

OM

THE TWELVE GARDENS

of the

Matrimandir

What significance?

March 2009

Marc D.
Surrender, Auroville

*It must be a thing of great beauty, of such beauty that when people come they will say “Ah this is it”... It must be an expression of that consciousness which we are trying to bring down.*¹

The Mother

The Matrimandir Gardens as a whole cannot be compared or identified with the realisation of any past or present garden for they have to respond to the indications given by the Mother to manifest a specific beauty and various states of consciousness. They are the first step of the initiatory path of the Matrimandir, and have to create an atmosphere that favours the visitors' inward receptivity. This research remains to be done. It will be more in the nature of a quest, to allow the manifestation of a vision, rather than a mental endeavour that seeks to achieve a symbiosis of the traditional gardening forms, be they Japanese or Western.

*Roger Anger, January 2004*²

The Mother gave the following names, in French, for the 12 Gardens of the Matrimandir:

*Existence, Conscience, Félicité, Lumière, Vie, Pouvoir,
Richesse, Utilité, Progrès, Jeunesse, Harmonie, Perfection.*

*Existence, Consciousness, Bliss, Light, Life, Power,
Wealth, Usefulness, Progress, Youth, Harmony, Perfection.*

¹ The Mother's oral comments about Matrimandir to Narad and Anie, 18th December 1969.

² Roger Anger: *Toward the realisation of the Matrimandir Gardens*, January 2004.

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The calm persistent vision of the One...

Savitri, Book II, Canto 14

*Flowers are the moment's representations of things that are in themselves eternal.*³

Foreword

This document completes the presentation, “The Gardens of Matrimandir today”⁴ given by Marie, Maurizio and myself in Auroville on March 28, 2008, a presentation followed by an initial plan for the three gardens of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss, as well as the models of all three gardens.

To incarnate concepts as profound and vast such as Existence, Consciousness and Bliss – *Sat, Chit, Ananda* – in a project as concrete as a garden, represents a delicate challenge. “In the absence of a clear vision, a vision as clear and irrefutable as the Mother’s vision of the Inner Chamber and crystal of Matrimandir”⁵, this study was above all an attempt to find the deeper significance of the three gardens on which we were working. It naturally spread further to include all the twelve gardens. In a way it is a question of exploring the possible meanings and implications of the names given by Mother for the gardens of Matrimandir, meanings that are obviously inseparable from the context of the Integral Yoga and the larger plan of Auroville. This compilation, using quotations of Sri Aurobindo and Mother, seeks to include the efforts of all those who have so far thought deeply about the signification of these gardens.⁶

Today, now that the Matrimandir is finished and the aspiration to start the gardens is growing, this research is unavoidable. If it helps to understand what each garden should express and, if possible, in what landscape form, then its objective will be achieved.

³ *Flowers and their messages* (Foreword).

⁴ An exploration, mainly artistic and intuitive, along the lines of “a jewel in a jewel box” that Roger Anger was so fond of, taking into consideration the lines of force in the park around Matrimandir.

⁵ Pierre Legrand, on page 1 of his proposal for the twelve gardens in 2001.

⁶ See *Closely related document*, p. 62.

Preface

This paper is a transcription of the notes used during our research. A number of the symbols encountered in the path of Yoga, known to reveal or express various states of consciousness, appear in the text. This does not necessarily mean that these symbols will be used in the gardens but that, as in the case of Japanese gardens for instance, many elements they contain will probably be symbolic.

Moreover, there seem to be some connections between all the gardens and we have tried to highlight these. The same quotations are used more than once in different gardens, the reason being that they contain elements that are applicable in different contexts and even serve as a link between the gardens.

All the quotations from the Mother and Sri Aurobindo appear in italics, as do references to them occurring in the text. We have underlined words or phrases that focus attention on the garden under study, or on possible links with one or more other gardens.

Any suggestion can be sent to marc.lili@auroville.org.in

THE FIRST THREE GARDENS: EXISTENCE, CONSCIOUSNESS, BLISS
OR
SAT, CHIT, ANANDA

A symbol, as I understand it, is the form of a plane that represents a truth of another. ⁷

The flower that represents *Sachchidananda* is the Hedychium

“Strong and pure, it stands erect in its creative power” ⁸

It is generally understood that the first three of the twelve gardens of Matrimandir, Existence, Consciousness and Bliss represent *Sat, Chit and Ananda*, the “*Nature of the divine Being*”, at once the transcendent origin and the divine dynamism:

Sachchidananda (Sat, Chit Ananda) “the triune principle of transcendent and infinite Existence (Sat), Consciousness (Chit), and Bliss (Ananda) which is the nature of the divine being” and “the origin, the continent, the initial and the ultimate reality of all that is in the cosmos” ⁹

“That” which throws itself out into forms is a triune Existence-Consciousness-Bliss, Sachchidananda... All things that exist are what they are as terms of that existence, terms of that conscious force, terms of that delight of being. ¹⁰

Sachchidananda is one with a triple aspect. In the supreme the three are not three but one... inseparable, not only inseparable but so much each other that they are not distinct at all ¹¹

Sachchidananda is the unity of the many-sidedness of manifested things, the eternal harmony of all their variations and oppositions... ¹²

Mahashakti, the Universal Mother, is associated with *Sat-Chit-Ananda* where, with Chit-Tapas (Consciousness-Force), the triple One becomes quadruple:

⁷ Sri Aurobindo, *Letters on Yoga*, p.954.

⁸ *Flowers and their messages*, p.111.

⁹ *Glossary to the Record of Yoga*.

¹⁰ *Flower, op cit.*, (1992 Edition), p.111.

¹¹ *Letters on Yoga*, p.239

¹² *ibid.*, p.239

The secret name of the Supreme Mahashakti signifies

Love, Bliss – Ananda

Creative and formative Knowledge-Power – Chit-Tapas

Support, Covering, Pervasion – Sat

*For the Supreme is Ananda unifying Consciousness and Existence in the single Power (Shakti) of these things.*¹³

A similar variation of *Sat-Chit-Ananda* takes place with the Vedic gods *Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman* and *Bhaga*. Sri Aurobindo, in his *Record of Yoga*, calls them “*The Four*”, who

*build up the whole divine state into its perfection by the natural interaction of its four essential elements. The four Vedic gods Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman and Bhaga...represent respectively “the all- pervading purity” of Sat (Varuna), “ the all-uniting light” of Chit (Mitra), “the movement of all-discerning force” of tapas (Aryaman) and “the all-embracing joy” of ananda (Bhaga), thus being “practically the later essential trinity of Sachchidananda – Existence, Consciousness, Bliss with self-awareness and self –force, Chit and Tapas, for double terms of Consciousness.*¹⁴

Sat, Chit Ananda is also related to the seven supreme planes, repeated thrice:

*The thrice seven supreme planes of Sat-Chit-Ananda...*¹⁵

¹³ Sri Aurobindo, *Record of Yoga*, p.1339

¹⁴ *Glossary to the Record of Yoga* (See : The Four)

¹⁵ *Record, op.cit.*, p. 1139.

1) EXISTENCE

*The One indivisible which is pure existence.*¹⁶

*The hansa [the swan] is the symbol of the Being.*¹⁷

Key words: *Sat*; Essence; Emergence; *Dynamis*¹⁸; Source of becoming.

The flower chosen by the Mother for this garden is the hibiscus named “*Psychic Power of Existence*”, which in her commentary she describes as being

“*Manifold, imperious, and irresistible in its comprehensive sweetness.*”¹⁹

EXISTENCE, the first of the twelve gardens, is considered as *SAT*:

Being, existence, substance;

1) *Pure Existence, eternal, infinite, indefinable, not affected by the succession of Time, not involved in the extension of Space, beyond form, quantity, quality.*

2) *Existence as “the stuff of its own becoming” ...that “has formed itself here, fundamentally, as Matter”.*²⁰

Sat is beyond time:

*When we look at Existence itself, Time and Space disappear.*²¹

*Essence can never be defined – it simply is.*²²

Sat is also manifested:

*Being and Becoming, One and Many are both true and are both the same thing.*²³

The meaning of the garden Existence implies being *and* becoming: the Latin root of the word existence, “*ex sistere*”, means “placed outside”, “coming out from”:

*The supreme Existence which has become the Universe...*²⁴

¹⁶ Chandogya Upanishad. VI, 2.1.

¹⁷ Letters, op.cit., p.979.

¹⁸ “*Dynamis is a Greek word... it is equivalent to the Sanscrit word Shakti. Philosophically it stands as the opposite word to status. Divine Status, Divine Dynamis.*” Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library, **30**:268.

¹⁹ Flower n° 600 in the book, *The Spiritual Significance of Flowers*. See also Richard Pearson, *The Gardens of Matrimandir*, p.14.

²⁰ *Glossary of the Record of Yoga*

²¹ Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, **21**:93.

²² , Letters, op.cit., p.286

²³ SABCL **12**: 137

²⁴ Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, Part II, p. 12 (Ashram edition, 1991).

*The supreme pours Himself out of an eternal peace, poise and silence into an eternal activity...*²⁵

*The Absolute manifests itself in two terms, a Being and a Becoming. The Being is the fundamental reality; the Becoming is an effectual reality: it is a dynamic power...*²⁶

In a letter to Roger Anger, Dr. Kireet Joshi mentioned this duality, quoting from *The Synthesis of Yoga*:

*Existence is not consciousness; it comes after the essence, before the life.
Essence – Existence – Life.*²⁷

Another aspect of *Sat* can be particularly interesting for us in the context of the Matrimandir Gardens:

*Sat is the divine counterpart of the physical substance.*²⁸

The latter quotation as well as the earlier one (“*Existence...has formed itself here, fundamentally, as Matter*”), are especially interesting for a landscaper, because one can ask oneself what symbolizes the most *physical substance* in a garden. Could it be “Stone”?²⁹

Narad, in his recent research on the significance of the order of the gardens, suggested: “All begins with existence, *Sat*, and I see the initial manifestation as represented by stone, pools, primordial plants such as bamboo, ferns, etc.”³⁰

It is interesting to note that all but one of the different approaches concerning the garden of Existence proposed so far have suggested that the stone should be the primordial element.

Existence has therefore a double meaning, which Sri Aurobindo clearly points out:

*We have therefore two fundamental facts of pure existence **and** of world existence, a fact of Being, a fact of Becoming.*³¹

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 380.

²⁶ SABCL, **19**: 659.

²⁷ *Synthesis*, Part 2: The object of Knowledge (cf. Kireet Joshi to Roger Anger, first version).

²⁸ SABCL, **12**: 84.

²⁹ In the *Dictionary of Symbols*, we can find this entry regarding stone “In the Tradition, the stone has a special place. There exist a close relation between the soul and the stone... The raw stone comes from heaven ; transmuted, it rises towards it...The raw stone is considered as androgynous, androgyny is the perfection of the primordial state”. This seems to be confirmed by “*Sat is the divine counterpart of the physical substance*”.

³⁰ Narad, *On the Significance of the order of the Matrimandir Gardens*. p. 1.

³¹ *The Life Divine*, Chap. IX, p. 87.

Therefore, if the garden of Existence expresses *Sat*, it must be: Being (the *essence*), and the Existent (the *becoming*), and as the first in the series of the twelve gardens, it is probably the source of becoming.

On the Matrimandir site, the garden of Existence is oriented towards the East, towards the rising sun, implying the emergence, the beginning of the manifestation of the solar Light. Together with the garden of Perfection, it faces the East pillar of Matrimandir, that of Mahalakshmi:

*The miracle of eternal beauty, an unseizable secret of divine harmony, the compelling magic of an irresistible universal charm and attraction that draws and hold things and forces and beings together and obliges them to meet and unite that a hidden Ananda may play from behind the veil and make of them its rhythms and its figure. This is the power of Mahalakshmi.*³²

The symbol of *Mahalakshmi* is a circle, and its colour is golden pink.

Existence is the first in the series of 12 gardens, the number twelve which,

*“...signifies anything one wants.... Twelve, that’s the number of Aditi, of Mahashakti. So it applies to everything; all Her Action has 12 Aspects. There are also Her 12 Virtues, Her 12 Powers, Her 12 Aspects, and then Her 12 Planes of manifestation and many other things that are 12; and the symbol, the number 12 is in itself a symbol. It is the symbol of manifestation, double perfection – in essence and in manifestation – in the creation.”*³³

The Divine Mother, Aditi, “*the Mother of the Gods*”, or Mahashakti, “*the universal Mother*”, is represented by the Matrimandir itself:

*The Matrimandir wants to be the symbol of the Universal Mother according to Sri Aurobindo’s teaching.*³⁴

The Matrimandir represents the number 12, Aditi. The 12 gardens as a whole will express most probably the Manifestation, the “*Dynamis*”³⁵, the Creation, “*That’ which has projected Itself into forms.*” The garden of Existence would then express the first movement of this manifestation, for “*12 is the symbol of manifestation, double perfection – in essence and in manifestation – in the creation*”.

This seems to be confirmed by the flower the Mother chose for this first garden, the hibiscus named “*Psychic Power of Existence*” which She described as “*manifold, imperious, and irresistible in its comprehensive sweetness*”. The “*psychic*” or the “*psychic being*” is characterised by its capacity to evolve during the cycle of

³² Sri Aurobindo, *The Mother*, p. 30.

³³ The Mother, to Her Wednesday class, 10.11.54.

³⁴ Undated note from The Mother, probably dating from early 1972 (according to Gilles G).

³⁵ Dynamis : see note 18.

manifestation and by its power to manifest progressively the Divine in the ignorant Nature. The psychic

*...is constantly in contact with the immanent Divine – the Divine secret in the individual...The psychic being evolves, so it is not immutable...The psychic being is the soul developing in the evolution.*³⁶

The psychic part in us is something that comes directly from the Divine, something which is in touch with the Divine. In its origin it is the nucleus of divine possibilities that supports this lower triple manifestation of mind, life, body.

The Manifestation being synonymous with Forgetfulness, Ignorance, Nescience (Avidya), it is therefore the psychic being that “evolves”:

*Avidya is ignorance; the power by which “the spirit dwells... in the consciousness of multiplicity and relativity”; the knowledge of the many “which becomes no longer knowledge at all but ignorance, Avidya”, because it “takes the Many for the real fact of existence and views the One only as a comic sum of the many.”*³⁷

*[The psychic] is that spark of the Divine Fire that grows behind the mind, vital and physical as the psychic being until it is able to transform the Prakriti of ignorance into Prakriti of knowledge.*³⁸

Richard Pearson mentions the power of the psychic when he speaks of the Garden of Existence: “...The Mother talks about the psychic Power of existence. The psychic is an essence of the Divine. It is in all of us. Its seat is behind the heart and it expresses itself through the purified emotions of the heart.”³⁹

Sri Aurobindo points out that, “Once the connection between the supramental and the human consciousness is made, it is the psychic being that give the readiest response... it is also a purer response.”⁴⁰

Everything seems to indicate that this garden --Existence-- signifies Manifestation, then Evolution (through the intermediary of the psychic being, its base in matter), expressed in the ensemble of the gardens by a cycle of 12, from Existence (the first garden) to Perfection (the last one) with a view to manifesting the Supramental Consciousness.

The hibiscus chosen by the Mother expresses the “power” of the psychic (which may mean that this garden is associated with the garden of Power). The psychic “evolves”; it may well be a matter of evolutionary power (thus a possible link between the gardens of Existence and Progress).

³⁶ Letters, pp. 291-298, 301.

³⁷ Glossary of the Record of Yoga.

³⁸ Letters, pp. 288-91.

³⁹ Richard Pearson, booklet about flowers, April 2008.

⁴⁰ Letters, p. 288 (footnote).

In his *Letters on Yoga*, Sri Aurobindo speaks about the light of the psychic being:
*The colour of the psychic light is according to what it manifests – e.g., psychic love is pink or rose, the psychic purity is white...The white rose [is] pure spiritual surrender. The rosy light is that of love – so probably you entered the psychic worlds – at least one of them.*⁴¹

The garden of Existence seems, through this aspect, to be associated with the garden of Light.

* * *

(N.B.: In looking at each garden we will add at the end the indications given by Dr. Kireet Joshi, a friend of Roger Anger, even though, unfortunately, he hasn't elaborated further upon these to date.⁴²)

“The first garden to be realised is the garden of Existence in which there are three concepts:

- Beyond Time and space
- Being (the essence)
- Source of Becoming

“Existence is connected to three other gardens -- Wealth, Usefulness, and Progress:

“Wealth (that which can be consumed) connected with Usefulness;
Wealth and Usefulness = Progress to embody Existence”

⁴¹ *ibid.* pp. 964 -65.

⁴² Kireet Joshi to Roger Anger, *Matrimandir Gardens*, first version. These are not the exact words of Kireet Joshi. They were noted down succinctly by a person who was present during the conversation. Jacqueline, the late Roger Anger's partner, tries to get more information from Dr. Joshi.

2) CONSCIOUSNESS

*The One whom we adore as the Mother is the divine Conscious Force that dominates all existence...*⁴³

*A lotus flower indicates the open consciousness...
The white lotus is the symbol of the Mother's consciousness.*⁴⁴

Key words: Chit Shakti (*dynamis*)⁴⁵ ; Creative Consciousness; Supramental Consciousness.

The Mother has chosen for the garden of Consciousness the hibiscus named “*Supramental Consciousness*”,

*“Gloriously awake and powerful, it is luminous, sure of itself, infallible in its movement”.*⁴⁶

CONSCIOUSNESS, the second of the twelve gardens is usually associated with *CHIT* which is,

1) *The “original Consciousness”.*

2) *An inherent self-consciousness... inseparable from its being (sat) and throwing itself out as a force (tapas) of movement of consciousness which is creative of force, forms and worlds; the “universal conscious stuff of existence.”*⁴⁷

*Chit Tapas or Chit Shakti, the Consciousness-Force of the eternal Existence who is the universal creatrix.”*⁴⁸

*...The Creative and Formative Knowledge-Power – Chit Tapas. (The secret name of the supreme Mahashakti)*⁴⁹

*Of that existence the essential nature or power is an infinite imperishable force of self conscious being...*⁵⁰

*All is Chit because all is Sat; all is various movement of the original Consciousness because all is various movement of the original Being.*⁵¹

⁴³ SABCL, 25: 11

⁴⁴ Letters,, p.978

⁴⁵ See note n°19.

⁴⁶ R. Pearson, *The Gardens*, op.cit., p. 16, Flower n° 569.

⁴⁷ *Glossary to the Record of Yoga*.

⁴⁸ *ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Record of Yoga*, p.1339.

⁵⁰ *The Life Divine*, Chap. 12, p. 110.

⁵¹ SABCL, 20: 373.

It is clear that Consciousness (*Chit*) is one with Existence (*Sat*) and the expression of its manifestation (*Chit Tapas* or *Chit Shakti*):

*Consciousness is the fundamental thing, the fundamental thing in existence – it is energy, the motion, the movement of consciousness that creates the universe and all that is in it – not only the macrocosm but the microcosm is nothing but consciousness arranging itself.*⁵²

Chit has therefore a twofold meaning: Primordial Consciousness and the creative Consciousness-Force (*Chit Shakti*). *Chit Shakti*, the universal creatrix, signifies Consciousness-Force, and Matter is related to it:

*Matter is the representation of force which is most easily intelligible to our intelligence, moulded as it is by contacts in Matter...*⁵³

The same with water:

*In the ancient image...this infinite existence of Force was figured as a sea... seed of a universe.*⁵⁴

*To me, for instance, consciousness is the very stuff of existence and I can feel it everywhere enveloping and penetrating the stone as much as man or the animal? A movement, a flow of consciousness is not to me an image but a fact.*⁵⁵

*The flow of the Force-ocean...*⁵⁶

The creative Force manifests itself in the symbolic form of the primordial waters, the waters of being. Water, an important element for the landscaper, is related to Consciousness:

The “Waters of being”⁵⁷ represent existence in its manifold movement on various planes.

This manifold movement, the “*Consciousness-Force of the eternal Existence*” is none other than *Chit Shakti*, the *universal creatrix*” mentioned above.

*...Agni Twastha⁵⁸ having made the Sun out of the Apas or the waters of being...*⁵⁹

⁵² *Letters*, p.236.

⁵³ *The Life Divine*, Chap. X.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*. The *Dictionary of Symbols* indicates: “The waters, an undifferentiated mass, represent the infinity of possibilities, they contain...the seed of all the seeds, all the promises of development...”

⁵⁵ *Letters on Savitri*, quoted by Narad in *On the significance of the Order of the Matrimandir Gardens*.

⁵⁶ *The Life Divine*, p. 88.

⁵⁷ *Glossary to the Record of Yoga*, (see Apas).

⁵⁸ Agni: “The divine Consciousness formulating itself in universal energy”; Twastha is “the Fashioner of things”. (*Glossary to the Record of Yoga*)

⁵⁹ *Record of Yoga*, p.1323

Therefore water represents the Consciousness-Force, the creatrix of Existence, but also, (see below) the higher consciousness which “comes down”, associated in this case with the symbol of a mountain:

*The flowing of water from the peak indicates some flow from the higher consciousness above.*⁶⁰

The Mother confirms what water stands for in her commentary on the symbol of Sri Aurobindo and its corollary, the central square:

*The water, inside the square, represents the multiplicity, the creation... The central square is the perfect manifestation.*⁶¹

This “*perfect manifestation*”, which could be one of the aspects of the garden of Consciousness, is reminiscent of the “*double perfection*” of the number 12 that we have seen in the garden of Existence. This might be the beginning or an indication of the meaning of the last garden, Perfection. This seems to be confirmed by Sri Aurobindo when he comments on the meaning of the square:

*The Square...is a symbol of complete creation... In my experience, the square symbolises the supermind.*⁶²

The square thus represents the perfect Manifestation, the complete Creation, the Supermind.

We may recall that the flower chosen by the Mother for the garden of Consciousness is named “Supramental Consciousness”. It appears that *Chit* is both “*Original Consciousness*” and “*Creative Consciousness-Force*”, “*Universal Conscious Stuff of Existence*” and *Supramental Consciousness*. It is, through the “*manifold movement*” of its “*Waters of being*”, the eternal creator “*of force, forms and worlds*”. Consciousness is immanent and all-pervasive: nothing exists outside of *Chit*.

The garden Consciousness thus seems to be directly associated to the multiplicity but also with a “*complete creation*” which would mean, in this particular context, a manifestation of the Supramental consciousness. Certainly, as pointed out by Dr Kireet Joshi with regard to the 12 gardens, “*Supermind is the whole thing*”⁶³.

Having as their origin *Sat* and *Chit* (and *Ananda*), the gardens of Matrimandir would therefore represent the Manifestation, then the progressive evolutionary movement towards the supramental Consciousness and its manifestation in the material world.

⁶⁰ *Letters*, p.968

⁶¹ *Sri Aurobindo, Archives and Research*, Dec 1979.

⁶² *Letters on Yoga*, II, third Edition (1971), pp. 949-954. The square could perhaps be compared to the “*cube of ocean*” mentioned by Satprem in *Carnets d'une apocalypse*.

⁶³ Dr. Joshi to Roger Anger, first draft: “*Supermind is the whole thing; the Mother is concentrated on Supermind*”.

* * *

According to Dr. Joshi, Consciousness is connected with the three gardens of Light, Life, Power.

3) BLISS

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their part to the Divine. For them... the seas of Ananda. ⁶⁴

A secret air of pure felicity. ⁶⁵

Key words: Ananda; Universal; Cosmic play; Joy; Love; Beauty.

The flower chosen by the Mother for the garden Felicity is the hibiscus, « *Ananda* » which she describes as

“*Calm, balanced, smiling and very gentle in its truly simple austerity.*” ⁶⁶

BLISS, or ANANDA which means:

Bliss, delight, beatitude, spiritual ecstasy.

1) *The essential principle of delight; a self delight which is the very nature of the transcendent and infinite existence.* ⁶⁷

2) *A profound concentrated intense self-existent bliss extended to all that our being does, envisages, creates, a fixed divine rapture.* ⁶⁸

As in the case of *Sat* and *Chit*, the nature of *Ananda* is twofold, at the same time essential and universal. The three are inseparable:

The self of things is an infinite indivisible existence; of that existence the essential nature or power is an infinite imperishable force of self-conscious being; and of that self-consciousness the essential nature or knowledge of itself is, again, an infinite inalienable delight of being. ⁶⁹

These three aspects of essential Being, one in reality, triune to our mental view, separable only in appearance. ⁷⁰

It is obvious that the three gardens -- Existence, Consciousness and Bliss -- are intimately associated with and together form a unity within the whole, a triple unity at once essential and universal, and that is probably the origin and the dynamic source of what the other nine gardens represent, although with a particular emphasis on Bliss:

⁶⁴ *Letters*, p.586.

⁶⁵ *Savitri*, Book X, Canto 3

⁶⁶ R. Pearson, *The Gardens*, p 18. The Flower has the n°565 in the book : *Spiritual significance of flowers.*

⁶⁷ *Glossary of terms in Sri Aurobindo's Writings.*

⁶⁸ *Glossary of the Record of Yoga*

⁶⁹ *The Life Divine*, p. 100.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p 101.

“If [Brahman]... indulges its power of movement and formation, it can be only for one reason, for delight”

“Delight is the secret of creation”; “...That delight is the sole cause, motive and object of cosmic existence.”⁷¹

Ananda in its purity is called *Suddhananda*, “*The pure delight of the infinite.*”

Likewise it is,

“the Ananda corresponding to the plane of transcendent bliss (Anandaloka) or to the sub-planes created by the ‘repetition of the Ananda plane in each of the lower worlds of consciousness’. It brings the ‘sense of Supreme Beauty in all things’ (sarvasaundarya).”⁷²

The original *Ananda* is therefore associated with the Manifestation and its echo is repeated “*in each of the lower worlds of consciousness*”. It is associated with the “*Supreme Beauty*”. *Ananda* is also linked to the Play, to Joy and to Eternal Youth (the tenth garden is called Youth):

If we look at World-Existence rather in its relation to the self-delight of eternally existent being, we may regard, describe and realise it as Lila,⁷³ the play, the child’s joy, the poet’s joy, the actor’s joy, the mechanician’s joy of the Soul of things eternally young, perpetually inexhaustible, creating and re-creating Himself in Himself for the sheer bliss of that self creation, of that self-representation – Himself the play, Himself the player, Himself the playground.⁷⁴

The *Lila*, the Universal Play of the manifestation, is therefore also the Universal *Ananda*. One interesting fact that to my knowledge is not mentioned anywhere else, is that Sri Aurobindo, in his *Record of Yoga*, describes in detail 12 essential *Anandas*⁷⁵ as well as a series of related *anandas*, all of which all became established in him and took over everything, even down to the physical body itself, as indicated this short note dated December 26th, 1912:

⁷¹ *The Life Divine*, pp. 100, 111, 154.

⁷² *Glossary of the Record of Yoga*. The definition continues: *Its highest intensities are experienced when the soul “casts itself into the absolute existence of the spirit and is enlarged into its own entirely self-existent bliss infinitude”*.

⁷³ *Lilâ* is the world as a cosmic game of the Divine. About the game, it is interesting to see the significance of the playful Krishna (Lilamaya) : “*The eternal child frolicking in the Universe, the Playmate, Lover, Master, Teacher and Fried of all His creation* », he “*who draws all of us to him by his love, compels all of us by his masteries and plays his eternal play of joy and strength and beauty in the manifold world*” (*glossary to the Record of Yoga*).

⁷⁴ *The Life Divine*, pp.102-103

⁷⁵ *Record of Yoga*, p. 1456. These twelve *anandas* are: *Kaivalyananda* (Sadananda), *Chidananda*, *Suddhananda*, *Chidghanananda*, *Ahaitukananda*, *Premananda*, *Kamananda*. The *Kamananda* (or physical *ananda*) is divided in five : *Vaidyutananda*, *Raudrananda*, *Tivrananda*, *Vishayananda*, *Maithunananda*. The *Record of Yoga* gives multiple examples, as well as other *anandas*, like the *ananda* of hunger and thirst, *ananda* of battle and defeat, of passivity, or combinations of *anandas*, etc..

“Once more, Soma is being felt physically in the sensation as of a wine flowing through the system, but in the subtle body rather than in the physical body”⁷⁶

Soma is “*the Lord of the delight of immortality, the god of ananda as symbolised by the wine of delight*”.⁷⁷ The physical body then, is where five of the twelve *Anandas* are manifested.⁷⁸

Ananda, in the cosmic play, extends ultimately to all that is. *Ananda* is immanent and universal :

For who could live or breathe if there were not this Ananda of existence as the ether in which we dwell?

From Ananda, all existences are born, by Ananda they remain in being and increase, to Ananda they depart...⁷⁹

World existence is the ecstatic dance of Shiva... its sole absolute object is the joy of the dancing.⁸⁰

Ananda is therefore the *raison d'être*, the “*secret*” of the manifestation. Sri Aurobindo, in *The Synthesis of Yoga*, indicates how a human being who is no longer moved by desire performs action:

He will do these things just as the supreme Power acts and creates, for a certain spiritual joy in creation and expression...⁸¹

For joy and not for sorrow, earth was made.⁸²

The “*Supreme Beauty*” is therefore intimately associated with *Ananda*, as expressed in this wonderful vision:

This morning... [there is a] strong increase of the suddhananda (pure ananda) with a manifestation of the faery element in the beauty of things, the sense of their beauty of ananda, the pleasure taken in them as visions of his weaving of God.⁸³

Beauty is ananda taking form...What we speak of as beauty is Ananda in manifestation.⁸⁴

⁷⁶ *Record of Yoga*, p.164.

⁷⁷ *Glossary to the Record of Yoga*.

⁷⁸ *Record of Yoga*, p. 1456. One of them, *raudrananda*, is specially connected to the transformation of pain into ananda.

⁷⁹ *Taittiriya Upanishad*. II. 7; III. 6.

⁸⁰ *The Life Divine*, p. 78.

⁸¹ *Synthesis*, p. 143.

⁸² *Savitri*, 50: 706, (1954)

⁸³ *Record of Yoga*, July 15th, 1912, p 90.

⁸⁴ Sri Aurobindo, *The Future Poetry*, SABCL:p. 491.

*Spiritual beauty illuminating human sight...*⁸⁵

For Auroville Mother talked about “*beauty in simplicity*”.

Among the four manifestation of the Supreme Mother associated with the Matrimandir, it is Mahalakshmi, “*the miracle of eternal beauty*” which seeks to manifest “*the hidden Ananda*”.⁸⁶

Ananda is Beauty, Ananda is Joy, Ananda is also Love :

*The triple term in which ananda may be stayed is Joy, Love, Beauty.*⁸⁷

The Ananda of Love, or *Premananda* is one of the twelve *Anandas*. *Premananda* is the

*“fundamental ecstasy of being” translated “ in the heart into a wide or deep or passionate delight of universal union and love and sympathy and the joy of beings and the joy of things”.*⁸⁸

Sri Aurobindo names and describes the seven Supramental suns of which the fourth is, “*the sun of Love, Bliss and Beauty, vivifying and harmonising the supramental creation*”.⁸⁹

*Love is an intense expression of the soul of Ananda.*⁹⁰

In “*The Mother*”, Sri Aurobindo mentions personalities of the Divine Mother other than the four main Shaktis, and suggests the most indispensable of these Presences, namely *Ananda*:

*“There are other great Personalities of the Divine Mother, but they were more difficult to bring down and have not stood out in front with so much prominence in the evolution of the earth-spirit. There are among them Presences indispensable for the supramental realisation – most of all one who is her Personality of that mysterious and powerful ecstasy and Ananda which flows from a supreme divine Love, the Ananda that alone can heal the gulf between the highest of the supramental spirit and the lowest abysses of Matter, the Ananda that holds the key of a wonderful divinest Life and even now supports from its secrecies the work of all other Powers of the universe”.*⁹¹

⁸⁵ *Savitri*, Bk I, Canto I, p 5.

⁸⁶ Sri Aurobindo, *The Mother*, p. 30.

⁸⁷ Sri Aurobindo, *The Hour of God and Other Writings*, SABCL 17:238.

⁸⁸ Glossary of the Record of Yoga.

⁸⁹ *Record of Yoga*, p. 1341. Cf the garden of Light for the description of the seven Suns of the Supramental.

⁹⁰ SABCL, 24: 1292

⁹¹ *The Mother*, op.cit., pp. 35-36.

The phrase, “*the Ananda that holds the key of a wonderful divinest Life*” links Bliss with Life, the names of two of the gardens.

The garden of Bliss, like the gardens of Existence and Consciousness, is connected with the manifestation and expresses “*the most indispensable presence for the supramental realisation*”, this *Ananda* which “*supports...the work of all other Powers of the universe*”. This passage indicates that *Ananda* is also a power in its own right, and moreover, while it is the support of all the other powers, it reveals itself to be a fundamental Power. The garden of Bliss has certainly a direct link with the garden Power. We will see later that other gardens are also associated with it.

* * *

According to Dr Kireet Joshi, “The garden of Bliss is connected with the gardens of Youth, Harmony and Perfection. They manifest Bliss. *Ananda* (in the Veda) = *madhu*, (honey). “The wind is full of *Ananda*”⁹²

And again, “*Ananda* is freedom...*Ananda* is a laughter of the snow of the Himalayas...*Ananda* is the cool breeze of sweetness and fragrance that animates the flute of Krishna”.⁹³

⁹² Dr. Joshi to Roger Anger, first version.

⁹³ *Ibid.* , second version (2007)

4) LIGHT

God is everywhere and wherever God is, there is Light. ⁹⁴

By Light we live and to the Light we go. ⁹⁵

Key words: Manifestation, Dynamis⁹⁶, Illumination, Colours.

The flower chosen for this garden by the Mother is the hibiscus named “*Light of the purified Power*” and her commentary on its significance is,

*“Of an irresistible simplicity in its power solely consecrated to the Divine”.*⁹⁷

LIGHT is the fourth garden, which comes just before that of Life.

*The Divine Light has no function – it is just Light of the Divine Consciousness.*⁹⁸

Light is primarily a spiritual manifestation of the Divine Reality illuminative and creative ⁹⁹

*All creation... is the work of the Mother.*¹⁰⁰

Light is therefore originally a manifestation of *Chit-Shakti*, the creative and universal Consciousness-Force. It arises out of the continuity of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss, all three of which are linked to the origin of the manifestation as we have already seen.

Light and Consciousness are intimately connected. Light is also a Power of The Mother:

*The white light indicates the divine consciousness.*¹⁰¹

*The white light is [the Mother’s] own characteristic power, that of the Divine Consciousness in essence... The white light is the Mother’s light.*¹⁰²

*The Mother’s light is white – especially diamond white.*¹⁰³

⁹⁴ SABCL, 17: 48

⁹⁵ *Savitri*, Book X, Canto 1

⁹⁶ See note n°19

⁹⁷ R. Pearson, *The Gardens*, p 20.

⁹⁸ *Letters*, p. 1206.

⁹⁹ SABCL, 19: 944

¹⁰⁰ *The Mother*, p. 78.

¹⁰¹ *Letters*, p 962.

¹⁰² *The Mother*, pp. 83-84

¹⁰³ *ibid.*, p 87

*But this Light assumes different forms...*¹⁰⁴

It appears that the garden of Light may be a transition between Existence, Consciousness, Bliss (*Sat, Chit, Ananda*) and the other gardens. It seems to be essentially an expression of *Chit* (Consciousness) where the play of the manifestation is diversified, diffracted in colour-lights, in the same way a prism plays on our material light. Thus there is THE Light, and the LIGHTS, for Light is also Power:

*The lights are the Mother's Powers – many in numbers.*¹⁰⁵

*The light is a manifestation of Force, the nature of the force being indicated by the colour of the light...The lights indicates the action of certain forces, usually indicated by the colours of the light*¹⁰⁶

The gardens of Power and Light seem to be connected. Sri Aurobindo describes various manifestations of light: diamond light, golden light, coloured lights, symbols, beings of light:

*The gods, the Powers of Light.*¹⁰⁷

*Golden Light always means the light of Truth... The sunlight is the light of the Truth itself...The Sun stands universally for the supramental Light, the Divine Gnosis.*¹⁰⁸

*Colours and light are always close to each other – colour being more indicative, light more dynamic. Colour incandescent becomes light. ...Deep red is the Divine Love – rosy is the psychic love... Yellow is the thinking mind... The violet is the light of Divine Grace and compassion.*¹⁰⁹

*Orange is the colour of occult knowledge...The green light is a vital force, a dynamic force...which has the power to purify, harmonise or cure... The colour of psychic light is according to what it manifest – e.g. psychic love is pink or rose, the psychic purity is white, etc.*¹¹⁰

*The cow [which] in the occult symbolism indicates Light or the consciousness...In the Veda, the Cow is the Divine Light – the white cow is the pure consciousness in which is the light.*¹¹¹

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*, p. 83.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*, p. 83.

¹⁰⁶ *Letters*, p. 960.

¹⁰⁷ *The Mother*, p. 62.

¹⁰⁸ *Letters*, p.954 -962.

¹⁰⁹ *Letters*, p. 959-965.

¹¹⁰ *Letters*, p.964 -966.

¹¹¹ *ibid.* ,p, 971.

*The lights represent forces – or sometimes a formed light like that you saw may be the light of a being of the supraphysical planes.*¹¹²

On the site, the garden of *Light* (as also *Bliss*) faces the North pillar of Matrimandir, that of *Mahakali* :

*...In her an overwhelming intensity, a mighty passion of force to achieve, a divine violence rushing to shatter every limit and obstacle. All her divinity leaps out in a splendour of tempestuous action...*¹¹³

The symbol of Mahakali is the square and its colour is a crimson gold; Mahakali, whose action is most effective in the body:

*The golden colour indicates here Mahakali force which is the strongest for the working in the body.*¹¹⁴

Light is also liberating Power:

*Light is a general term. Light is not knowledge but the illumination that comes from above and liberates the being from obscurity and darkness.*¹¹⁵

It [Light] is the power that enlightens whatever it falls upon – the result may be vision, memory, knowledge, right will, right, impulse etc.

*It [Light] clarifies the consciousness and works as a force and makes knowledge possible.*¹¹⁶

*When [the Truth-Soul] plunges into the black waters of the subconscious, it releases from it the spiritual light and the sevenfold stream of the Divine Energy...*¹¹⁷

Light is then also a Power that illumines and liberates (linking it perhaps to the garden of Progress). In the *Life Divine*, the plane that Sri Aurobindo calls the “Illumined Mind”,

*“illumines the thought-mind with a direct inner vision and inspiration, brings a spiritual sight into the heart and a spiritual light and energy into the feelings and emotions, imparts to the life-force a spiritual urge, a truth inspiration that dynamises the action and exalts the life-movements,... it throws on the physical mind a transforming light... and pours luminosity and consciousness into the very cells of the body”.*¹¹⁸

¹¹² *ibid.*, p. 952 .

¹¹³ *The Mother*, p. 28.

¹¹⁴ *Letters*, p. 963.

¹¹⁵ *The Mother*, p. 83.

¹¹⁶ *Letters*, p. 1206.

¹¹⁷ *Letters*, p. 981.

¹¹⁸ *The Life Divine*, pp. 982-983.

Thus the transforming Light touches all the parts of the being, down to the “*very cells of the body*”. It really seems that the garden of Light is related to the Supramental transformation.

The spiritual traditions of India are well acquainted with different states of consciousness or diverse types of light.¹¹⁹

Surya: the Sun, “*the Sun of knowledge*”, “*the Lord of Light and Truth*”.

Prakasha : radiance illumination; “transparent luminosity”; but also “clarity of the thinking faculty”...; and also “the divine light of knowledge into which Sattwa is transformed in the process of liberation of the three modes of the lower nature”; and “the highest of the seven kinds of akashic material.”¹²⁰

Jyoti: “light, light of spiritual consciousness”, or, “one of the seven kinds of ‘akashic material’”; *rupa* or *lipi* composed of this material”.

Agni: the god of Fire; “he is the secret inhabitant of Matter and its forms”, the divine Consciousness in the form of universal energy, manifestation of light in the three forms of *Saura agni* (solar fire), *Vaidyuta agni* (electric fire), and *Jada agni*, (ordinary fire).

Mitra, “The Friend of all beings, the lord of the luminous harmony”

Swar, “The luminous world”.

The original Light, the “*spiritual manifestation of the illumining and creating divine reality*”, is therefore expressed as a manifold power of creation, in a multitude of worlds and forms. Sri Aurobindo, in his *Record of Yoga*, gives a striking description of what seems to be an All-Powerful manifestation of the Light in the form of *seven creative Suns* and *seven supramental Suns*. He mentions an “*eighth Sun of Truth*” hidden in the heart of Mother Earth, which awakens the Earth “*to her own divinity*”. This aspect of Light would confirm a supramental dimension to the garden of Light as well as, as it will later become clear, the general orientation of the 12 gardens:

The Seven creative Suns¹²¹

The Sun of Creative Origination (from the eternal vastnesses).

The double Sun of Light and Power (concentrating the movement emanated from the infinite Wisdom-Will).

The Sun of Love, Bliss and Beauty (dynamising the descending harmonies).

The Sun of Soul-Power (aspiring, receiving, grasping, assimilating the creation; divided here into the mind and psyche, there unified in Soul-Mind, Brahman).

The Sun of Life (dynamically externalising the creation).

¹¹⁹ *Glossary to the Record of Yoga.*

¹²⁰ The seven kinds of akashic material are: *prakasha*, *agni*, *varna*, *jyoti*, *tejas*, *dhuma* et *chaya*, respectively: *illumination*, *fire*, *colour*, *light*, *brilliance*, *smoke*, *shadow*. (glossary of the Record of Yoga).

¹²¹ *Record of Yoga*, pp. 1339-41.

The Sun of Everlasting Form (stabilising and containing the creation).

Then, the Seven Suns of the Supermind:

The Sun of Truth, originating the supramental creation.

The double Sun of Supramental Light and Will, transmitting the Knowledge-Power that creates, founds and organises the supramental creation.

The Sun of Word, expressing and arranging the supramental creation.

The Sun of Love, Bliss and Beauty, vivifying and harmonising the supramental creation .

The Sun of supramental Force (source of life) dynamising the supramental creation.

The Sun of supramental Life-Radiances, (Power-Rays) canalising the dynamis and pouring it into forms.

The Sun of Supramental Form-Energy holding and embodying the supramental life stabilising the creation.

Then, the seven Jewel-Centres of the Earth-Mother, and the Eighth Sun :

Seven times seven are the planes of the Supreme Goddess, the steps of ascent and descent of the Divine Transcendent and Universal Adyashakti [the Original Power].

Above are the thrice seven supreme planes of Sat-Chit-Ananda... ; in between are the seven planes of the Divine Truth and Vastness, Mahat Brahman...; below are the thrice seven steps of ascent and descent into this evolutionary world of the earth existence.

These three gradations are successively Supermind or Truth-Mind, with its seven suns; Life with its seven lotuses; Earth with its seven Jewel-Centres.

The seven Lotuses are the seven chakras of the Tantric tradition, descending and ascending from Mind (Sahasradala, Ajna, Vishuddha, Anahata) that takes up life through Life in Force (Manipura, Swadhisthana) down to life involved in Matter (Muladhara).

All these Life-Centres are in themselves centres of Truth in Life even as the seven Suns are each a flaming heart of Truth in luminous Divine-Mind-Existence; but these lotuses have been veiled, closed, shut into their own occult energies by the Ignorance. Hence the obscurity, falsehood, death, suffering of our existence.

The Jewel-Centres of the Earth Mother are seven luminous jewel-hearts of Truth in Substance; but they have been imprisoned in darkness, fossilised in immobility, veiled, closed, shut into their own occult energies by the hardness, darkness and inertia of the material Inconscience.

To liberate all these powers by the luminous and flaming descent of the suns of the Supermind and release of the eighth Sun of Truth hidden in the Earth, in the darkness of the Inconscience, in the cavern of Vala and his Panis ¹²², this is the first step towards the restoration of the Earth Mother to her own divinity and the earth-existence to its native light, truth, life and bliss of immaculate Ananda.

¹²² The Panis: a class of Vedic demon “traffickers... stealers and concealers of the higher Light and its illuminations” whose chief is Vala, a Vedic demon, the “circumscriber” or “encloser”. (*Glossary of the Record of Yoga*).

In the “*Life Divine*” Sri Aurobindo insists on this essential recurrence of seven:
“*The seven colours of the light of the divine consciousness, the seven rays of the Infinite... [the] seven Words of the ancient sages... The Light, the Sound is one; their action is sevenfold*”.¹²³

Could it be that the Matrimandir is the symbol of this eighth Sun?

The flower, “Light of the purified Power” chosen for this garden, is “*of an irresistible simplicity in its power solely consecrated to the Divine*”.

It seems that the garden of Light, which represents a “*spiritual manifestation of the Divine Reality illuminative and creative*” is, through the intermediary of the *Seven Creative Suns*, an expression de *Chit-Shakti*, the original creative Power. It is also “*the illumination that comes from above and liberates the being from obscurity and darkness*” as well as a “*Power solely consecrated to the Divine*” that “*enlightens whatever it falls upon*”. One can also think that the Power of the garden of Light has for a mission to restore the “*Earth Mother to her own divinity*”, by “*liberating the eighth Sun hidden in its heart*”.

This Light, which in *Savitri* is repeated like a mantra:

Then shall the earth be touched by the Supreme...

...

*The Supermind shall claim the world for Light...
And place Light's crown on Nature lifted heart
And found Light's reign on her unshaking base ...*

...

Even the multitude shall hear the Voice...

...

*The mind of earth shall be a home of light,
The life of earth a tree growing toward heaven,
The body of earth a tabernacle of God.*¹²⁴

* * *

According to Dr Kireet Joshi, the group of the three gardens -- Light, Life and Power - - are connected to Consciousness: “Light is power, but there is a distinction. It is a special uncovering manifestation. Spiritual Light.”¹²⁵

¹²³ *The Life Divine*, p. 501.

¹²⁴ *Savitri* XI, p 699-709

¹²⁵ Kireet Joshi to Roger Anger (first version)

5) LIFE

*The life on earth, a tree growing towards heaven...*¹²⁶

*The superman shall reign as king of life...*¹²⁷

Key words: *Dynamis*¹²⁸ ; Evolution; Supramental.

The flower chosen by the Mother for the garden of LIFE is the hibiscus, “*Power of Consciousness*” whose meaning is,

*“All the powers of controlling and dominating the lower movements of
inconscient nature.”*¹²⁹

With the garden of LIFE, the fifth of the twelve gardens, the “*dynamis*” of the manifestation becomes clearer. The “*Sun of Life, dynamically externalizing the creation*” is a part of the seven creative Suns described in the garden of Light, to which are added two other suns, among the seven Supramental Suns¹³⁰ :

- *The Sun of supramental Force, Source of Life, dynamising the supramental creation.*

- *The Sun of supramental Life-Radiance – Power-Rays - canalising the dynamis and pouring it into forms.*

Life, Light (the Sun) and Power are brought together here, supplemented by Being (Existence) and Consciousness. We can rightly imagine a combination of gardens with the same names.

*Life itself here [on earth] is Being at labour in Matter to express itself in terms of
Conscious Force.*¹³¹

*The One we adore as the Mother is the divine Conscious Force that dominates all
existence...*¹³²

*Life is the dynamic expression of the Consciousness-Force when thrown outward to
realise itself in concrete harmonies of formation.*¹³³

¹²⁶ *Savitri*, Bk XI, p. 699.

¹²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 707.

¹²⁸ *Dynamis* : see note 18

¹²⁹ Pearson, *The Gardens*, p. 22.

¹³⁰ *Record of Yoga*, pp. 1339-41.

¹³¹ SABCL, **15**: 147

¹³² *The Mother*, p.19

These three quotations indicate that Life is an expression of Being, of Consciousness-Force, synonymous with the Divine Mother. The last one, which clearly states the intention and the aim of Life, speaks of a “*concrete harmony*”. Harmony is the name of the twelfth garden.

*Life is...a subordinate power of the energy aspect of Sachchidananda, it is Force working out forms and the play of conscious energy...*¹³⁴

*Life is not only a play of forces...but a field for the evolution of the concealed spirit*¹³⁵

The garden of Life is therefore also connected with evolution (and to the psychic being whose main characteristic is that it evolves as we have seen in the garden of Existence), which would tend to confirm that the gardens are related to the manifestation of the Supramental Consciousness. In this regard, Sri Aurobindo, in a chapter of his *Record of Yoga* called “*The evolutionary scale*”, speaks about “*ten rays*” (*dasha-gavas*) which represent the ten types of the forms of the evolving consciousness, starting with “*the animal power of the body*” and continuing up to the “*true god, the mind raised to the plane of Sat*”¹³⁶. This “true god” is therefore the intention of Life.

Sri Aurobindo also lists the seven chakras which he calls “*the seven centres in Life*” already mentioned in the garden of Light¹³⁷, and adds,

*“All these Life-Centres are in themselves centres of Truth in Life... but these lotuses have been veiled, closed, shut into their own occult energies by the Ignorance...To liberate all these powers by the luminous and flaming descent of the suns of the Supermind and release of the eighth Sun of Truth hidden in the Earth, in the darkness of the Inconscience...this is the first step towards the restoration of the Earth Mother to her own divinity...”*¹³⁸

Light and Life are clearly related here.

The flower chosen for this garden, the “Power of Consciousness”, signifies “*all the powers of controlling and dominating the lower movements of inconscient nature*”. This power to control the unconscious nature seems to be essential because “*Life must blossom like a flower offering itself to the Divine*”¹³⁹

It seems therefore that the garden of Life expresses the “*Force working out forms and the play of conscious energy*”, but also a “*field for the evolution*”, and if one refers to the

¹³³ *Letters*, p. 1292.

¹³⁴ SABCL, **18**: 263

¹³⁵ SABCL, **23**: 505

¹³⁶ *Glossary to the Record of Yoga*; See also *Record of Yoga*, pp. 1326-30. The ten stages are: *pashu, varana, pishacha, pramatha, rakshasa, asura, deva, saddhyadeva, siddhadava et satyadeva.*

¹³⁷ *Record of Yoga*, p. 1343.

¹³⁸ *ibid.*, p. 1340.

¹³⁹ Handwritten note from the Mother, *Flowers and their Messages*.

commentary selected, it also means “the power of controlling and dominating the lower movements of unconscious nature.” It would then be in direct relation with the gardens of Consciousness and Power and perhaps also Progress as well. It seems likewise to be associated with the garden Light through the “*Sun of Life*” and through “*the radiation of the Sun of Supramental life*” mentioned above.

According to Dr Kireet Joshi, the gardens of Life, like the gardens of Light and Power, are connected with the garden of Consciousness.

Moreover, Life proves itself to be an unavoidable necessity even for the Spirit, because,

The spirit itself if it wants to manifest in matter must use the vital. It is so that things are arranged... The vital being with the life force in it is one of these ends; the other is a latent dynamic power of the higher consciousness through which the Divine Truth can act, take hold of the vital and its force and use it for a greater purpose here.

*The Life-Force in the vital is the indispensable instrument for all action of the Divine Power on the material worlds and the physical nature...*¹⁴⁰

*The vital is an indispensable instrument – no creation or strong action is possible without it. It is simply a question of mastering it and of converting it into the true vital which is at once strong, and calm and capable of great intensity and free from ego.*¹⁴¹

Again the garden of Life is associated with the gardens of Consciousness and Power “for a greater purpose here”. This greater purpose is elaborated in *The Life Divine*:

*Man has created a system of civilisation which has become too big for his limited mental capacity and understanding and his still more limited spiritual and moral capacity to utilise and manage... This new fullness of the means of life might be, by its power for a release from the incessant unsatisfied stress of his economic and physical needs, an opportunity for the full pursuit of other and greater aims surpassing the material existence, for the discovery of a higher truth and good and beauty, for the discovery of a greater and diviner spirit which would intervene and use life for a higher perfection of the being.*¹⁴²

The names of five of the gardens appearing in this paragraph are connected: Power, Wealth (fullness of means), Existence, Life and Perfection. One can also imagine that the “*greater and diviner spirit which would intervene and use life*” could point to the meaning of the garden of Usefulness.

The garden of Life is related to the garden of *Bliss* (Ananda):

¹⁴⁰ *Letters*, pp. 1289-92.

¹⁴¹ *Letters*, p. 1292.

¹⁴² *The Life Divine*, pp.1092.

*That mysterious and powerful ecstasy and Ananda which flows from a supreme divine Love, the Ananda that alone can heal the gulf between the highest of the supramental spirit and the lowest abysses of Matter, the Ananda that holds the key of a wonderful divinest Life and even now supports from its secrecies the work of all other Powers of the universe.*¹⁴³

The garden of Life is also connected to the garden of Light through the lights that Life manifests:

*Purple is the colour of the vital force... Green is a vital energy of work and action ... the green light is a vital force, a dynamic force of the emotional vital which has the power to purify, harmonise or cure.*¹⁴⁴

Life has also its Powers and symbols, its gods:

*The horse is power, usually Life-Power... The lion means vital force, strength, courage... Red flowers would ordinary indicate an opening of the consciousness either in the physical or some part of the vital according to the shade.*¹⁴⁵ *The Ashwins are the gods of vital Strength and Joy.*¹⁴⁶

The garden of Life also seems to be related to the garden of Wealth:

*...Some [spiritual disciplines] even put a ban on money and riches and proclaim poverty and bareness of life as the only spiritual condition. But this is an error; it leaves the power in the hands of the hostile forces.*¹⁴⁷

*Renunciation of ego, acceptance of God in life is the Yoga I teach, - no other renunciation.*¹⁴⁸

To summarize, it seems that the garden of Life is directly related to the gardens of Existence, Consciousness, Light, Progress, Power, Wealth, Usefulness and Perfection. It is also connected to Ananda, as we have already seen with the garden of Bliss.

*We want to give the example of the true Life in the world.*¹⁴⁹

Thus,

*Nature shall live to manifest secret God
The Spirit shall take up the human play
This earthly life become the life divine.*¹⁵⁰

¹⁴³ *The Mother*, pp. 35-36.

¹⁴⁴ *Letters*, pp. 965-66.

¹⁴⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 970-73.

¹⁴⁶ Record of Yoga, p 429. "Ashwins : 'Riders on the Horse', Twin divine powers whose special function is to perfect the nervous and vital being in man in the sense of action and enjoyment". (*Glossary of the Record of Yoga*).

¹⁴⁷ *The Mother*, p. 12.

¹⁴⁸ SABCL, 27: 469.

¹⁴⁹ *Agenda de Mère*, 1951-1960, p. 212.

¹⁵⁰ *Savitri*, Book XI, Canto 1, p 711.

6) POWER

*There are two powers that alone can effect in their conjunction the great and difficult thing which is the aim of our endeavour, a fixed and unfailing aspiration that calls from below and a supreme Grace from above that answers.*¹⁵¹

Key words: Aesthetic Power; Power of transformation; Beauty; *Ananda*; Love.

POWER is the sixth garden, situated between Life and Wealth. For this garden the Mother chose the hibiscus flower named “*Aesthetic Power*”, about which she made the following remark:

*“Beauty is a great Power.”*¹⁵²

It seems that Beauty occupies an important place in all the twelve gardens, especially in the gardens of Bliss, Power and Youth.

*Beauty is the special divine Manifestation in the physical as Truth is in the mind, Love in the heart, Power in the vital*¹⁵³

*Love and beauty are powers of Ananda as Light and Knowledge are of Consciousness.*¹⁵⁴

The Mother’s commentary on this flower, that “*Beauty is a great Power*” and its complement “*beauty is a power of Ananda*”, suggests that the garden of Power might express the Power of *Ananda*.

*Beauty is not the same as Delight, but like love it is an expression, a form of Ananda, created by Ananda and composed of Ananda.*¹⁵⁵

*Beauty is Ananda taking form...What we speak of as beauty is Ananda in manifestation*¹⁵⁶

The garden of Power seems to be directly related to the garden of Felicity (*Ananda*).

At its origin, the Supreme Power is the attribute of *Adya Shakti*, *Aditi*, the Vedic goddess of the infinite being, the Mother of the gods:

¹⁵¹ *The Mother*, p. 1.

¹⁵² R. Pearson, *The Gardens*, p. 25.

¹⁵³ SABCL, **9**: 491.

¹⁵⁴ SABCL, **9**: 492 (Glossary, p. 3).

¹⁵⁵ *Idem*.

¹⁵⁶ SABCL, *The Future Poetry*, p. 941.

Adya Shakti [is] the original power (Shakti), both transcendent and universal (Adya parashakti and Adya mahashakti).¹⁵⁷

The one original transcendent Shakti, the Mother stands above all the worlds and bears in her eternal consciousness the Supreme Divine. Alone she harbours the eternal Power and the ineffable Presence...The Supreme is manifest in her for ever as the everlasting Sachchidananda.¹⁵⁸

Power, at its origin, is thus connected to the gardens of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss (*Sat, Chit, Ananda*). Again, as in the gardens of Consciousness, Light and Life, we find in the garden of Power the implicit presence of the Universal Mother. The supreme Power is that of the Supreme Mother, *Chit Shakti*, Consciousness Force, creator of all that is:

Power means strength and Force, Shakti...¹⁵⁹

All creation and transformation is the work of the Mother.¹⁶⁰

The Divine Mother is the Consciousness and Force of the Divine – which is the Mother of all things...or it may be said, she is the Divine in its consciousness-force...¹⁶¹

The garden of Power is therefore directly related to the universal Mother, the Consciousness-Force of the Divine, and hence is associated with the garden of Consciousness. Sri Aurobindo, in his *Record of Yoga*, writes extensively about the *Ishwara* and its conscious Power, *Shakti*:

The Lord, the supreme Being as the Lord, “the omniscient and omnipotent All-ruler” who by his conscious Power (Shakti) “manifests himself in Time and governs the universe”.¹⁶²

The universal Mother is entirely eternal power:

There are three ways of being of the Mother...Transcendent...Universal...Individual.

For the Mother is One but she comes before us with differing aspects; many are her powers and personalities...

¹⁵⁷ *Glossary of the Record of Yoga.*

¹⁵⁸ *The Mother*, p. 20.

¹⁵⁹ *Letters*, p. 1203.

¹⁶⁰ *The Mother*, p. 78.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

¹⁶² *Glossary of the Record of Yoga.*

But there are many planes of her creation, many steps of the Divine Shakti. At the summit of this manifestation of which we are part there are worlds of infinite existence, consciousness, force, and bliss over which the Mother stands as the unveiled eternal Power.

The Mother not only governs all from above but she descends into this lesser triple universe.

Nearer to us are the worlds of perfect supramental creation in which the Mother is the supramental Mahashakti, a Power of divine omniscient Will and omnipotent Knowledge always apparent in its unfailing works and spontaneously perfect in every process.

Four great aspects of the Mother, four of her leading Powers and Personalities have stood in front in her guidance of this Universe and in her dealing with the terrestrial play...To the four we give the four great names, Maheshwari, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi, Mahasaraswati.¹⁶³

Respectively they correspond to: *Wisdom, Strength, Harmony, Perfection.*

Roger Anger, while working on the gardens, had asked his friend Dr. Kireet Joshi this question:

Roger: “Do the Mother’s Forces represent the four aspects? Do we have to represent them in the gardens? [For example, is Kali the Power?]”

Kireet: “The four powers and personalities of the Mother are the Mother’s Supramental Personalities. In the garden of Power other aspects come into play: the capacity of the Force. The situation shows that it is different. The flower, ‘Aesthetic power’, is a transforming power. The Mother has chosen the hibiscus, ‘Beauty is a great power’.”¹⁶⁴

This Power of transformation has been described at length by Sri Aurobindo in his *Record of Yoga*, in which, day after day between 1909 and 1927, he explores, experiments and tests out on himself the *Ashta siddhis*, the eight powers of yoga, powers which he also applies to his entourage and to world events:¹⁶⁵

The word Power...can be applied to whatever or whoever exercises a conscious power in the cosmic field and has authority over the world- movement or some movement in it...¹⁶⁶

The power...enables to carry out what the divine Will proposes. It can include many things, power on men, events, circumstances, means, etc.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶³ *The Mother*, pp. 19- 26.

¹⁶⁴ Kireet Joshi to Roger Anger, first version.

¹⁶⁵ *Record of Yoga*, see in particular *Ashta Siddhis*, pp. 19 et 1473, but the whole Journal contains numerous examples.

¹⁶⁶ *The Mother*, p. 62.

(This last sentence could link the garden of Power with that of Usefulness.)

*Indeed there is a stage reached by the Yogin, when, unless he avoids all action in the world, he can no more avoid the use of the siddhi of power and knowledge than an ordinary man can avoid eating and breathing... For these things are the natural action of the vijnana, the plane of ideal consciousness, to which he is rising, just as mental activity and physical motion are the natural action of man's ordinary life. All the ancient Rishis used these powers, all great Avatars and Yogins and vibhutis from Christ to Ramakrishna have used them.*¹⁶⁸

The Sanskrit word *Siddhi* means “power, realisation, perfection”:

1) *Success; fulfilment; perfection, regarded not as a static condition but as an automatic self-fulfilment of growth into a higher divine nature.*

(This movement of growth can be associated with the garden Progress.)

2) *Occult power or supernatural faculty, especially any of the eight included in the asthasiddhis, grouped into two siddhis of knowledge, three siddhis of power and three siddhis of the body.*¹⁶⁹

Sri Aurobindo points out in this regard that,

We must therefore keep in view strictly certain fixed principles:
1-That these powers are not miraculous, but powers of Nature, which manifest of themselves as soon as the vijnanapadma [lotus of knowledge] in us begins to open, and are no more a cause for bragging and vanity than the power of eating and breathing or anything else that is Nature's.
2-That they can manifest fully only when we leave ego and offer up our petty separate being in the vastness of God's being.
3-That when they manifest in the unpurified state, they are a dangerous ordeal to which God subjects us and we can only pass through it safely by keeping our mind clear of vanity, pride, selfishness, and by remembering continually that they are His gifts and not our acquirements.
4-That these powers are not to be pursued for their own sake, but developed or allowed to develop as part of the flower of divine perfection which is by God's grace blossoming out in us.
Subject to these cautions, we have not to reject these powers when they come but accept them, to be used in us by God for His own purpose and not for ours, to be poured out by vyapti [conscious connection] on humanity and not kept for our own use and pride.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ Letters, p. 1203.

¹⁶⁸ Record of Yoga, p. 14.

¹⁶⁹ Glossary of the Record of Yoga. These siddhis are: prakamyā, vyapti, vashita, aishwarya, ishita, mahima, laghima and anima.

¹⁷⁰ Record of Yoga, p. 15-16.

Another aspect of the garden of Power seems to be its association with the garden of Light through the hibiscus named “*Light of purified Power*” chosen by the Mother for this garden, but also (as with the garden of Life) by the Light which expresses the supreme Power or powers:

*The lights are the Mother's powers – many in number. The white light is her own characteristic power...*¹⁷¹

*The light is a manifestation of Force, the nature of the force being indicated by the colour of the light.*¹⁷²

*Force is nothing but power of being in motion.*¹⁷³

Power is also manifested by symbols:

*The horse is Power, usually Life-Power... The horse is always the symbol of Power... The elephant is Strength – sometimes strength illumined with wisdom...sometimes strength removing obstacles. The lion means vital force, strength, courage ... The serpent with the hood over the head generally indicates future siddhi ...The milk is the knowledge and Power descending from the Divine Consciousness.*¹⁷⁴

Note that this last quotation links Power with Life and Consciousness.

By considering what we have seen so far, we can now very well conceive that the general orientation revealed by the gardens of Matrimandir implies that the full development of man's personality is an indispensable step in his journey towards the Supramental. Sri Aurobindo draws a parallel between this accomplishment and the original intent of the ancient system of *the four orders*¹⁷⁵ and associates it to its Divine counterpart in the four forms of *Ishwara* (the Lord). One of these forms is *Balarama*¹⁷⁶, *the cosmic principle of Power* which could certainly be associated with the garden of Power and which corresponds to the King or Warrior, the *Kshatriya*, of the ancient Indian

¹⁷¹ *The Mother*, p. 83.

¹⁷² *Letters*, p. 960.

¹⁷³ SABCL, 12 : 195

¹⁷⁴ *Letters*, pp. 972-976.

¹⁷⁵ *Chaturvarnya* : the ancient Indian system of the four orders (*brahmana, kshatriya, vaishya, shudra*), representing four psychological types whose combination is necessary for the complete personality (cf *Glossary to the Record of Yoga*, p. 42, and *Record of Yoga*, p. 1468) ; these four types are symbolic of “four cosmic principles: the Wisdom that conceives the order and principle of things, the Power that sanctions, upholds and enforces it, the Harmony that creates the arrangement of its parts, the Work that carries out what the rest direct.” Sri Aurobindo adds, “We must realise that the ancient Aryan Rishis meant by the *chaturvarnya* was not a mere social division, but a recognition of God manifesting Himself in fundamental *swabhava* [essential nature], which our bodily distinctions, our social orders are merely an attempt to organise in the symbols of human life, often a confused attempt, often a parody and distortion of the divine thing they try to express. Every man has in himself all the four dharmas, but one predominates, the one he is born in and which strikes the note of his character and determines the type and cast of all his actions.” (*Record of Yoga*, p. 7.)

¹⁷⁶ ‘*Four who are One, One who is four*’, the *Ishwara* in his four personalities, usually referred in the *Record of Yoga* as Mahavira, Balarama, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, to whom correspond the four aspects of his *Shakti* and the four psychological types of the *Chaturvarnya*. (*Glossary to the Record of Yoga*.)

system. His qualities are “*Force, greatness, impetuosity, imperious courage*”, and his *Shakti* is *Mahakali* (Supreme Force and Energy):

*[For the complete man] There should also be the qualities of the Kshatriya, the qualities of the man of action or the fighter. The first of these is courage and it is of two kinds – Abhaya or passive courage which is alarmed by no danger and shrinks from no peril that offers itself and from no misfortune or suffering. The second is Sahasa or active courage, that is to say the daring to undertake any enterprise however difficult or apparently impossible and carry it though in spite of all dangers, suffering, failures, obstacles and oppositions. For this, two other things are necessary. [First,] a tendency of the nature to insist on the battle and victory and effort and triumph, i.e. Yasholipsa. Secondly, there must be a strong self-confidence and a high idea of the power that is in one’s self. This is Atma Shakti or Atma Slagha..*¹⁷⁷

We have seen in the paragraph on *Sat, Chit, and Ananda* that these three fundamental planes correspond to the four Vedic gods -- *Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman and Bhaga*-- who “*build up the whole divine state into its perfection by the natural interaction of its four essentials elements*”, *Aryaman* “*the Aspirer*”, “*the deity of the human journey*”, seems to be associated with Power, because he brings to this aspiration a “*mighty strength and perfectly-guided happy inner upsurging.*”¹⁷⁸

We can observe in passing that the four is repeated four times: the **four** aspects of *Ishwara* (the Lord) correspond to the **four** *Shaktis* (Powers of the Mother) and the **four** orders of *Chaturvarnya* (psychological types) to which can be added the **four** Vedic gods (essential elements of the complete Divine state).

It seems that the garden of Power has a particular significance, because The Mother chose a hibiscus flower whose name includes the word “Power”¹⁷⁹ for six out of the twelve Gardens. To this we have to add the flower representing *Sat, Chit, Ananda* (*Hedychium*) -- “*Strong and pure, it stands erect in its creative power*”. One has to add also the twelfth garden, *Perfection*, which as we will see seems to mean “*that one perfection which has the power to manifest upon earth the eternal Truth.*”¹⁸⁰ We may remark that, apart from the specific name given to this hibiscus by the Mother, the flower bears the generic name of Power and that it occurs ten times in the twelve gardens.

In describing Sri Aurobindo’s symbol, the Mother explains that “*the descending triangle represents Sat, Chit, Ananda, and the ascending triangle represents the aspiring answer from matter under the form of life, light and love*”.¹⁸¹ Interestingly, with the exception of the reversed order of Life and Light, here we find the names given to the

¹⁷⁷ *Record of Yoga*, p. 1469.

¹⁷⁸ In reference to *Record of Yoga* and to its Glossary.

¹⁷⁹ These hibiscuses are : Psychic power in existence ; Light of purified power ; Power of Consciousness ; Power of Progress ; Power of Harmony.

¹⁸⁰ See the chapter on the garden of Perfection.

¹⁸¹ Sri Aurobindo, *Archives and Research*, Dec. 1979.

first five gardens, -- Existence, Consciousness, Bliss, Light and Life, then the sixth one, where Love replaces Power. This fact is mentioned by Gilles G. in his compilation on the gardens¹⁸², in which he suggest that Power is synonymous with Love, citing the Mother's comment regarding a vision she had on January 21, 1962 :

“It was like a memory, an eternally present memory of that consciousness of supreme Love emanated by the Lord onto earth – INTO earth – to draw it back again to him... And unless That, that supreme Love, becomes all powerfully conscious here on Earth, the return can never be definitive”.

Gilles remarks, “Hence, Love is the Power emanated by the Lord into matter in order to draw it back to Him again.”

It could well be that among the four Vedic gods mentioned above, Aryaman “*the Aspirer*”, represents this “*aspiring answer from matter under the form of life, light and love*” in the form of the aspiration to *Sat Chit Ananda*, because,

*Aspiration is a call to the Divine...It is a call of the being for higher things – for the Divine, for all that belongs to the higher or Divine Consciousness ...The aspiration is a call to the Divine Force to act ...It is the psychic that gives the true aspiration...the psychic fire ...*¹⁸³

*It is in answer to your aspiration that the Mahakali force descended...the white fire is the fire of aspiration, the red fire is the fire of renunciation and tapasya, the blue fire is the fire of spirituality and spiritual knowledge which purify and dispel the ignorance.*¹⁸⁴

It seems that Aryaman, who brings a “*mighty strength*” to the aspiration, is associated with Love-Power. (The all-powerful aspiration probably links it with the garden *Progress* as well:

*There are two powers that alone can effect in their conjunction the great and difficult thing which is the aim of our endeavour, a fixed and unfailing aspiration that calls from below and a supreme Grace from above that answers.*¹⁸⁵

The aspiration (power of the psychic being which “*evolves*”), but also the Grace are therefore associated with Power.

The Mother's explanation regarding Sri Aurobindo's symbol can be compared with Sri Aurobindo's description of the *seven Jewel-Centres of the Earth-Mother* that we have seen in the garden of Light:

¹⁸² Gilles Guigan, *Matrimandir, on the significances of the twelve Gardens*, April 2007.

¹⁸³ *Letters*, pp. 566-568, et SABCL, I: 106.

¹⁸⁴ *Letters*, p. 976.

¹⁸⁵ *The Mother*, p. 1.

The Jewel-Centres of the Earth-Mother are seven luminous jewel-hearts of Truth in Substance; but they have been imprisoned in darkness, fossilised in immobility, veiled, closed, shut into their own occult energies by the hardness, darkness and inertia of the material Inconscience.

*To liberate all these powers by the luminous and flaming descent of the suns of the Supermind and the release of the eighth Sun of Truth hidden in the Earth, in the darkness of the Inconscience... this is the first step towards the restoration of the Earth-Mother to her own divinity and the earth-existence to its native light, truth, life and bliss of immaculate Ananda.*¹⁸⁶

Love is not directly mentioned but it is implicit because the fourth of the seven Supramental Suns is “*the Sun of Love, Bliss and Beauty, vivifying and harmonising the supramental creation.*”¹⁸⁷

*A Bliss, a Light, a Power, a Flame-white Love ...*¹⁸⁸

(Here we find the names of three of the gardens Bliss, Light, and Power appearing together)

*Union is the consummation of love ... It is the foundation of oneness in ecstasy.*¹⁸⁹

A mysterious passage, already mentioned in the garden of Felicity, reveals some personalities of the divine Mother other than the four main ones, and reveals that *Ananda* = Supreme Love = Power:

*There are other great Personalities of the Divine Mother, but they were more difficult to bring down and have not stood out in front with so much prominence in the evolution of the earth-spirit. There are among them Presences indispensable for the supramental realisation, – most of all one who is her Personality of that mysterious and powerful ecstasy and Ananda which flows from a supreme divine Love, the Ananda that alone can heal the gulf between the highest of the supramental spirit and the lowest abysses of Matter, the Ananda that holds the key of a wonderful divinest Life and even now supports from its secrecies the work of all the other Powers of the universe.*¹⁹⁰

This confirms that Power is directly associated to *Ananda*, “*which flows from a supreme divine Love*”, *Ananda* which is itself the power that “*supports... the work of all other Powers of the universe*”. Here, *Ananda* is the foundation of all the other Powers.

¹⁸⁶ *Record of Yoga*, p. 1340.

¹⁸⁷ *ibid.* p. 1341. See the garden of Light where the seven Suns are described.

¹⁸⁸ *Savitri*, Bk III, Canto 3, p. 322.

¹⁸⁹ SABCL, 21: 566

¹⁹⁰ *The Mother* pp. 35-36.

Moreover, “*The Absolute manifests itself in two terms, a Being and a Becoming. The Being is the fundamental reality; the Becoming is an effectual reality, it is a dynamic Power...*”¹⁹¹

This quotation, cited earlier in the garden of Existence, indicates that Power is also related to Existence (*Sat*).

The garden of Power is therefore directly associated with the gardens of Existence, Consciousness, Bliss, Light and Life. It appears to be associated with Aspiration, with the Grace and with the transformation, and by the same token with the garden of Progress and, as we will see, to the gardens of Progress, Wealth, Usefulness, Youth, Harmony and Perfection.

Thus it is clear that Power is at the same time the original Power, the creative Power, the Power of Love-Aspiration, the Supramental Power, the Power of Beauty, the Power of *Ananda*, the Power of transformation (individual and terrestrial).

If, as everything seems to indicate, the twelve gardens of Matrimandir are an expression of the vast curve of the manifestation and the evolution of consciousness towards the supramental manifestation¹⁹², and if we consider the significance, which seems to be manifold, of the garden of Power, not to mention the number of flowers in all twelve gardens that the Mother has named Power, then it is possible that this garden is the golden thread upon which hangs the dynamic Unity of the other eleven gardens. The garden of Power seems nevertheless to express first and foremost the Power of the Earth’s aspiration to be transformed by and through the manifestation of the Supramental Consciousness in Matter.

*[These gardens] must be an expression of that consciousness which we are trying to bring down.*¹⁹³

* * *

According to Dr. Kireet Joshi, “The garden of Power is connected with the gardens of Light and Life, their common basis being the garden of Consciousness.

Power of the soul, Power of the word (*Future Poetry*).

Energy, Power, Force. The origin of life is Force. In *The Life Divine*, Sri Aurobindo uses the expression ‘Consciousness-Force’ instead of Consciousness
Consciousness-Force = Life: Light and Power = Reality. »¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹ Glossary of terms in Sri Aurobindo’s Writings: Being and Becoming

¹⁹² “*The Supramental concerns all the gardens*”, Kireet Joshi to Roger Anger, first version.

¹⁹³ The Mother speaking to Narad and Anie about the Matrimandir gardens on 18 December 1969

¹⁹⁴ Kireet Joshi to Roger Anger, first version.

7) WEALTH

The Jewel-Centres of the Earth Mother ...luminous jewel-hearts of Truth in Substance
195

Key words: Integral Wealth; Wealth and supramental Manifestation.

The flower chosen by the Mother for this garden is the water lily (Nymphaea), “**Wealth**” which is accompanied by the following comment:

“*True wealth is that which one offers to the Divine*”¹⁹⁶

WEALTH is the seventh of the 12 gardens, situated between Power and Usefulness.

197 *All wealth belongs to the Divine and those who hold it are trustees, not possessors*

*Golden light means the light of the higher Truth ... The diamond in your heart was a formation of the light of Mother’s consciousness here ...*¹⁹⁸

We may assume, unable as we are to isolate the significance of the Matrimandir gardens from the very meaning of Auroville itself that this refers not only to spiritual wealth, but also to worldly wealth, both of which would be needed for the creation of a new society oriented towards the future Divine Life.

The garden of Wealth, along with the garden of Power, faces the West pillar of the Matrimandir, *Mahasaraswati*, “...*the Mother’s Power of Work and her spirit of perfection and order. The youngest of the four, she is the most skilful in executive faculty and the nearest to physical Nature*”.¹⁹⁹ The symbol of *Mahasaraswati* is the triangle, and its colour is golden blue.

According to Dr. Kireet Joshi, the garden of Wealth is associated with the gardens of Usefulness and Progress, both of which are based in Existence:

“Wealth (what can be eaten) connected with Usefulness. Wealth and Usefulness = Progress to embody Existence.”

“In the Veda, the Sanskrit word *Vasu* [substance, wealth] includes 11 or 12 kinds of wealth. The one which can be consumed and fosters our growth (possessing,

¹⁹⁵ *Record of Yoga*, p 1340; see also, in the chapter on the garden of Light, the seven jewels of Mother Earth and the eighth Sun.

¹⁹⁶ R. Pearson, *The Matrimandir Gardens*, p. 27.

¹⁹⁷ *The Mother*, p.12.

¹⁹⁸ *Letters*, pp 958-1015.

¹⁹⁹ *The Mother*, p. 33.

consuming, increasing) and which later on we can offer to the Divine, is a different kind of energy”.²⁰⁰

We have seen in the previous garden that the four aspects of the ancient Indian system of the four Orders²⁰¹ were needed for the realization of man’s complete personality. It seems that the third one, the *Vaishya*, the merchant who manages the assets, would have the responsibility for the material riches and that he has to have developed the requisite qualities:

*The first [quality of the Vaishya] is the readiness to spend labour, resources, materials, means and life itself quite freely, taking great risks of loss in order to secure great gains... But with this must be skill in the use of means and methods and their proper disposition in order to secure the end and also the knowledge of what is or is not possible to be gained by a particular means or method or a particular expense. There should be a sense of proportion, of order and a skill in arrangement and management. ...Also in the use of one’s possessions, there are two other qualities of the Vaishya which are necessary. [First there must be] the readiness to give no less than to receive and to share with the world what one gets from the world. This is the nature of love as it is ordinarily practised; [this] giving and receiving may be called Dana. And then there should be a tendency to enjoy, i.e. Bhogalipsa.*²⁰²

The mission of the *Vaishya* is then clearly associated with physical wealth, with the management of assets and money. But some of the elements associated with the power of money are threatening:

*Money is the visible sign of a universal force, and this force in its manifestation on earth works on the vital and physical planes and is indispensable to the fullness of the outer life. In its origin and its true action it belongs to the Divine. But like other powers of the Divine it is delegated here and in the ignorance of the lower Nature can be usurped for the use of the ego or held by Asuric influences and perverted to their purpose... The seekers or keepers of wealth are more often possessed rather than its possessors; few escape entirely a certain distorting influence stamped on it by its long seizure and perversion by the Asura. For this reason most spiritual disciplines insist on a complete self-control, detachment and renunciation of all bondage to wealth and of all personal and egoistic desire for its possession. Some even put a ban on money and riches and proclaim poverty and bareness of life as the only spiritual condition. But this is an error; it leaves the power in the hands of the hostile forces. To reconquer it for the Divine to whom it belongs and use it divinely for the divine life is the supramental way for the Sadhaka. ...Regard wealth simply as a power to be won back for the Mother and placed at her service*²⁰³

²⁰⁰ Kireet Joshi to Roger Anger, first version.

²⁰¹ See note 175.

²⁰² *Record of Yoga*, p. 1469.

²⁰³ *The Mother*, pp. 11-12

Let us note in passing that money is “a force, a power” and therefore certainly associated with one aspect of the garden of Power.

Money and material wealth have to be reclaimed and put at the service of the divine. Such is “*the supramental way*”. This confirms that the garden of Wealth is related to the supramental creation, for:

In the supramental creation the money-force has to be restored to the Divine Power and used for a true and beautiful and harmonious equipment and ordering of a new divinised vital and physical existence in whatever way the Divine Mother herself decides in her creative vision. But first it must be conquered back for her... ²⁰⁴

Wealth is a force... a force of Nature, and it should be a means of circulation, a power in movement, as flowing water is a power in movement. ²⁰⁵

This passage also indicates that the garden of Wealth bears a direct relation with the gardens of Progress, Usefulness, Life and Power.

Spiritual wealth is also coveted by the Panis:

The Panis withhold or steal the cows; they are a class of Vedic demons whose chief is Vala. “Traffickers in the sense-life, stealers and concealers of the higher Light and its illuminations”. ²⁰⁶

The Sanskrit word *Go*, means cow, milk, ray, radiance, consciousness. ²⁰⁷

The cow in the occult symbolism... indicates Light of the consciousness... ²⁰⁸
“Yes, the robbers are as in the Veda, vital beings who come to steal away the good condition or else to steal the gains of the sadhana”. ²⁰⁹

It seems that here a special link can be made with the commentary given for the flower in the garden of Life: “*All the powers of controlling and dominating the lower movements of inconscient nature.*” Here too, the gardens of Life and Power seem to be associated with the garden of Wealth.

Richard Pearson, in his brochure, gives a description of the hibiscus and other flowers attributed to the 12 gardens; for this one garden, Wealth, there is only a short description of the garden itself: “The central portion of this garden will be a lily pond and the Mother

²⁰⁴ *ibid.*, p. 25

²⁰⁵ CWM, Vol. 7. Quoted by Narad in *On the significance of the Order of the Matrimandir Gardens*.

²⁰⁶ *Glossary of the Record of Yoga*.

²⁰⁷ Glossary of Terms in Sri Aurobindo’s Writings.

²⁰⁸ *Letters*, p. 971.

²⁰⁹ *Letters*, p. 985.

decided that all varieties of water lilies should be represented there, but kept separate by a cement partition to avoid domination of weaker varieties by stronger ones”.

The Mother named eight Lilies -- *emotive wealth, generous wealth, integral wealth of Mahalakshmi, wealth in the most material vital, supramentalized wealth, wealth in the vital, wealth in the mind of light, and wealth under psychic influence*, and three cacti -- *Riches, Riches of feeling, and Supramental Riches*.²¹⁰

It would seem that the names of these eleven flowers cover symbolically the whole gamut of wealth in manifestation, from the material to the Supramental, and represent an integral wealth.

“*God in life*”, which can most certainly be considered as the Supreme Wealth, would seem to suggest a connection between the two gardens, Wealth and Life:

*Renunciation of ego, acceptance of God in life is the Yoga I teach, – no other renunciation.*²¹¹

The garden of Wealth seems then to be directly associated with the four gardens of Life, Power, Usefulness and Progress, which is not difficult to conceive in the context of Auroville whose aim is to achieve

... a living embodiment of an actual Human Unity.

(Auroville Charter).

²¹⁰ R. Pearson, *The Gardens of the Matrimandir*, pp. 28-29.

²¹¹ SABCL, 27: 49

8) USEFULNESS

*Earth shall be my work-chamber and my house,
My garden of life to plant a seed divine.*²¹²

*The frog [symbolises] modest usefulness*²¹³

Key words: New Creation; Auroville; Surpassing oneself.

The flower chosen by the Mother for this garden is the hibiscus “*Usefulness of the new creation*” and she explains its significance in this commentary:

*“A creation which aims at teaching men to surpass themselves”.*²¹⁴

The eighth garden, USEFULNESS, is situated between the gardens of Wealth and Progress. The word itself (“*Utilité*” in French) comes from the Latin *utilis*, de *uti* (utensil, tool), “to make use of”, “which is profitable”, “which answers to a need”. Of all the twelve gardens, this one alone bears a name essentially “practical”, while all the others represent rather qualities of the soul, -- although Power, Wealth and Progress can also bring to mind a power of action.

R. Pearson says, “The Mother first named Hibiscus flowers as Charm of Auroville, Concentration of Auroville, Beauty of Auroville...but later She changed the word “Auroville” to the New Creation.”²¹⁵

The other name given to the hibiscus chosen for Usefulness is “Usefulness of Auroville”²¹⁶, which indicates clearly the orientation of this garden:

Auroville will be the place of an unending education, of constant progress, and a youth that never ages.

Auroville wants to be the bridge between the past and the future. Taking advantage of all discoveries from without and from within, it will boldly spring towards future realizations.

(Auroville Charter)

The word “bridge” can certainly be associated with *Usefulness*, the bridge being that which allows a “passage” from one consciousness to another, at first individually but also

²¹² *Savitri*, Bk 11, Canto I, p. 699.

²¹³ *Letters*, p. 975.

²¹⁴ R. Pearson, *The Gardens of the Matrimandir*, p. 30.

²¹⁵ R. Pearson, April 2008.

²¹⁶ Mentioned by Gilles Guigan in: *Matrimandir, on the significances of the twelve Gardens*, p.12.

collectively. Several chapters in *The Synthesis of Yoga*, in which the words Usefulness (utility), Life and Perfection appear together, speak of “...the utilities of divine knowledge” and “the self application of the spirit to life”...:

*“The perfect utility of our perfection is, having realised in ourselves the divine symbol, to reproduce, multiply and ultimately universalise it in others.”²¹⁷
A new and marvellous creation rose.²¹⁸*

We can assume that the garden of Usefulness is directly related to the preceding garden of Wealth as well as to the one that follows, namely Progress. It would seem to be a matter of the right use of Wealth (spiritual and material), to achieve a constant Progress “*which aims at teaching men to surpass themselves*”, with a view to a “*new creation*”.

According to Dr. Joshi, the garden of Usefulness is associated with the gardens of Wealth and Progress, having their basis in Existence.²¹⁹

The very terms “*New Creation*” and “*Usefulness of Auroville*” seem to imply that the garden of Usefulness is associated with the material manifestation of the Supramental. Usefulness requires therefore that the means necessary to fulfill this need have to be available. Everything in the following passage reminds us of these means: the riches, the power, the organisation and the essential, the service; all for a “*divinised vital and physical existence*”:

Regard wealth simply as a power to be won back for the Mother and placed at her service... ..In the supramental creation the money-force has to be restored to the Divine Power and used for a true and beautiful and harmonious equipment and ordering of a new divinised vital and physical existence in whatever way the Divine Mother herself decides in her creative vision.²²⁰

In a letter Sri Aurobindo wrote on September 2, 1920, we find the importance given to the material means needed for the establishment of a spiritual society:

*“Our first business is to establish our communal system on a firm spiritual, secondly on a firm economical foundation, and to spread it wide, but the complete social change can only come as a result of the other two”.*²²¹

And in this passage from *The Life Divine*:

Man has created a system of civilisation which has become too big for his limited mental capacity and understanding and his still more limited spiritual and moral capacity to utilise and manage.... This new fullness of the means of life might be,

²¹⁷ *The Synthesis*, pp. 29, 781.

²¹⁸ *Savitri*, Bk III, Canto 3, p. 323.

²¹⁹ Kireet Joshi to Roger Anger (first version).

²²⁰ *The Mother*, pp. 12-14.

²²¹ Sri Aurobindo, *Autobiographical notes*, p.246

*by its power for a release from the incessant unsatisfied stress of his economic and physical needs, an opportunity for the full pursuit of other and greater aims surpassing the material existence, for the discovery of a higher truth and good and beauty, for the discovery of a greater and diviner spirit which would intervene and use life for a higher perfection of the being.*²²²

Again, in another letter probably written in the 1930's: "*The supramental creation, since it is to be a creation upon earth, must be not only an inner change but a physical and external manifestation also.*"²²³

In the ancient Indian system of the four orders²²⁴, whose combination is indispensable for the unfolding of the complete personality of man, if the *Vaishya*, the soul type representing "*the Divine as production, enjoyment and mutuality*" corresponds to Wealth, then it is the *Shudra*, the servant, which represents "*the Divine as service, obedience and work*". This seems to correspond to Usefulness:

...The qualities of the Shudra are no less important. The Vaishya has the spirit of order, opposition and interchange. The Shudra has the spirit of service. Service is governed by two motives: first desire or kama, secondly love or prema. In the perfect man, Kama should take the form of an interest in the bodily well-being of the world and a wish to see that physically it lack nothing. Love in the Shudra... is governed by the third quality of the Shudra, the desire to serve and this in the perfect man becomes the desire to serve God-in-all... The perfection of the Shudra nature is in self surrender, the giving of one's self without demanding a return... The nature of the Brahmana is knowledge, of the Kshatriya force and courage, of the Vaishya skill in works, and of the Shudra self giving and service. The perfect character possesses all of these; for they are necessary for the perfect action²²⁵

This last line mentions Perfection (the name of the twelfth garden), associated here with all four aspects combined. "*The perfect action*" is nevertheless subject to an imperative condition:

*If you want to be a true doer of divine works, your first aim must be to be totally free from all desire and self regarding ego. All your life must be an offering and a sacrifice to the Supreme: your only object in action shall be to serve, to receive, to fulfil, to become a manifesting instrument of the Divine Shakti in her works.*²²⁶

Sri Aurobindo describes four progressive levels of service to the Divine (*dasya*), which culminate in,

²²² *The Life Divine*, p.1090.

²²³ *Letters*, p. 1314.

²²⁴ See note 175.

²²⁵ *Record of Yoga*, p.1470.

²²⁶ *The Mother*, p. 15.

“...the supreme or quaternary dasya, by which the very thought and feeling comes only as things impelled by the divine hand of the Master and Sarathi [divine Charioteer]. Absolute samata and passivity are now possible”²²⁷

*God's servant is something; God's slave is greater.*²²⁸

Usefulness seems therefore to imply self-giving, surrender, an attitude so necessary in the Integral Yoga: “to become a manifesting instrument” guided by the “the divine charioteer” in order to humbly “serve, receive, fulfil”. In terms of yogic symbols, “The frog [symbolises] modest usefulness”²²⁹. (Perhaps the proliferation of so many different kinds of frogs in Auroville has a deeper meaning after all!)

Among the four aspects of *Ishwara* (the Lord) already mentioned, it is *Anirudha*²³⁰ which corresponds to *shudra* (the servant) and which represents the *cosmic principle of Work*. His method is “of the patient intellectual seeker and the patient and laborious contriver who occupies knowledge and action inch by inch and step by step”. His *Shakti* is *Mahasaraswati*, Perfection.

To go along with the hibiscus that the Mother chose for the garden of Usefulness, Richard Pearson proposes some other flowers that she also named, such as: *Thoroughness*, *Skill in works*, *Enthusiasm*, and *Mahasaraswati's Perfection in works*.²³¹

The garden of Usefulness is certainly linked with the garden of Perfection.

It looks as if the garden of Power, by virtue of its aspect of “Power of transformation”²³², a transformation towards a new creation, could also be associated with the garden of Usefulness:

*The word Power... can be applied to whatever or whoever exercises a conscious power in the cosmic field and has authority over the world movement.*²³³

*[The Power] enable[s]... to carry out what the Divine Will proposes. It can include many things, power over men, events, circumstances, means etc.*²³⁴

The garden of Usefulness, which clearly seems to be associated with the manifestation of a new creation, can be directly connected to the gardens of Life, Wealth, Progress, Power, Harmony and Perfection.

²²⁷ *Record of Yoga*. January 31, 1913, p. 223.

²²⁸ Sri Aurobindo, *Thoughts and Aphorisms* ; n° 512.

²²⁹ *Letters*, p. 975.

²³⁰ “Four in One, One in Four” : Mahavira, Balarama, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. (*Record of Yoga*).

²³¹ R. Pearson, *The Gardens*, p. 31.

²³² See Kireet Joshi to Roger Anger, first version.

²³³ *The Mother*, p. 62.

²³⁴ *Letters*, p. 1203.

The sixth of the seven Supramental Suns, “*The Sun of supramental Life-Radiance (Power-Rays) canalising the dynamis and pouring it into forms*”²³⁵ might be associated with the garden of Usefulness as well.

²³⁵ See the seven Suns in the garden of Light.

9) PROGRESS

*The face of Truth upon the roads of Time
Pointing to the souls of men the routes to God.*²³⁶

*Progress, the reason why we are on earth.*²³⁷

Key words: Perpetual education; thirst for progress; future realisation.

The flower chosen by the Mother for this garden is the hibiscus, “**Power of progress**”, and the accompanying commentary is,

*“Precious because of its rarity, it must be cultivated with care”.*²³⁸

Two other related hibiscuses, “*Progress of Auroville*” and “*Power of Progress*”²³⁹ give us the signature of this garden:

Auroville will be the place of an unending education, of constant progress, and a youth that never ages...

Auroville will be a site of material and spiritual researches for a living embodiment of an actual human unity

(Auroville Charter)

The garden of PROGRESS is associated with the garden of Power through the hibiscus flower assigned to it, namely “*Power to progress*”, and as we have seen earlier, with the two gardens of Usefulness and Wealth but also, as the following passage shows, to the garden of Life. The Mother lays particular emphasis here on the material conditions which allow progress. Once more, the right use of material Wealth is bound up with Progress and Wealth of the consciousness:

Money is meant to circulate. What is necessary is the progressive increasing movement of earthly production – this progressive movement, increasing, increasing, of earthly production and of progress of earthly existence ... an increase in production, an improvement in the conditions of life and a progress in human consciousness. This is its true use. What I call an improvement in consciousness, a progress in consciousness, is everything that education in all its forms can provide... until the spiritual education and progress through Yoga : the whole spectrum, everything that leads humanity towards its future realisation...

²³⁶ Savitri Bk. XI, Canto 1, p.703.

²³⁷ Significance given by the Mother to the flower Progress (*Catarenthus Rossus*).

²³⁸ R. Pearson, *The Gardens*, p. 32.

²³⁹ “Though *Progress of Auroville* and *Power of Progress* had already been named, the Mother chose this hibiscus. In answer to a question from Richard, the Mother said that *Power to progress* and *Power of progress* were not the same thing”. (Gilles G. in *Matrimandir, on the significance of the twelve Gardens*).

We want to give the example of the true life in the world...The earth should become more and more a resplendent sun, but a sun of life. Not a sun that burns, but a sun that illumines – a radiant glory ²⁴⁰

This quotation could be summed up as “Integral Progress”, or the usefulness and right use of Wealth for the constant Progress towards the future realisation, a true Life, a shining sun of life, a radiant glory.

It seems that the Progress of terrestrial existence and the Progress of consciousness towards the future realisation cited above brings together the meaning of the three gardens of Wealth, Usefulness and Progress, namely, a terrestrial action of the Supramental Consciousness.

Among the Seven Suns of the Supramental mentioned by Sri Aurobindo, the fifth, “*The Sun of supramental Force (Source of Life) dynamising the supramental creation*”, seems to be associated with it and everything moves in the direction of the liberation of the “*Seven Jewel-Centers of the Earth Mother*” and “*the release of the eighth Sun of Truth hidden in the Earth...*” ²⁴¹.

The Aspiration, “*the fire of the soul*”, this “*call of the being ...for the Divine*”²⁴², brings to mind Power, but also Progress. It seems too that of all the four Vedic gods -- Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman and Bhaga -- who “*build up the whole divine state into its perfection by the natural interaction of its four essential elements*”, ²⁴³ it is Aryaman “*the deity of the human journey*”, “*the aspirer*”, who is most closely linked to Progress.

Among the four psychological types of the ancient Indian system of the four orders²⁴⁴ whose combined qualities are required for the full realisation of man’s personality, if *Vaishya*, the soul type representing “*The Divine as production, enjoyment and mutuality*”, corresponds to Wealth, and if *Shudra*, the soul type representing “*The Divine as service, obedience and work*”, corresponds to Usefulness, then it is the Brahman which most closely corresponds to Progress:

First, a man should have Brahmana qualities, those of the man of knowledge. He should have, first, the general temperament of the Brahmin, that is to say calmness, patience, steadiness and thoughtfulness...Then he should have the tendency towards knowledge, especially the Divine Knowledge, but also all kinds of knowledge on all kinds of subjects, with the necessary mental openness and curiosity... The Brahmin has not only the thirst for knowledge but also a general clearness of mind

²⁴⁰ *Mother’s Agenda*, 4 Oct. 1958.

²⁴¹ See the garden of Light, and *Record of Yoga*, pp. 1340-41.

²⁴² Sri Aurobindo, *Guidance I*: 107.

²⁴³ The four gods (*Mitra, Aryaman and Bhaga*) are four aspects of *Ishwara*, the Lord. They represent respectively Purity, Light, Force (and aspiration), and Felicity. See also the chapters on *Sat, Chit, Ananda*, and the gardens of Power and Perfection.

²⁴⁴ Cf. note n°175.

*and its tendency to be easily illuminated by ideas and to receive the truth...He has also a spiritual force which comes from knowledge and purity ...*²⁴⁵

And the Mother added:

*Naturally, the thirst for progress, the thirst to know, the thirst to transform yourself, and above all the thirst for Love and Truth – if you keep that, you go faster. Truly a thirst, a need, you know, a need. All the rest has no importance, what you need is THAT... The something we need, the Perfection we need, the Light we need, the Love we need, the Truth we need, the supreme Perfection we need – and that's all.*²⁴⁶

This thirst for Progress, this need, is certainly a “Power”, related here to Light and to Perfection.

If, as we have seen, the psychological type of the *Kshatriya* seems to correspond with Power, it can as well apply to Progress, in the fight against inertia and all the forces that hinder progress:

*[For the complete man] there should also be the qualities of the Kshatriya, the qualities of the man of action or the fighter. The first of these is courage and it is of two kinds – Abhaya or passive courage which is alarmed by no danger and shrinks from no peril that offers itself and from no misfortune or suffering. The second is Sahasa or active courage, that is to say the daring to undertake any enterprise however difficult or apparently impossible and carry it though in spite of all danger, suffering, failures, obstacles and oppositions...*²⁴⁷

The *psychic Being*, given its evolutionary character, also seems to be related to Progress:

*The psychic being is especially the soul of the individual evolving in the manifestation...and taking part in the evolution. It is that spark of the Divine Fire that grows behind the mind, vital and physical as the psychic being until it is able to transform the Prakriti of Ignorance into Prakriti of Knowledge...The psychic being evolves, so it is not immutable...*²⁴⁸

As in the case of Wealth, Progress can be endangered, and if the Power of Progress cannot disappear, it can get bogged down, as this diary entry of Sri Aurobindo's dated August 1st, 1914 indicates:

²⁴⁵ *Record of Yoga*, p. 1468.

²⁴⁶ *Mother's Agenda*, 7 Oct. 1964, p.240.

²⁴⁷ *Record of Yoga*, p. 1469 (already cited in the garden of Power).

²⁴⁸ *Letters*, p. 291.

*“There is no advance, only the struggle which shows continually that [the hostile forces] ²⁴⁹ cannot eventually prevail, but can obstruct and limit, to a certain extent cloud, to a lesser extent devour”.*²⁵⁰

Progress possesses its own Forces, powers and symbols:

The image of journeying always signifies a movement in life or a progress in sadhana.

A journey in a boat or other conveyance means always a movement in the yoga – often an advance or a progress.

The horse is the symbol of force or power...the inertia and obstruction in the physical will be changed into Power and Force of Progress.

The horse is a force acting for progress. The railway train at full speed means rapid progress.

Aeroplane, steamer and train are always symbols of a rapid progress or forward movement.

The elephant is the spiritual strength that removes obstacles and the horse the force of tapasya that gallops to the summit of the spiritual realization.

*Flowers indicate a blossoming in the consciousness.*²⁵¹

We have seen in the garden of Light that Progress is related to it by the Power that illumines and “*liberates the being from obscurity and darkness*”.

According to Richard Pearson, the Mother has named some other flowers “Progress”, such as *Integral progress, Integral progress in matter, Vital progress, Integral progress in the vital*. The flowers “*Integral progress*” or “*Thirst for perfection*” seem indeed to be associated with both *Progress* and *Perfection*.

Other flowers indicate the conditions required for progress, like “*Silence*” (Passiflora), about which the Mother said: “*The ideal condition for progress*”, or “*Perfect quietness in mind*” (Nerium oleander) which She describes as an “*An essential condition for true progress*”.

²⁴⁹ In this passage, Sri Aurobindo mentions the “Dwayavins, the Nidhas, the Vritras and the Atris” respectively, “those *who* divide, those who restrict, those who cover up and those who devour”. Let us point out that Sri Aurobindo, in his journal, mentions several times the usefulness of the hostile forces and the fact that the *Ishwara* (the Lord) tolerates them or uses them for certain purposes of the evolution. We can also add this sentence of Mother in the Agenda of October 1958 “*Difficulties are sent exclusively for the perfecting of the realisation*”.

²⁵⁰ *Record of Yoga*, p.586.

²⁵¹ *Letters*, pp. 972 – 985.

In short, the garden of Progress seems to be in direct relation with the gardens of Light, Life, Power, Wealth, Usefulness and Perfection, and as we will see, the garden of Youth.

* * *

According to Dr. Kireet Joshi, the garden of Progress is associated with the gardens of Usefulness and Wealth, having their basis in Existence: “Wealth (what can be eaten) connected with Usefulness. Wealth and Usefulness = Progress to embody Existence.”²⁵²

²⁵² Kireet Joshi to Roger Anger, first version.

10) YOUTH

*Laughing out an unmeasured happiness...*²⁵³

Key words: Play; Laughter; Progress; Eternal Youth.

For the tenth garden, the Mother chose the hibiscus “*Beauty of supramental youth*”, adding the following comment:

*“Is exquisitely fresh and powerful with uncontested beauty”*²⁵⁴

The fact that the Mother uses the word *beauty* twice here gives it a very special significance:

*Beauty is a special divine manifestation in the physical as Truth is in the mind, Love in the heart, Power in the vital.*²⁵⁵

This garden then expresses the Supramental Youth, which one can imagine as possessing these four qualities of the divine manifestation -- Beauty, Truth, Love and Power:

*Harmony and beauty of the mind and soul, harmony and beauty of the thoughts and feelings, harmony and beauty in every outward act and movement, harmony and beauty of the life and surrounding, this is the demand of Mahalakshmi.*²⁵⁶

Beauty is linked to *Mahalakshmi*, who expresses Harmony; beauty also expresses Bliss (*Ananda*):

*Love and Beauty are Powers of Ananda...*²⁵⁷

*Beauty is Ananda taking form... What we speak as Beauty is Ananda in manifestation.*²⁵⁸

The garden of Youth seems to be directly associated with *Ananda*, and thereby with the garden of Bliss, as well as the gardens of Power and Harmony. It is also closely related to the aims of the Auroville project:

Auroville will be the place of an unending education, of constant progress, and a youth that never ages.

(Auroville Charter)

²⁵³ *Savitri*, Bk. III, Canto 3, p.323.

²⁵⁴ R. Pearson: *The Gardens*, p.34.

²⁵⁵ SABCL, 9: 491.

²⁵⁶ *The Mother*, p.31.

²⁵⁷ SABCL, 9: 492.

²⁵⁸ SABCL, *The Future Poetry*, p. 941.

The name of the hibiscus itself, ‘*Beauty of supramental youth*’, that Mother chose indicates that this garden is directly associated with the supramental manifestation and confirms, once again, the orientation of all the gardens of Matrimandir.

The garden of Youth and the garden of Progress both face the south pillar of Matrimandir, that of *Maheshwari* :

*Imperial, Maheshwari is seated in the wideness... She is the mighty and Wise One who opens us to the supramental infinities and the cosmic vastness, to the grandeur of the supreme Light, to a treasure-house of miraculous knowledge, to the measureless movement of the Mother’s eternal forces. Tranquil is she and wonderful, great and calm for ever...All are to her eyes her children and portion of the One...*²⁵⁹

The symbol of *Maheshwari* is the hexagon and its color is golden yellow.

It seems that the garden of Youth marks a transition in the progression of the 12 gardens. If the three preceding gardens, Wealth, Usefulness and Progress, indicate a movement, the last three gardens, Youth, Harmony and Perfection, seem rather to indicate an outcome, because even if Youth is associated with Progress:

To be young is to live in the future.

To be young is to be always ready to give up what you are in order to become what you should be.

To be young is never to accept the irreparable.

*To know how to be reborn into a new life at every moment is the secret of eternal youth.*²⁶⁰

Thus, Youth is also eternal, as indicated by the hibiscus *miniatus*²⁶¹ which the Mother named “*Eternal Youth*” that Pearson mentions: “*The gift the Divine gives us when we unite ourselves with Him*”

In *The Life Divine*, Sri Aurobindo brings together play, joy, eternal youth, and bliss in the same sentence:

If we look at World-Existence rather in its relation to the self-delight of eternally existent being, we may regard, describe and realise it as Lila, the play, the child’s joy, the poet’s joy, the actor’s joy, the mechanician’s joy of the Soul of things eternally young, perpetually inexhaustible, creating and re-creating Himself in Himself for the sheer bliss of that self creation, of that self-representation – Himself the play, Himself the player, Himself the playground.²⁶²

²⁵⁹ *The Mother*, pp. 26-27.

²⁶⁰ *The Mother, On Education*, CWM: 12, pp. 122-124.

²⁶¹ Pearson, *The Gardens*, p 35. It seems that the hibiscus is also called *Hortus*.

²⁶² *The Life Divine*, pp. 102-103.

Eternal Youth is therefore an infinite self-creation in the blissful Game of the world. Youth is once again associated here with Bliss (*Ananda*).

Some names and terms Sri Aurobindo often used in his journal illustrate eternal youth, the youth that never ages, the divine child eternally young, the divine Play:

Bala-Krishna : The boy Krishna, “the divine Child” at play in the worlds in “the free infinity of the self-delight of Sachchidananda”.

Balabhava : the state of being like a child “...a state of pure happy and free irresponsibility of action”; “the royal and eternal childhood whose toys are the worlds and all universal Nature is the miraculous garden of the play that tires never”.

Lila : play, game ; the world as a game of the Lord or Ishwara, “a play of the divine Being with the conditions of cosmic existence in this world of an inferior Nature”... “experienced as a play of the divine Delight.”

Lilamaya : playful ; enjoying the cosmic game; the Lila perceived as pouring out the delight of existence (ananda) in the play of the world.

Lilamaya Ishwara : the Lord of the cosmic Lila, “the mighty Lord of Nature, who... enjoy with his universal delight this play of her figures of his own being” ; the Ishwara as “our Playmate in the great world-game who has disguised himself throughout as friend and enemy, helper and opponent, and in all relations and in all workings that affect us, had led our steps towards our perfection and our release.”

Lilamaya Krishna : “the eternal child frolicking in the Universe, the Playmate, Lover, Master, Teacher and Friend of all His creation”, he “who draws all of us to him by his love, compels all of us by his masteries and plays his eternal play of joy and strength and beauty in the manifold world.”

Lilamaya Purusha : the Purusha as the enjoyer and master of the Lila, “the Soul of things eternally young, perpetually inexhaustible...”

Hasyam : literally, “laughter”, “a clear joy and laughter of the soul embracing life and existence”, an active internal state of gladness and cheerfulness which no adverse experience mental or physical can trouble, “a state of positive joy and cheerfulness which takes the whole of Life and the world as a pleasant and amusing play.”

Saundarya : beauty ; physical beauty as part of the perfection of the body...involving an attempt “of the psychic body to alter...the physical sheath into its own image”; beauty in the world.²⁶³

²⁶³ Glossary of the Record of Yoga – Glossary of terms in Sri Aurobindo’s Writings.

Physical Beauty, of which Sri Aurobindo lists three stages, leaves us filled with wonder:

- *When there is a brightness in the body combined with sweetness of voice and charm of expression etc.*
- *Continual youth.*
- *When the features and figure can be changed to a form of perfect beauty.*²⁶⁴

The child, symbol of Youth, manifests symbolically in yogic visions and is generally an expression of the *psychic being*, the soul in evolution:

*A dream like this of a child – especially a newborn child – usually signifies the birth (or the awakening) of the soul or psychic being in the outward nature. The child usually signifies the psychic being ...The golden child is the Truth-soul... When it plunges into the black waters of the subconscious, it releases from it the spiritual light and the sevenfold streams of the Divine Energy...*²⁶⁵

The garden of Youth will thus express a manifestation of the attributes of the Supramental youth. This garden seems to be directly associated with the gardens of Progress and Light, but also, as we have seen, with the gardens of Power, Bliss, Harmony and Perfection.

Let us note an interesting detail: the area allotted for the garden of Youth is the largest of all twelve gardens.

* * *

According to the Dr. Kireet Joshi, the garden of Youth is related to the gardens of Harmony and Perfection, having their base in Bliss (*Ananda*).

²⁶⁴ *Record of Yoga*, p.1477.

²⁶⁵ *Letters*, pp. 980-981.

11) HARMONY

*When all is in agreement with the One Truth or an expression of it,
that is harmony.*²⁶⁶

*The vina [is a symbol] of harmony*²⁶⁷

Key words: Harmony and evolution; Harmony at the service of the Supramental creation;
Harmony of harmonies.

HARMONY is the eleventh garden, located between Youth and Perfection. The flower chosen by the Mother for this garden is the hibiscus “**Power of harmony**” upon which she commented,

*“Simple, noble, dignified, powerful and charming”*²⁶⁸

Richard Pearson mentions some other flowers in relation to this garden: “*Harmony, Collective harmony, Harmony in the vital, Integral Harmony*”.²⁶⁹

The original eternal harmony is intrinsic to *Sat, Chit and Ananda*:

*Sachchidananda the unity of the many-sidedness of manifested things, the eternal harmony of all their variation and oppositions.*²⁷⁰

Thus the relationship between Harmony and the first three gardens of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss becomes apparent right away.

Harmony is fundamental to the manifested world but here veiled, in the process of evolving:

A cosmos or universe is always a harmony, otherwise it could not exist, it would fly to pieces. But as there are musical harmonies which are built out of discord partly or even predominantly, so this universe (the material) is disharmonious in its separate elements – the individual elements are at discord with each other to a large extent; it is only owing to the sustaining Divine Will behind that the whole is still a harmony to those who look at it with the cosmic vision. But it is a Harmony in evolution in progress – that is, all is combined to strive towards a goal which is not yet reached, and the object of our yoga is to hasten the arrival of this goal.

²⁶⁶ *Letters on Yoga*, p. 560.

²⁶⁷ *ibid.*, p. 982.

²⁶⁸ R. Pearson, *The Gardens*, p. 36.

²⁶⁹ *ibid.*, p. 37.

²⁷⁰ SABCL, **20**: 395.

*When it is reached, there will be a harmony of harmonies substituted for the present harmony built upon discord.*²⁷¹

Harmony has therefore a double aspect: eternal harmony and harmony in evolution. In the manifestation, it is only in the Supramental consciousness that discordant elements can be harmonized:

*The supermind is the One Truth deploying and determining the manifestation of its Powers – all these Powers working as a multiple Oneness, in Harmony, without opposition or collision, according to the One Will inherent in all.*²⁷²

The garden of Harmony is therefore also associated with the Supramental consciousness. This harmony is the same one Sri Aurobindo describes in the seven Suns of the Supramental, the fourth of which is “*the Sun of Love, Bliss and Beauty, vivifying and harmonising the supramental creation*”. Then again, among the seven creative Suns, the fourth one is “*The Sun of Love, Bliss and Beauty (dynamising the descending harmonies).*”²⁷³

Light (the Suns) and again Bliss, are associated to Harmony.

Mahalakshmi is the manifestation of the supreme Mother in her aspect of Harmony, a harmony which concerns all the movements of Life:

*Harmony and beauty of the mind and soul, harmony and beauty of the thoughts and feelings, harmony and beauty in every outward act and movement, harmony and beauty of the life and surrounding, this is the demand of Mahalakshmi*²⁷⁴

Sri Aurobindo refers to Harmony as **the** condition for the manifestation of the Supramental *Mahashakti*:

*Only when the Four have founded their harmony and freedom of movement in the transformed mind and life and body, can those other rarer Powers manifest in the earth movement and the supramental action become possible. For when her Personalities are all gathered in her and manifested and their separate working has been turned into harmonious unity and they rise in her to their supramental godhead, then is the Mother revealed as the supramental Mahashakti and brings pouring down her luminous transcendences from their ineffable ether. Then can human nature change into dynamic divine nature because all the elemental lines of the supramental Truth-consciousness and Truth-force are strung together and the harp of life is fitted for the rhythms of the Eternal.*²⁷⁵

²⁷¹ *Letters*, pp. 1083-84.

²⁷² *ibid.*, pp. 257-58

²⁷³ *Record of Yoga*, p. 1341. See the garden of Light, where the seven Suns are described.

²⁷⁴ *The Mother*, p.31

²⁷⁵ *ibid.*, pp.35-36. These personalities are mentioned in the gardens of Bliss and Power.

We deal here with the “*harmonious unity*” of the four main Powers of the Mother, harmony unveiling the “*supramental Mahashakti*” which will transform the Earth (down here on the earth); “*Then can human nature change into dynamic divine nature*”. This also brings to mind the eighth Sun which will bring the “*restoration of the Earth Mother to her own divinity*” that we have seen previously, and confirms the Supramental dimension of this garden.

As regards the collective work, it is *Pradyumna*²⁷⁶, the third of the four aspects of *Ishwara* (the Lord), which corresponds to the *Vaishya* of the ancient Indian system of the four Orders²⁷⁷ who represents the cosmic principle of Harmony. It is “*the sweet and throbbing heart in things*”; its *Shakti* is *Mahalakshmi* (Harmony), as we have seen above.

On the collective physical plane, Harmony is the result of a society whose organization is dedicated to the service of the divine Mother. The Auroville project takes on its full meaning here in correlation with the gardens of Life, Power, Wealth, Utility and Progress, because,

*In the supramental creation the money-force **has to be restored** to the Divine Power and used for a true and beautiful and harmonious equipment and ordering of a new divinised vital and physical existence in whatever way the Divine Mother herself decides in her creative vision. But first it must be conquered back for her...*²⁷⁸

This eleventh garden, Harmony, seems therefore to be directly related to all the other gardens, an integral Harmony, which in the flower of the same name means “*Harmony between things, harmony between persons, harmony of circumstances, and above all, harmony of all aspirations directed towards the Supreme Truth*”, to ultimately reveal “*a harmony of harmonies substituted for the present harmony built upon discord*”.²⁷⁹

The Mother’s comment about the flower named “Harmony” presupposes that there is a will towards Harmony:

“*Let us strive that the day may come when this will be the means and the goal.*”²⁸⁰

* * *

According to Dr. Kireet Joshi, the garden of Harmony is associated with the gardens of Usefulness and Wealth having their basis in the garden of Existence. “Harmony: Joy, Love, Wisdom, heroism, Perfection.”²⁸¹

²⁷⁶ The Four aspects of *Ishwara*, already mentioned in the gardens of Power and Usefulness are Mahavira, Balarama, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. (cf. notes 176.)

²⁷⁷ The *Vaishya* has been mentioned in the garden of Wealth. See also the footnote 175.

²⁷⁸ *The Mother*, p. 14.

²⁷⁹ *Letters*, p. 1083.

²⁸⁰ R.Pearson, commentary of the Mother regarding the flower “Harmony” (*Antigonon leptopus*).

²⁸¹ Kireet Joshi to Roger Anger, first version.

12) PERFECTION

*Even the body shall remember God...
All earth shall be the Spirit's manifest home...*²⁸²

Key words: Balance; Growth; Power to manifest.

. The flower chosen by the Mother for PERFECTION, the twelfth and last garden, is the Plumeria “**Psychological Perfection**”, known commonly as “Frangipani”. Mother commented about this flower:

*“There is not one psychological perfection but five, like the five petals of this flower. We have said they are : Sincerity, Faith, Devotion, Aspiration, and Surrender, but as a matter of fact every time I give this flower it is not always the same psychological perfection. It is something very fluid, depending on the circumstances and the need of the people.”*²⁸³

Sri Aurobindo, who also refers to the language of the flowers, speaks of the meaning of Perfection:

*Such qualities as faith, sincerity, aspiration, devotion, etc. make up the perfection indicated in our language of the flowers. In ordinary language it would mean something else such as purity, love benevolence, fidelity and a host of other virtues.*²⁸⁴

In the language of the flowers, Perfection has a very specific meaning and signifies in essence the qualities that prepare us to receive the response of the Divine and to unite to Him:

*Perfection in the sense in which we use it in Yoga, means a growth out of a lower undivine into a higher divine nature. In terms of knowledge it is a putting on the being of the higher self and a casting away of the darker broken lower self or a transforming of our imperfect state into the rounded luminous fullness of our real and spiritual personality. In terms of devotion and adoration it is a growing into a likeness of the nature or the law of the being of the Divine, to be united with whom we aspire.*²⁸⁵

Perfection is connected with aspiration (*Aspiration, this fire of the soul*).

²⁸² Savitri, Bk. XI, Canto 1, p. 707.

²⁸³ Pearson, *The Gardens*, p.38.

²⁸⁴ *Letters*, p. 554.

²⁸⁵ SABCL, 21: 671.

We thirst for perfection. Not this human perfection which is a perfection of the ego and bars the way to the divine perfection. But that one perfection which has the power to manifest upon earth the eternal Truth.²⁸⁶

The true spiritual perfection is not so much of form ; it is of the very substance of the consciousness and, as it consists at its base in an entire harmony with the Divine Consciousness and a free and plastic self adaptation at each moment to the Divine Will, its forms and the form of its action are not so easily visible or appreciable.²⁸⁷

(Here, Perfection is associated with Harmony, the name of the eleventh garden)

Perfection is not a maximum or an extreme. It is an equilibrium and a harmonisation. It may be said that perfection is attained, though it remains progressive, when the receptivity from below is equal to the force from above which wants to manifest.²⁸⁸

It appears that in the context of the Matrimandir gardens, Perfection expresses a general attitude that allows a state of being to manifest progressively, but also a dynamic power of transformation.

What precedes it connects Perfection with Consciousness (entire harmony with the Divine Consciousness), light (rounded luminous fullness), progress (free and plastic self adaptation), harmony (its base in an entire harmony), and power (has the power to manifest ...). These are all names of the gardens preceding Perfection.

The five qualities of psychological Perfection specified by Mother are Sincerity, Faith, Devotion, Aspiration and Surrender:

Sincerity is to allow no part of the being to contradict the highest aspiration towards the Divine...To be entirely sincere means to desire the divine truth only.

Faith is the soul's witness to something not yet manifested, achieved or realised, but which yet the Knower within us, even in the absence of all indication, feels to be true or supremely worth following or achieving...Faith is a dynamic intuitive conviction in the inner being...

Devotion is not an experience, it is a state of the heart and soul. It is a state which comes when the psychic being is awake and prominent. Bhakti is devotion to the Divine, love and adoration and the soul's desire of the highest.

Aspiration is a call to the Divine... It is a call of the being for higher things – for the Divine, for all that belongs to the higher or Divine Consciousness.

²⁸⁶ *Words of the Mother, CWM, 15 : 186.*

²⁸⁷ *Letters, p.1669.*

²⁸⁸ *Words,op.cit., CWM, 15 : 85.*

*Surrender is giving oneself to the Divine – to give everything one is or has to the Divine, and regard nothing as one’s own, to obey only the Divine Will and no other...*²⁸⁹

*Mahasaraswati is the manifestation of that aspect of the Supreme Mother expressing Perfection, “The Mother’s Power of Work and her spirit of perfection and order”*²⁹⁰

*Yes – all perfection in intricacy of detail shows the touch of Mahasaraswati.*²⁹¹

The four Vedic gods -- Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman and Bhaga -- together represent Perfection. *“The Four... build up the whole divine state into its perfection by natural interaction of its four essential elements”,* respectively, Purity, Light, Force and Ananda.²⁹²

Three names of three gardens are mentioned here: Light, Power (Force), Bliss (Ananda).

If we go back to Chaturvarnya (the four Orders) that we have seen earlier,
*“The perfect man has all the four in him, although one usually predominates and gives the character its general type”*²⁹³

The Lord of the Play (*Ishwara lilamaya*) guides us towards our perfection:
*Ishwara, the Lord as “our Playmate in the great world-game who has disguised himself throughout as friend and enemy, helper and opponent, and in all relations and in all workings that affect us, had led our steps towards our perfection and our release.”*²⁹⁴

Sri Aurobindo lists other aspects of Perfection in relation to the human “system”, through the power of *Shakti*²⁹⁵ :

Shakti is a general force by which each of the four parts of the system (the body, the Prana, the Chitta et la Buddhi) is kept at its highest state of perfection.

The perfect state of the body consists in four things: a sense of entire lightness (Laghuta), a sense of strength and energy (Balam), a sense of a certain mass and force (Mahattwa) and the power of containing without strain or reaction any working however intense and constant, of energy however great and puissant. This is Dharana Samarthyam.

²⁸⁹ *Glossary of Terms in Sri Aurobindo’ Writings.*

²⁹⁰ *The Mother*, p. 33.

²⁹¹ *The Mother*, p. 77.

²⁹² *Glossary of the Record of Yoga.*

²⁹³ *Record of Yoga*, p. 1468. See the four orders, in the garden of Usefulness, as well as footnote 171.

²⁹⁴ *Glossary of the Record of Yoga.*

²⁹⁵ *Record of Yoga, Scribal version*, pp. 1470-7.

The perfect state of the Prana consists in a sense of fullness of vital force (Purnata), of general clearness and cheerfulness (Prasannata), of equality in all experiences, shocks and contacts (Samata) and in the capacity to take all enjoyment of the world without desire but also without exhaustion and satiety. This is Bhoga Samarthyam.

The perfect state of the Chitta consists in a sense of richness and gladness of feeling (Snigdhatta), of abounding moral power and energy (Tejas), in a confidence in the divine grace and help and general sense of mangala [good fortune] (Kalyana Sraddha) and in the capacity for unbounded love for all beings and all objects. This is Prema Samarthyam.

The perfect state of Buddhi consists in a general purity and clearness of the thinking faculty (Vishuddhatta et Prakasha ; in richness and great variety and minuteness of the perceptions (Vichitra bodha); and in the power of the mind to receive and adapt itself to any kind of knowledge without feeling anywhere a limit or an incapacity. This is Jnana Samarthyam.

One can add to this list Daivi Prakriti (Divine Nature),

which means the possession of the four Shaktis – Maheshwari, the Shakti of greatness and knowledge; Mahakali, the Shakti force and violence ; Mahalakshmi, the Shakti of beauty, love and delight and Mahasaraswati, the Shakti of worldly reason (science) and work. The possession of these Shaktis carries with it a sense of the Divine Power of general compassion and helpfulness to the world, and a faculty for any work that the nature may undertake.

The “Program for the Body” (Sharira Chatusthaya) that Sri Aurobindo explores and notes down in his *Record of Yoga* describes the four stages that lead to its perfection²⁹⁶ : Arogya (health), Utthapana (levitation), Saundarya (beauty), and Ananda (felicity):

I) Arogya is a state of being healthy. There are three stages:

1. When the system is normally healthy and only gets disturbed by exceptional causes or very strong strain, such as continual exposure to cold, overstrain of any kind.
2. When even exceptional causes or great overstrain cannot disturb the system; this shows that there is full Arogya Shakti [power of arogya].
3. Immortality in the body.

II) Utthapana is the state of not being subject to the pressure of physical forces. There are also three stages here:

1. When there is a great force, lightness and strength in the body (full of vital energy); this shows that the body is full of Prana Shakti [Life Force].
2. When there is no physical weariness, no exhaustion of the brain or nervous centres.

²⁹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 1477

3. *When one is not necessarily subject to the law of gravitation or other physical laws.*

- III) *Saundarya* is the state of being beautiful. There are also three stages here:
1. *When there is a brightness in the body combined with sweetness of voice and charm of expression etc.*
 2. *Continual youth.*
 3. *When the features and figure can be changed to a form of perfect beauty.*

IV) *Physical Ananda* or *kamananda* [of five kinds].

The word *siddhi* can certainly be applied to the garden of Perfection, because, *siddhi* means perfection, fulfilment, success...of any element of the yoga...regarded not as a static condition, but as an automatically self-fulfilling movement of growth into a higher divine nature.²⁹⁷

Some symbols also seem to be related to Perfection:

When you see a square that is a symbol of complete creation...The square indicates that the creation is to be complete in itself...In my experience the square symbolises the supermind.

*White indicates a force of purity...The sunlight is the direct light of the Truth...The Sun is the Truth from above, in the last resort the supramental Truth.*²⁹⁸

Perfection is the twelfth garden; it seems that at this juncture Perfection gathers together all the 12 gardens and is associated with the accomplishment of all the aspects contained within the number 12:

*...Twelve the number of Aditi, of Mahashakti. So it applies to everything; all Her Action has 12 Aspects. There are also Her 12 Virtues, Her 12 Powers, Her 12 Aspects, and then Her 12 Planes of manifestation and many other things that are 12.*²⁹⁹

The number 12 also represents double Perfection:

*“and the symbol, the number 12 is in itself a symbol. It is the symbol of manifestation, double perfection – in essence and in manifestation – in the creation”*³⁰⁰

In the *Agenda* entry of July 18, 1961, the Mother mentions an “utmost perfection”, probably in relation to what became later the project of Auroville:

²⁹⁷ *Glossary of the Record of Yoga.*

²⁹⁸ *Letters*, pp. 948-954-957-962

²⁹⁹ The Mother speaking to her Wednesday class on 10 November, 1954.

³⁰⁰ *ibid.*

A place where each thing is exactly in its place, setting an example. Each thing exactly in its place, each person exactly in its place, each movement exactly in its place, and all in its place in an ascending, progressive movement without relapse... Naturally this also means a sort of perfection, it means a sort of unity; it means that the different aspects of the supreme can be manifested; and necessarily, an exceptional beauty, a total harmony; and a power sufficient to keep the forces of Nature obedient even if this place were encircled by destructive forces, for example, those forces would be powerless to act – the protection would be sufficient. It would all require an utmost perfection in the individuals organising such a thing”

Then, She mentions the power of contagion of a supramentalized individual who would exercise—

*...[a] contagion of influencing vibration and forms in the surrounding environment, so that automatically they begin to be supramentalized. All that is possible – but confined to the individual scale... While what’s happening here should already have a much broader radiating influence. At some point this has to happen – it **MUST** happen... The realisation under community or group condition would clearly be far more complete, integral, total and probably more perfect than any individual realization.*

(We cannot fail to notice here the names of five gardens: Power, Progress, Harmony, Perfection, and probably Light.) And She adds:

*Naturally, the thirst for progress, the thirst to know, the thirst to transform yourself, and above all the thirst for Love and Truth – if you keep that, you go faster. Truly a thirst, a need, you know, a need. All the rest has no importance, what you need is **THAT**... The something we need, the Perfection we need, the Light we need, the Love we need, the Truth we need, the supreme Perfection we need – and that’s all. ³⁰¹*

To the sadhak seeking Perfection, Sri Aurobindo gives a few recommendations:

As I have said already, in all matter, work and study as well as in the inner progress in the yoga, the same thing is needed if you want perfection – quietude of mind, becoming aware of the Force, opening to it, allowing it to work in you. To aim at perfection is all right, but restlessness of mind is not the way towards it... Do not worry about mistakes in work... even if there are mistakes, it is nothing to be sad about. Let the consciousness grow – only in the divine consciousness is there entire perfection. The more you surrender to the Divine, the more will there be the possibility of perfection in you. ³⁰²

³⁰¹ *Mother’s Agenda*, 7 Oct. 1964, p.240.

³⁰² *Letters*, pp. 703-705.

The garden of Perfection is therefore related to the divine Consciousness, therefore to *Sat, Chit, Ananda* which is “*the nature of the divine being.*”³⁰³. Perfection, the twelfth garden, ties up here again, as in a loop, with the very first garden, *Sat*, or Existence.

Finally, the “surrender” to the Divine, one of the five psychological perfections expressed by the flower chosen for this last garden, perhaps summarizes the meaning of the twelve gardens because,

*The Mother’s power and not any human endeavour and tapasya can alone rend the lid and tear the covering and shape the vessel and bring down into this world of obscurity and falsehood and death and suffering, Truth and Light and Life divine and the immortal’s Ananda.*³⁰⁴

* * *

According to Dr. Kireet Joshi, the garden of Perfection is related to the gardens of Youth and Harmony, having their base in the garden of Bliss (*Ananda*).

“Perfection is: - Maximum

- Constant balance: in union, there is no equality among the elements but equilibrium and perfection.
- Totality = totality of accomplishment.”

³⁰³ See *Sachchidananda (Sat, Chit, Ananda)*, p.4.

³⁰⁴ *The Mother*, pp. 40-41.

SYNTHESIS (In a nutshell)

Each of the Matrimandir gardens presents more than one aspect, but the following ones seem to be predominant in the context of the whole:

- 1 – EXISTENCE - *SAT*: Source of Becoming
- 2 – CONSCIOUSNESS - *CHIT*: Manifestation (*Chit-Tapas, Chit Shakti*)
- 3 – BLISS - *ANANDA*: “*Raison d’être*” of the Manifestation

- 4 – LIGHT: “expression” of *Chit-Shakti*, Light-Power of the Mother
- 5 – LIFE: “result” of the Manifestation, “*Immense field of sacrifice*” (to make sacred)
- 6 – POWER: presents many aspects, but the main one seems to be “Power of Supreme Love” = Power of aspiration, Power of transformation, and also Power of beauty

- 7 – WEALTH: “*Riches at the service of the Divine*”
- 8 – USEFULNESS: flow of Divine wealth in the material world; new creation, service to the Divine
- 9 – PROGRESS: growth, progressive transformation, individual and collective

- 10 – YOUTH: constant rebirth, eternal youth.
- 11 – HARMONY: “balance”, the most favourable state of receptivity.
- 12 – PERFECTION: number 12, *Aditi*, total perfection = Divine consciousness in Matter.
Linked with *Sat, Chit, Ananda*. (Existence, Consciousness and Bliss)

SEQUENCES

1 – EXISTENCE – SAT	
2 – CONSCIOUSNESS – CHIT	Nature of the Divine Being – Origin – Source of Becoming
3 – BLISS – ANANDA	
4 – LIGHT	
5 – LIFE	Manifestation
6 – POWER.	
7 – WEALTH	
8 – USEFULNESS	Realisation of potentials – New creation -
9 – PROGRESS	Auroville
10 – YOUTH.	
11 – HARMONY	Results, attainments, Supramental.
12 – PERFECTION	

ELEMENTS WHICH CAN HELP IN DESIGNING THE GARDENS

There are in fact two systems simultaneously active in the organization of the being and its parts: one is concentric, a succession of rings or sheets of which the psychic is the center; the other is vertical, an ascent and a descent, like a staircase, a series of overlapping planes where the overmind-supermind is the crucial node of the passage beyond the human towards the divine.³⁰⁵

SAT is the divine counterpart of the physical substance.³⁰⁶

Existence as “the stuff of its own becoming”...which “ has formed itself here, fundamentally, as matter.”³⁰⁷

The “Waters of being”³⁰⁸ represent Existence in its manifold movement on various planes.

“To me, for instance, consciousness is the very stuff of existence and I can feel it everywhere enveloping and penetrating the stone as much as man or animal. A movement, a flow of consciousness is not to me an image but a fact.”³⁰⁹

Water inside the square represents multiplicity, creation...the central square is the perfect manifestation.³¹⁰

The square ...is a symbol of complete creation...; In my experience, the square symbolizes the Supermind.³¹¹

The *Ananda* corresponding to the plane of transcendent bliss (*Anandaloka*) or to the sub-planes created by the “repetition of the *Ananda* plane in each of the lower worlds of consciousness”. It brings the “sense of Supreme Beauty in all things (*sarvasaundarya*)...”³¹²

The 12 essential *Anandas*³¹³

The Mother’s light is white – especially diamond white.³¹⁴

³⁰⁵ Sri Aurobindo, Letters on Yoga, II, ?

³⁰⁶ SABCL 12:84.

³⁰⁷ *Glossary to the Record of Yoga*, (Sat).

³⁰⁸ Voir: Apas, *Glossary to the Record of Yoga*.

³⁰⁹ *Letters on Savitri*, quoted by Narad in *On the significance of the Order of the Matrimandir Gardens*.

³¹⁰ Sri Aurobindo, *Archives and Research*, Dec 1979.

³¹¹ *Letters*, (3rd Edition, 1971),II, pp. 949-954. The square can be compared to the « Ocean Cube » mentioned by Satprem in *Carnets d’une Apocalypse* (we quote from memory).

³¹² *Glossary to the Record of Yoga*, p. 175.

³¹³ Sri Aurobindo, *Record of Yoga*, p. 1456. These twelve anandas are: *Kaivalyananda* (Sadananda), *Chidananda*, *Suddhananda*, *Chidghanananda*, *Ahaitukananda*, *Premananda*, *Kamananda*. The last one (Kamananda or physical ananda) is divided into five variants: *Vaidyutananda*, *Raudrananda*, *Tivrananda*, *Vishayananda*, *Maithunananda*.

But this Light assumes different forms...³¹⁵

Golden light always means the light of Truth...The sunlight is the light of the Truth itself... the Sun stands universally for the supramental Light, the divine Gnosis.³¹⁶

The seven creative Suns and the seven Supramental Suns; the «eighth Sun of Truth hidden in the heart of the Earth Mother, which awakens the Earth to its own Divinity.³¹⁷

Life itself here [on earth] is Being at labour in Matter to express itself in terms of Conscious Force.³¹⁸

Life is the dynamic expression of the Consciousness-Force when thrown outward to realize itself in concrete harmonies of formation.³¹⁹

Life is not only a play of forces...but a field for the evolution of the concealed spirit.³²⁰

The ten rays (*dasha-gavas*) which represent the ten types of evolutionary consciousness forms which rise from “the animal power in the body” to “the real god, the mind raised to the Sat plane”.³²¹

“It was like a memory – an eternally present memory – of this Consciousness of supreme Love that the Lord has emanated on earth – IN the earth – in order to bring it back to Him...and unless it is That, this Supreme Love, which becomes all-powerfully conscious here on Earth, the return can never be definitive.”³²²

Auroville wants to be the bridge between the past and the future. (Charter of Auroville)

³¹⁴ *The Mother*, p. 87

³¹⁵ *ibid*, p. 83.

³¹⁶ *Letters*, pp. 954 -962.

³¹⁷ *Record of Yoga*, pp. 1339-41.

³¹⁸ SABCL, **15**:147.

³¹⁹ *Letters*, p. 1292.

³²⁰ SABCL, **23**:505.

³²¹ *The Record of Yoga*; See also *Record of Yoga: the Evolutionary Scale*, pp. 1326-30. The ten stages are: *pashu, vanara, pishacha, pramatha, rakshasa, asura, deva, saddhyadeva, siddhadava* and *satyadeva*.

³²² *Mother's Agenda*, January 21, 1962.

³²³ *The Synthesis*: **29** :781

“The utilities of divine knowledge”, of the “self-application of the spirit to life”. “The perfect utility of our perfection is, having realized in ourselves the divine symbol, to reproduce, multiply, and ultimately universalize it in others”.³²³

To be completed.

*The gardens are as important as Matrimandir.*³²⁴

CONCLUSION

The twelve gardens reveal a Unity whose elements are mutually enriching in a profound and subtle relation. One is certainly obliged to remain humble and cautious regarding their meaning. Nevertheless, if we base ourselves on what Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have written or said on the theme of each garden, several possible meanings reveal themselves, one of which seems to dominate in each specific context. It seems too that taken as a whole they present a slightly different symbolism, depending on whether one is considering the individual or the collective. The present study deals rather with the collective signification.

Furthermore, it would be certainly be very interesting to explore the potential relationship between the twelve gardens and the twelve meditation chambers, or the significance of the garden of Power which seems to have a special importance, as well as the sequence of the four groups of three gardens, mentioned by Dr Kireet Joshi but hardly touched upon here. Dr. Joshi had written the following in a letter to Roger Anger dated March 23, 2007:

“It appears, from the indications given by the Mother and from the flowers chosen by Her for these twelve gardens, that the over-arching atmosphere of the gardens should be filled with intense sense of devotion and surrender filled with aspiration that is surcharged with psychic consciousness, and which strives for the ascent to the supermind and for the manifestation of the supermind in order that the entire earthly life becomes divinised. An overview of the garden should vibrate with the divine joy that is beautiful and which expands itself for youthful progression towards majestic and sovereign perfection that is perfectly perfect”.

³²⁴ The Mother, orally, on Feb. 21, 1971, to some Aurovilians working at the Matrimandir Nursery.

*“The story of Matrimandir is told for those who have the heart of a child;
Mother has chosen a place charged with an uncontrollable force.
The island which supports the Matrimandir contains the power of the Sacred
The gardens surrounding it acquire the power of the Sacred.
The gestures, the attitudes, the poise, the respect, define the presence of the
Divine in the beauty charged with the Sacred.
The whole place looks toward the future charged with the sacred, for the
responsibility, for the Power of transformation.”*³²⁵

³²⁵ In March 2007, during a working meeting in which five people were present, Roger Anger suddenly stopped speaking and then pronounced these words, as if filled with a force. The person who was taking notes continued to write down these words so that they might be preserved.

Closely related documents

(These documents are available at the landscape office at Matrimandir)

- Roger Anger, *Towards the realisation of the Matrimandir Gardens*, January 2004.
- Letter of Dr. Kireet Joshi to Roger Anger, *Matrimandir Gardens*, first version, 2004(?),
Twelve Gardens of Matrimandir, March 2007.
- Narad, *On the significance of the Order of the Matrimandir Gardens*, November 2007.
- Narad, *The Matrimandir Gardens*, (List of flowers for Matrimandir Gardens), December 2008.
- Richard Pearson, *The Gardens of the Matrimandir*, 2002 (?), regarding the flowers of each garden, as well as a short study written in April 2008.
- Madhav Pandit, *The Psychic Being*, presented to the workers of Matrimandir in 1973, (archived by Alain Grandcolas).
- Gilles Guigan, *Matrimandir, the Significance of the 12 Gardens*, April 2007,
- Pierre Legrand, *The Inner Gardens of Matrimandir, a Proposal*, March 2001.
- Paulette Hadgani, *Work for the Gardens was about to commence – with Mother's approval*, (2005?)
- Alain Grandcolas, *Guidelines for landscapers of the Matrimandir Gardens* (with comments from Narad), April 2005.
- *L'Oratoire de La Mère*, compilation of the Mother's references to Matrimandir, September. 1999.
- Marc, Marie, Maurizio, *The twelve Gardens of the Matrimandir today*, March 2008.