As a test. Exactly on the weak point, the thing that’s most difficult to solve; it is there that you will hear from someone the phrase which was just the one you did not want to hear; someone will make towards you that gesture which was exactly the one which could shock you; you find yourself facing a circumstance, a movement, a fact, an object, anything at all — just the things which... “Ah, how I should have liked this not to happen!” And it’s that which will happen. And more and more. Because you do not do your yoga for yourself alone. You do the yoga for everybody — without wanting to — automatically.

CWM 7: 410-11

Collective life in the Ashram

In human life the cause of all difficulties, all discords, all moral sufferings, is the presence in everyone of the ego with its desires, its likes and dislikes. Even in a disinterested work which consists in helping others, until one has learned to overcome the ego and its demands, until one can force it to keep calm and quiet in one corner, the ego reacts to everything that displeases it, starts an inner storm that rises to the surface and spoils all the work.

This work of overcoming the ego is long, slow and difficult; it demands constant alertness and sustained effort. This effort is easier for some and more difficult for others.

We are here in the Ashram to do this work together with the help of Sri Aurobindo's knowledge and force, in an attempt to realise a community that is more harmonious, more united, and consequently much more effective in life.

As long as I was physically present among you all, my presence was helping you to achieve this mastery over the ego and so it was not necessary for me to speak to you about it individually very often.

But now this effort must become the basis of each individual's existence, more especially for those of you who have a responsible position and have to take care of others. The leaders must always set the example, the leaders must always practise the virtues they demand from those who are in their care; they must be understanding, patient, enduring, full of sympathy and warm and friendly goodwill, not out of egoism to win friends for themselves, but out of generosity to be able to understand and help others.

To forget oneself, one's own likings and preferences, is indispensable in order to be a true leader.

That is what I am asking of you now, so that you can face your responsibilities as you should. And then you will find that where you used to feel disorder and disunity, they have vanished, and

harmony, peace and joy have taken their place.

You know that I love you and that I am always with you to sustain you, help you and show you the way.

CWM 12: 355-56

Liberty and community living

When one lives in a community, does it not often become necessary to obey laws imposed by others instead of following the disciplines one would wish for oneself?

It is obvious that if you have chosen or accepted to live in a community, you must observe the laws of that community, otherwise you become an element of disorder and confusion.

But a discipline willingly accepted cannot be harmful to the inner development and the growth of the higher consciousness.

CWM 10: 256

The Mother

“On the harm done by incontinence of speech.”

Very often I have told you that every word spoken uselessly is dangerous chatter. But here, the situation has reached the very limit — there are things which have been said, said over and over again, repeated by all those who have tried to perfect humanity, unfortunately without much result — it is a question of malicious gossip... of slander, of that pleasure taken in speaking ill of others. Anyone who indulges in this kind of incontinence debases his consciousness, and when to this incontinence is added the habit of vulgar quarrelling, expressed in coarse language, then that amounts to suicide, spiritual suicide within oneself.

I stress this point and insist that you take it very seriously.

CWM 9: 144

The Mother

Many sided spiritual evolution

Spiritual truth is a truth of the spirit, not a truth of the intellect, not a mathematical theorem or a logical formula. It is a truth of the Infinite, one in an infinite diversity, and it can assume an infinite variety of aspects and formations: in the spiritual evolution it is inevitable that there should be a many-sided passage and reaching to the one Truth, a many-sided seizing of it; this many-sidedness is the sign of the approach of the soul to a living reality, not to an abstraction or a constructed figure of things that can be petrified into a dead or stony formula. The hard logical and intellectual notion of truth as a single idea which all must accept, one idea or system of ideas defeating all other ideas or systems, or a single limited fact or single formula of facts which all must recognise, is an illegitimate transference from the limited truth of the physical field to the much more complex and plastic field of life and mind and spirit....

“In the evolution of the spiritual man there must necessarily be many stages and in each stage a great variety of individual formations of the being, the consciousness, the life, the temperament, the ideas, the character. The nature of instrumental mind and the necessity of dealing with the life must of itself create an infinite variety according to the stage of development and the individuality of the seeker. But, apart from that, even the domain of pure spiritual self-realisation and self-expression need not be a single white monotone, here can be a great diversity in the fundamental unity; the supreme Self is one, but the souls of the Self are many and, as is the soul’s formation of nature, so will be its spiritual self-expression. A diversity in oneness is the law of the manifestation; the supramental unification and integration must harmonise these diversities, but to abolish them is not the intention of the Spirit in Nature.

CWSA 22: 919-21

Sri Aurobindo

Freedom and servitude

What does this paragraph mean?: “Freedom is the law of being in its illimitable unity, secret master of all Nature: servitude is the law of love in the being voluntarily giving itself to serve the play of its other selves in the multiplicity.”

Thoughts and Glimpses, SABCL, Vol. 16, p. 386

At a superficial glance these two things appear absolutely contradictory and incompatible. Outwardly one cannot conceive how one can be at once in freedom and in servitude, but there is an attitude which reconciles the two and makes them one of the happiest states of material existence.

Freedom is a sort of instinctive need, a necessity for the integral development of the being. In its essence it is a perfect realisation of the highest consciousness, it is the expression of Unity and of union with the Divine, it is the very sense of the Origin and the fulfilment. But because this Unity has manifested in the many — in the multiplicity — something had to serve as a link between the Origin and the manifestation, and the most perfect link one can conceive of is love. And what is the first gesture of love? To give oneself, to serve. What is its spontaneous, immediate, inevitable movement? To serve. To serve in a joyous, complete, total self-giving.

So, in their purity, in their truth, these two things — freedom and service — far from being contradictory, are complementary. It is in perfect union with the supreme Reality that perfect freedom is found, for all ignorance, all unconsciousness is a bondage which makes you inefficient, limited, powerless. The least ignorance in oneself is a limitation, one is no longer free. As long as there is an element of unconsciousness in the being, it is a limitation, a bondage. Only in perfect union with the supreme Reality can perfect freedom exist. And how to realise this union if not through a

spontaneous self-giving: the gift of love. And as I said, the first gesture, the first expression of love is service.

So the two are closely united in the Truth. But here on earth, in this world of ignorance and inconscience, this service which should have been spontaneous, full of love, the very expression of love, has become something imposed, an inevitable necessity, performed only for the maintenance of life, for the continuation of existence, and thus it has become something ugly, miserable — humiliating. What should have been a flowering, a joy, has become an ugliness, a weariness, a sordid obligation. And this sense, this need for freedom has also been deformed and has become that kind of thirst for independence which leads straight to revolt, to separation, isolation, the very opposite of true freedom.

CWM 9: 50-51

The law of supreme order and harmony

When the vital will is submitted to the mental power, then the life of the individual or of the society becomes moral. But it is only when both, vital will and mental power, are equally submissive to something higher, to the supermind, that human life is exceeded, that true spiritual life begins, the life of the superman; for his law will come from within, it will be the divine law shining in the centre of each being and governing life from therein, the divine law multiple in its manifestation but one in its origin. And because of its unity this law is the law of supreme order and harmony.

Thus the individual, no more guided by egoistical motives, laws or customs, shall abandon all selfish aims. His rule will be perfect disinterestedness. To act in view of a personal profit, either in this world or in another beyond, will become an unthinkable impossibility. For each act will be done in complete, simple, joyful obedience to the divine law which inspires it, without any seeking for reward or results, as the supreme reward will be in the very

delight of acting under such inspiration, of being identified in conscience and will with the divine principle within oneself.

And in this identification the superman will find also his social standard. For in discovering the divine law in himself he will recognise the same divine law in every being, and by being identified with it in himself he will be identified with it in all, thus becoming aware of the unity of all, not only in essence and substance but also in the most exterior planes of life and form. He will not be a mind, a life or a body, but the informing and sustaining Soul or Self, silent, peaceful, eternal, that possesses them; and this Soul or Self he will find everywhere sustaining and informing and possessing all lives and minds and bodies. He will be conscious of this Self as the divine creator and doer of all works, one in all existences; for the many souls of the universal manifestation are only faces of the one Divine. He will perceive each being to be the universal Divinity presenting to him many faces; he will merge himself in That and perceive his own mind, life and body as only one presentation of the Self, and all whom we, at present, conceive of as others will be to his consciousness his own self in other minds, lives and bodies. He will be able to feel his body one with all bodies, as he will be aware constantly of the unity of all matter; he will unite himself in mind and heart with all existences; in short, he will see and feel his own person in all others and all others in himself, realising thus true solidarity in the perfection of unity.

CWM 2: 167-68

The Mother

What are the rules of conduct You consider indispensable in our community?

Patience, perseverance, generosity, broad-mindedness, insight, calm and understanding firmness, and control over the ego until it is completely mastered or even abolished.

CWM 12: 374

The Mother

Towards World Union

Need of sincerity in international dealings

The earth will enjoy a lasting and living peace only when men understand that they must be truthful and sincere even in their international dealings.

For the Governments honesty lies not only in saying what they are doing but also in doing what they say.

*

If diplomacy could become the instrument of the Truth and the Divine Grace, instead of being based on duplicity and falsehood, a big step would be taken towards human unity and harmony.

*

It is only by the growth and establishment of the consciousness of human unity, that a true and lasting peace can be achieved upon earth. All means leading towards this goal are welcome, although the external ones have a very limited effect; however, the most important, urgent and indispensable of all, is a transformation of the human consciousness itself, an enlightenment of and conversion in its working.

Meanwhile some exterior steps may be taken usefully, and the acceptance of the principle of double nationality is one of them. The main objection to it has always been the awkward position in which those who have adopted a double nationality would be in case the two countries were at war.

But all those who sincerely want peace must understand that to think of war, to speak of war, to foresee war is to open the door to it.

On the contrary, the larger the number of people who have a vital interest in the abolition of war, the more effective the chances towards a stable peace, until the advent of a new consciousness in man makes of war an impossibility.

*

Shake off all narrowness, selfishness, limitations, and wake up to the consciousness of Human Unity. This is the only way to achieve peace and harmony.

CWM 15: 58-59

Unity of Nations

The most important idea is that the unity of the human race can be achieved neither by uniformity nor by domination and subjection. Only a synthetic organisation of all nations, each one occupying its true place according to its own genius and the part it has to play in the whole, can bring about a comprehensive and progressive unification which has any chance of enduring. And if this synthesis is to be a living one, the grouping should be effectuated around a central idea that is as wide and as high as possible, in which all tendencies, even the most contradictory, may find their respective places. This higher idea is to give men the conditions of life they need in order to be able to prepare themselves to manifest the new force that will create the race of tomorrow.

All impulses of rivalry, all struggle for precedence and domination must disappear and give way to a will for harmonious organisation, for clear-sighted and effective collaboration.

CWM 12: 40

The Mother

It is not through uniformity that you obtain unity.

It is not through uniformity of programmes and methods that you will obtain the unity of education.

Unity is obtained through a constant reference, silent or expressed, as the case demands, to the central ideal, the central force or light, the purpose and the goal of our education.

The true, the supreme Unity expresses itself in diversity. It is mental logic that demands sameness. In practice, each one must find and apply his own method, that which he understands and feels. It is only in this way that education can be effective.

CWM 12: 171

A spiritual religion of humanity

A spiritual religion of humanity is the hope of the future. By this is not meant what is ordinarily called a universal religion, a system, a thing of creed and intellectual belief and dogma and outward rite. Mankind has tried unity by that means; it has failed and deserved to fail, because there can be no universal religious system, one in mental creed and vital form. The inner spirit is indeed one, but more than any other the spiritual life insists on freedom and variation in its self-expression and means of development. A religion of humanity means the growing realisation that there is a secret Spirit, a divine Reality, in which we are all one, that humanity is its highest present vehicle on earth, that the human race and the human being are the means by which it will progressively reveal itself here. It implies a growing attempt to live out this knowledge and bring about a kingdom of this divine Spirit upon earth. By its growth within us oneness with our fellow-men will become the leading principle of all our life, not merely a principle of cooperation but a deeper brotherhood, a real and an inner sense of unity and equality and a common life. There must be the realisation by the individual that only in the life of his fellow-men is his own life complete. There must be the realisation by the race that only on the free and full life of the individual can its own perfection and permanent happiness be founded. There must be too a discipline and a way of salvation in accordance with this religion, that is to say, a means by which it can be developed by each man within himself, so that it may be developed in the life of the race. To go into all that this implies would be too large a subject to be entered upon here; it is enough to point out that in this direction lies the eventual road. No doubt, if this is only an idea like the rest, it will go the way of all ideas. But if it is at all a truth of our being, then it must be the truth to which all is moving and in it must be found the means of a fundamental, an inner, a

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

CWSA 25: 577-78

Brotherhood

A deeper brotherhood, a yet unfound law of love is the only sure foundation possible for a perfect social evolution, no other can replace it. But this brotherhood and love will not proceed by the vital instincts or the reason where they can be met, baffled or deflected by opposite reasonings and other discordant instincts. Nor will it found itself in the natural heart of man where there are plenty of other passions to combat it. It is in the soul that it must find its roots; the love which is founded upon a deeper truth of our being, the brotherhood or, let us say, — for this is another feeling than any vital or mental sense of brotherhood, a calmer more durable motive-force, — the spiritual comradeship which is the expression of an inner realisation of oneness. For so only can egoism disappear and the true individualism of the unique godhead in each man found itself on the true communism of the equal godhead in the race; for the Spirit, the inmost self, the universal Godhead in every being is that whose very nature of diverse oneness it is to realise the perfection of its individual life and nature in the existence of all, in the universal life and nature.

This is a solution to which it may be objected that it puts off the consummation of a better human society to a far-off date in the future evolution of the race. For it means that no machinery

invented by the reason can perfect either the individual or the collective man; an inner change is needed in human nature, a change too difficult to be ever effected except by the few. This is not certain; but in any case, if this is not the solution, then there is no solution, if this is not the way, then there is no way for the human kind. Then the terrestrial evolution must pass beyond man as it has passed beyond the animal and a greater race must come that will be capable of the spiritual change, a form of life must be born that is nearer to the divine.

CWSA 25: 220 – 221

A spiritualised society

A spiritualised society would treat in its sociology the individual, from the saint to the criminal, not as units of a social problem to be passed through some skilfully devised machinery and either flattened into the social mould or crushed out of it, but as souls suffering and entangled in a net and to be rescued, souls growing and to be encouraged to grow, souls grown and from whom help and power can be drawn by the lesser spirits who are not yet adult. The aim of its economics would be not to create a huge engine of production, whether of the competitive or the cooperative kind, but to give to men — not only to some but to all men each in his highest possible measure — the joy of work according to their own nature and free leisure to grow inwardly, as well as a simply rich and beautiful life for all. In its politics it would not regard the nations within the scope of their own internal life as enormous State machines regulated and armoured with man living for the sake of the machine and worshipping it as his God and his larger self, content at the first call to kill others upon its altar and to bleed there himself so that the machine may remain intact and powerful and be made ever larger, more complex, more cumbrous, more mechanically efficient and entire. Neither would

it be content to maintain these nations or States in their mutual relations as noxious engines meant to discharge poisonous gas upon each other in peace and to rush in times of clash upon each other's armed hosts and unarmed millions, full of belching shot and men missioned to murder like war-planes or hostile tanks in a modern battlefield.

CWSA 25: 257

Group-soul

It would regard the peoples as group-souls, the Divinity concealed and to be self-discovered in its human collectivities, group-souls meant like the individual to grow according to their own nature and by that growth to help each other, to help the whole race in the one common work of humanity. And that work would be to find the divine Self in the individual and the collectivity and to realise spiritually, mentally, vitally, materially its greatest, largest, richest and deepest possibilities in the inner life of all and their outer action and nature.

For it is into the Divine within them that men and mankind have to grow; it is not an external idea or rule that has to be imposed on them from without. Therefore the law of a growing inner freedom is that which will be most honoured in the spiritual age of mankind. True it is that so long as man has not come within measurable distance of self-knowledge and has not set his face towards it, he cannot escape from the law of external compulsion and all his efforts to do so must be vain. He is and always must be, so long as that lasts, the slave of others, the slave of his family, his caste, his clan, his Church, his society, his nation; and he cannot but be that and they too cannot help throwing their crude and mechanical compulsion on him, because he and they are the slaves of their own ego, of their own lower nature....

CWSA 25: 257

Spiritual age of mankind

A spiritual age of mankind will perceive this truth. It will not try to make man perfect by machinery or keep him straight by tying up all his limbs. It will not present to the member of the society his higher self in the person of the policeman, the official and the corporal, nor, let us say, in the form of a socialistic bureaucracy or a Labour Soviet. Its aim will be to diminish as soon and as far as possible the need of the element of external compulsion in human life by awakening the inner divine compulsion of the spirit within and all the preliminary means it will use will have that for its aim. In the end it will employ chiefly if not solely the spiritual compulsion which even the spiritual individual can exercise on those around him,— and how much more should a spiritual society be able to do it, —that which awakens within us in spite of all inner resistance and outer denial the compulsion of the Light, the desire and the power to grow through one's own nature into the Divine. For the perfectly spiritualised society will be one in which, as is dreamed by the spiritual anarchist, all men will be deeply free, and it will be so because the preliminary condition will have been satisfied. In that state each man will be not a law to himself, but the law, the divine Law, because he will be a soul living in the Divine Reality and not an ego living mainly if not entirely for its own interest and purpose. His life will be led by the law of his own divine nature liberated from the ego.

CWSA 25: 257-58

The pioneers of the New Age

Therefore the individuals who will most help the future of humanity in the new age will be those who will recognise a spiritual evolution as the destiny and therefore the great need of the human being. Even as the animal man has been largely converted into a mentalised and at the top a highly mentalised humanity,

so too now or in the future an evolution or conversion — it does not greatly matter which figure we use or what theory we adopt to support it — of the present type of humanity into a spiritualised humanity is the need of the race and surely the intention of Nature; that evolution or conversion will be their ideal and endeavour. They will be comparatively indifferent to particular belief and form and leave men to resort to the beliefs and forms to which they are naturally drawn. They will only hold as essential the faith in this spiritual conversion, the attempt to live it out and whatever knowledge — the form of opinion into which it is thrown does not so much matter — can be converted into this living. They will especially not make the mistake of thinking that this change can be effected by machinery and outward institutions; they will know and never forget that it has to be lived out by each man inwardly or it can never be made a reality for the kind. They will adopt in its heart of meaning the inward view of the East which bids man seek the secret of his destiny and salvation within; but also they will accept, though with a different turn given to it, the importance which the West rightly attaches to life and to the making the best we know and can attain the general rule of all life.

CWSA 25: 265-66

East and West

The message of the East to the West is a true message, “Only by finding himself can man be saved,” and “what shall it profit a man though he gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul?” The West has heard the message and is seeking out the law and truth of the soul and the evidences of an inner reality greater than the material. The danger is that with her passion for mechanism and her exaggerated intellectuality she may fog herself in an external and false psychism, such as we see arising in England and America, the homes of the mechanical genius, or in intellectual, unspiritual

and therefore erroneous theories of the Absolute, such as have run their course in critical and metaphysical Germany.

The idea by which the illumination of Asia has been governed is the firm knowledge that truth of the Spirit is the sole real truth, the belief that the psychological life of man is an instrument for attaining to the truth of the Spirit and that its laws must be known and practised with that aim paramount, and the attempt to form the external life of man and the institutions of society into a suitable mould for the great endeavour.

This idea, too, is absolutely just and we accept it entirely. But in its application, and in India most, it has deviated into a divorce between the Spirit and its instruments and a disparagement and narrowing of the mental and external life of the race. For it is only on the widest and richest efflorescence of this instrumental life that the fullest and most absolute attainment of the spiritual can be securely based. This knowledge the ancients of the East possessed and practised; it has been dimmed in knowledge and lost in practice by their descendants.

The message the West brings to the East is a true message. Man also is God and it is through his developing manhood that he approaches the godhead; Life also is the Divine, its progressive expansion is the self-expression of the Brahman, and to deny Life is to diminish the Godhead within us. This is the truth that returns to the East from the West translated into the language of the higher truth the East already possesses; and it is an ancient knowledge. The East also is awaking to the message. The danger is that Asia may accept it in the European form, forget for a time her own law and nature and either copy blindly the West or make a disastrous amalgam of that which she has in its most inferior forms and the crudenesses which are invading her.

CWSA 13:144-45

Sri Aurobindo

Unity in diversity

“The spiritual life reveals the one essence in all, but reveals too its infinite diversity; it works for diversity in oneness and for perfection in that diversity.”

Questions and Answers 1929 (4 August)

This is the very motive of the creation of the universe, that is to say, all are one, all is one in its origin, but each thing, each element, each being has as its mission the revealing of one part of this unity to itself, and it is this particularity which must be developed in everyone, while awakening at the same time the sense of the original unity. This is “to work for unity in diversity”. And the perfection in that diversity lies in everyone’s being perfectly what he ought to be.

CWM 4: 323

In the last analysis, it is always the same summit — the divine oneness which is behind all things — but everyone will reach his own summit, that is, through his own nature and own way of manifesting the divine unity. This is what we were saying the other day: each one represents a special way of having a relation with the Divine and manifesting the Divine. You don’t need to follow another’s path! You must follow your own path and it is by this path that you will reach the summit, which is one, but found by your own route. The goal is beyond the summits — the goal is one and beyond the summits — but one may attain this summit each by his own road, climbing his own mountain, not the mountain of another.

CWM 4: 350

Hope for the future

The future of the earth depends on a change of consciousness.

The only hope for the future is in a change of man’s consciousness and the change is bound to come.

But it is left to men to decide if they will collaborate for this change or if it will have to be enforced upon them by the power of crashing circumstances.

So, wake up and collaborate!

*

How can Humanity become one?

By becoming conscious of its origin.

What is the way of making the consciousness of human unity grow in man?

Spiritual education, that is to say an education which gives more importance to the growth of the spirit than to any religious or moral teaching or to the material so-called knowledge.

What is a change of consciousness?

A change of consciousness is equivalent to a new birth, a birth into a higher sphere of existence.

How can a change of consciousness change the life upon earth?

A change in human consciousness will make possible the manifestation upon earth of a higher Force, a purer Light, a more total Truth.

*

Nothing but a radical change of consciousness can save humanity from the terrible plight into which it is plunged.

*

All the so-called “practical” means are a childishness by which men blind themselves so as not to see the true need and sole remedy.

What is the right way of achieving lasting world unity?

To realise the Consciousness of the one. CWM 15:60-61 **The Mother**

The unity of all the nations is the compelling future of the world. But for the unity of all nations to be possible, each nation must first realise its own unity.

CWM 12: 250

The Mother

World is a Unity

God's world advances step by step fulfilling the lesser unit before it seriously attempts the larger. Affirm free nationality first, if thou wouldst ever bring the world to be one nation.

A nation is not made by a common blood, a common tongue or a common religion; these are only important helps and powerful conveniences. But wherever communities of men not bound by family ties are united in one sentiment and aspiration to defend a common inheritance from their ancestors or assure a common future for their posterity, there a nation is already in existence.

Nationality is a stride of the progressive God passing beyond the stage of the family; therefore the attachment to clan and tribe must weaken or perish before a nation can be born.

CWM 10: 307

The World is a unity — it has always been, and it is always so, even now it is so — it is not that it has not got the unity and the unity has to be brought in from outside and imposed upon it.

Only the world is not conscious of its unity. It has to be made conscious.

We consider now is the time most propitious for the endeavour.

For, a new Force or Consciousness or Light — whatever you call the new element — has manifested into the world and the world has now the capacity to become conscious of its own unity.

CWM 15: 62

The Mother

Sutras for Unity

I should love my neighbour not because he is neighbourhood, — for what is there in neighbourhood and distance? nor because the religions tell me he is my brother, — for where is the root of that brotherhood? but because he is myself. Neighbourhood and distance affect the body, the heart goes beyond them. Brotherhood is of blood or country or religion or humanity, but when self-interest clamours what becomes of this brotherhood? It is only by living in God and turning mind and heart and body into the image of his universal unity that that deep, disinterested and unassailable love becomes possible.

All the human reasons that are given for solidarity and mutual love are of little value and also of little effect. Only by becoming conscious of the Divine and uniting with Him can one attain and realise true Unity.

CWM 10: 347

Love God in thy opponent, even while thou strikest him; so shall neither have hell for his portion.

Men talk of enemies, but where are they? I only see wrestlers of one party or the other in the great arena of the universe.

All this is written to awaken mankind to the sense of its own unity. When one has become conscious of this Unity and when one sees the Divine in all beings, it is easy to feel as Sri Aurobindo recommends.

CWM 10: 279

The division of consciousness starts from the unity conscious of its unity, in order to arrive at the unity conscious of its

multiplicity in the unity. And then it is this path which, because of its fragments, is translated for us by space and time. For us, such as we are, it is possible for each point of this consciousness to be conscious of itself *and* conscious of the original Unity.

CWM 11: 199

Communal life must necessarily have a discipline so that the weaker are not bullied by the stronger; and this discipline must be respected by all those who want to live in that community.

But for the community to be happy, this discipline should be set by the most broad-minded person or persons, if possible the person or persons who are conscious of the Divine Presence and are surrendered to it.

For the world to be happy, power should only be in the hands of those who are conscious of the Divine Will. But for the time being that is impossible because the number of those who are *truly* conscious of the Divine Will is very small, and because they necessarily have no ambition.

CWM 12: 381-82

The language problem harasses India a good deal. What would be our correct attitude in this matter?

Unity must be a living fact and not the imposition of an arbitrary rule. When India will be one, she will have spontaneously a language understood by all.

CWM 13: 363

Stop thinking that you are of the West and others of the East. All human beings are of the same divine origin and meant to manifest upon earth the unity of this origin.

CWM 13: 379

The Mother

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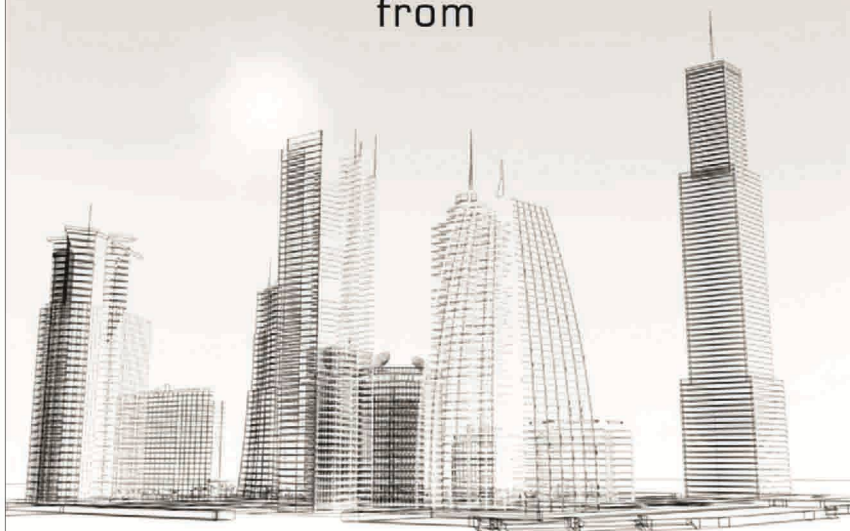
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