Auroville:
A Practical Experiment in Utopian Society

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Advisor: Professor Robert Ehrlich
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To my parents,

For their pioneering spirit and a life dedicated to service.
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I. Introduction

“There is always a need of persons not only to discover new truths, and point out when what were once truths are truths no longer, but also to commence new practices and set the example of more enlightened conduct and better taste and sense in human life” John Stuart Mill.¹

Throughout history, humanity has quested for utopia. How may people live together, as equals, in harmony and prosperity? Numerous individuals – philosophers, economists and political scientists – have formulated theories for how this may be achieved, and intentional communities have acted as laboratories for the practical application of such theories. Auroville, an international township founded in 1968 in southern India, with the goal of realizing human unity, is one such unique example of a practical experiment in utopian society. Its continuous evolution is a fascinating display of how to construct one – in the real world. This thesis will analyze the underlying ideology of the Auroville experiment, as well as its approach to governance, economy, urban and environmental design, assessing successes, limitations, and works in progress.

The social contribution of intentional communities to the broader societies in which they are embedded have garnered well-earned recognition – New Harmony, an intentional community founded by Robert Owen in Indiana (USA) in 1814 was the pioneer of free public education and free public libraries, which have now become US institutions.² Over the last 45 years, Auroville has been a focal point for the pioneering of innovative forms of governance, economic systems, education, urban planning and renewable technologies. It is endorsed by both the Government of India and by UNESCO; these (and other) national and international bodies have chosen to do so because Auroville represents a unique attempt at realizing a model of human community that

could serve as an example to the world. Many intentional communities are in existence today. I choose Auroville as a case-study for several reasons. My scholarly interest lies in the social significance of such endeavors, and Auroville’s embeddedness and recognition within national and international frameworks – exceptional within the diverse spectrum of intentional communities – responds to that interest. As Bouvard states: “Among the tests of the effectiveness of communities are in the scope of its communication with outside groups and its relevance to the larger society.” Auroville is also the largest intentional community and eco-village in the world, with a population of 2500 permanent residents, and among the oldest of those that are active as ICs today. In addition, I was born and raised there; I am a product of this community, and am able to bring in a subjective sensibility, as well as auto-ethnographic evidence, that would not be accessible to a non-Aurovilian academic who may be interested in writing the same paper. Although I have some trepidation about doing justice to the Auroville experiment, it feels authentic to me to write a research paper on a topic I have extensive firsthand insight into, rather than another community I have not even visited.

The thesis is divided into two overarching parts. The initial bi-partite section of the paper provides the historical background that fostered the conception of Auroville as well as its establishment within the framework of the Indian Government and UNESCO program. The first half will introduce the reader to the Indian revolutionary independence activist and spiritual leader Sri Aurobindo, whose philosophy informs the ideology of Auroville, and to its founder, Sri Aurobindo’s companion Mirra Alfassa who petitioned the government of India, a member of the UN, to recommend Auroville to the UNESCO program. The motivations of a relatively

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4 Ibid., 14.
5 Contemporaries include Findhorn, founded in 1962, and the Federation of Damnahur, founded in 1975.
newly independent India in such an undertaking, and the process by which it came to nationally and internationally endorse the Auroville project, will be closely examined, as will the rationales for UNESCO’s reinforcement. The second half of this initial section will situate Auroville within the broader context of the intentional community movement – both the first wave, in the 19th century, where utopian writers and communitarians initially collaborated to construct “utopian” communities,⁶ and the second wave of intentional communities beginning in the 1960s.

The second part of the paper will be broken up into several sections addressing different aspects of the Auroville community. The first will focus on ideology, as this forms the basis and inspiration for all other aspects. It will look at foundational texts such as the Auroville Charter, “A Dream,” Mirra Alfassa’s blueprint for an alternative society, and her manifesto “To Be a True Aurovilian.” The following section will be dedicated to the Auroville “Masterplan,” illustrating how Auroville’s town planning is reflective of its spiritual, international, community-fostering and environmentally sustainable goals, as well as consider challenges, criticisms and current contentions. The next two sections will overview the existing governance and economic systems, as well as examine these in relation to ideology to assess how successfully it is being translated into practice. Throughout the description and analysis, I will draw salient parallels with prominent theorists of utopian society – such as Plato, Marx and Rousseau – to continue to situate Auroville within the context of a broader and long-standing utopian aspiration of humankind throughout time.

In Bouvard’s words, “Communities are also laboratories for social change, and a new generation is being socialized within the community culture.”⁷ A voice of that socialization, and one of a European national who has lived, worked and pursued university educations in both Europe and the US, in the conclusion I will speak to and from my personal experience of

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⁶ Schehr, Dynamic Utopia, 28.
growing up in Auroville in discussing, in light of my research and analysis, whether and how it is socially significant in the context of the modern world. In doing so, I wish to propose what aspects of the Auroville experiment may serve as contributions or inspiration to larger societies, while unreservedly questioning the transferability of its practices and ideology.
II. Historical Section

1) *Intentional Communities: Historical Traditions & Influences and Contemporary Features*

“By their very existence intentional communities broaden the choice of values and institutions for society as a whole, a welcome addition to any democratic society which upholds pluralism.” Marguerite Bouvard, 1975.  

Sri Aurobindo, the Indian revolutionary and spiritual leader whose philosophy inspired the Auroville experiment, passed away in 1950, 18 years before Auroville was founded by his spiritual companion and collaborator, Mirra Alfassa. It was she who explicitly conceptualized and designed the community, although, in his writings, Sri Aurobindo did make allusion to such an endeavor:

At a certain stage it might be necessary to follow the age-long device of the separate community, but with a doable purpose, first to provide a secure atmosphere, a place apart, in which the consciousness of the individual might concentrate on its evolution in surroundings where all was turned and centered towards the one endeavor and, next, when things were ready, to formulate and develop the new life in those surroundings and in this prepared spiritual atmosphere.

A brief history of what Aurobindo may have been referring to is warranted here. Although I will touch on examples dating as far back as the first century AD, to do justice to his reference and the historical tradition of such experiments, I will focus on the intentional community movement of the 19th, and especially 20th century – the so called “second-wave” that began in the 1960s, the decade of Auroville’s founding.

Among the earliest recorded accounts of communitarianism in the Western world are in St Paul’s letters, describing the communitarian movement of Christians who sought political and cultural freedom within the enclave of community living. The establishment of Christian monasteries, initiating in the twelfth century, represent a subsequent iteration of such a

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8 Bouvard, *The Intentional Community Movement*, 5.
phenomenon. In addition, the 12th and 13th centuries are also said to have fomented the creation of communes resembling those that emerged in the 1960s, as a result of newly-emerging wealth rapidly destabilizing social relations:

the mountain paths and town ghettos all over Europe were overrun from time to time by wandering fanatics, militants, flower people, most of whom preached brotherhood and poverty.\(^{10}\)

Although early communitarian efforts in America were religious – i.e. the Puritan Massachusetts Bay Colony in the 17th century and the Amish in the 18th century – the utopian social movement of the 19th century was largely secular, although not a-spiritual, drawing inspiration from contemporary philosophers, social theorists, political economists such as Robert Owen, Charles Fourier, Etienne Cabet, Edward Bellamy, Henry George, Marx & Engels, and the Transcendentalist authors and poets Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, as well as earlier proponents of ideal community models, such as Rousseau, and, from the classical Greek tradition, Plato and Aristotle.\(^{11}\) Robert Schehr describes it as a synthesis of practical communists and utopian writers, where “communitarians believed that they would come to symbolize, for all the world, what was possible, the true fulfillment of human nature; they would indeed become laboratories for experimentation,” based on a foundational conviction of the evolutionary trajectory of society towards a collective state.\(^{12}\) Mira Alfasssa, Auroville’s founder, intended for the community to be a “living laboratory” for humankind, a term by which Auroville continues to use in defining itself.\(^{13}\)

India has a lasting history of ashrams, spiritual residential retreats devoted to the teachings of a particular sage, just as Asian religions such as Buddhism have a long-standing spiritual tradition of monasteries (Sanskrit, perhaps the world’s most ancient language, has a

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\(^{10}\) Schehr, *Dynamic Utopia*, 26. (Emphasis added).
\(^{11}\) Ibid., 28.
\(^{12}\) Ibid.
\(^{13}\) *Auroville Land Fund Newsletter*, No. 36 (2005), 1.
word for community, “sangha,” used to refer to such spiritual social organizations). Because Auroville was influenced by the teachings of Sri Aurobindo, considered to be one of the great Indian sages of the 20th century, and Auroville was initially associated with the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, some have claimed that Auroville is a community of a religious nature. I place Auroville within the utopian intentional community context and tradition. Its salient characteristics share far more affinity with examples of the latter, and diverge in significant ways from the former.

Sri Aurobindo, in the latter part of his life, turned his focus from the revolutionary agenda of Indian nationalism to a cultivation of a spiritual practice that he believed would be more profoundly revolutionary. It is important to note that what he came to name his “Integral Yoga” was not one that followed the ascetic ethos of the great yogis of the Indian tradition, but that embraced all facets of human life, and sought to transform them:

I… have definitely commenced another kind of work with a spiritual basis, a work of spiritual, social, cultural and economic reconstruction of an almost revolutionary kind… my idea of spirituality has nothing to do with ascetic withdrawal… There is to me nothing secular, all human activity is for me a thing to be included in a complete spiritual life.14

Sri Aurobindo’s Integral Yoga, on which he wrote prolifically, was never presented as a system of religious belief or practice. Although it affirmed the existence of an ultimate reality which was divine, and conceived of humankind to be in a process of conscious evolution with the ultimate goal of realization of this higher consciousness, it recognized that each person was a unique manifestation of that divine essence, and therefore, each would follow his or her own path to enlightenment.15 Sri Aurobindo himself spoke very critically of religions and their monolithic systems of salvation, which he perceived as dogmatic, limited in scope and effectiveness:

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14 Sri Aurobindo, Birth Centenary Library XXVI, 430-433.
15 Minor, The Religious, the Spiritual, and the Secular, 19, 27.
Religionism… entrenches itself in some narrow pietistic exaltation… or lays exclusive stress in intellectual dogmas, forms and ceremonies, on some fixed and rigid moral code, on some religio-political or religio-social system.\textsuperscript{16}

Bouvard states that secular intentional communities (ICs) share an affinity with religious communities by virtue of their ethos of integrality.\textsuperscript{17} Schehr, in his study of contemporary IC’s, states that their defining characteristic is a ‘planetary consciousness.’\textsuperscript{18} The utopian philosopher Ernst Bloch asserts that humanity is instilled with the striving for progress, and as such, a utopian consciousness is latent, existing in the “not-yet-consciousness” in all people.\textsuperscript{19} The idealist philosopher and historicist Hegel believed that man, throughout history, progressed towards spiritual self-realization, which he termed ‘Geist.’\textsuperscript{20} He contended that alienation between individuals, and between individuals and their environment, would be “overcome in the process by which Spirit gradually realizes itself in the world.”\textsuperscript{21} I present this brief selection of views to contextualize Sri Aurobindo’s thought and concepts within an ontological and idealistic philosophy, rather than relegating them to the domain of religious thought. In the context of ICs, I posit that this translates into spiritual worldview rather than religious faith, a nuance well-captured in Fogerty’s coining of the term “secular salvation.”\textsuperscript{22}

Although the organization of ICs is incredibly varied, there are some marked differences between religious and contemporary intentional communities that distinguish the one from the other; religious communities typically have hierarchical structures, authoritarian control, strict sanctions and set practices.\textsuperscript{23} Pre-twentieth century communities exhibited some restrictive and prescriptive characteristics, as well as unflinching organizational structures that reflected

\textsuperscript{16} Sri Aurobindo, \textit{Birth Centenary Library} XXII, 166-67
\textsuperscript{17} Bouvard, \textit{The Intentional Community Movement}, 10.
\textsuperscript{18} Schehr, \textit{Dynamic Utopia}, 45.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., 148.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{22} Robert Fogerty, \textit{All Things New} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 16.
\textsuperscript{23} Bouvard, \textit{The Intentional Community Movement}, 43-44.
impositions from a higher authority; in the Skinnerian Twin Oaks and Walden communities, for example, members were obligated to perform a minimum amount of physical labor\(^\text{24}\) and relegated their children to being housed and raised in communal nursery.\(^\text{25}\) There was not a system of popular control, but a technocracy, with a board of planners and specialists who were \textit{not selected by the citizenry} responsible for governance.\(^\text{26}\) However, the second-wave intentional communities, beginning in the 1960s – the period in which Auroville was founded (1968) – were neither as communal nor as restrictive.\(^\text{27}\) These no longer required that members surrender individual sovereignty, for example in matters pertaining to their financial resources or children, to community direction;\(^\text{28}\) internal governance shifted towards more egalitarian, non-hierarchical, often feminist inspired models of decision-making based on consensus.\(^\text{29}\) In addition, they insistently pursued and experimented with innovative models and approaches to the vast array of human social activity and organization, such as economy, governance, conflict resolution, and sustainability, seeking to improve and progress in these areas instead of choosing to maintain the earlier rural communities’ ethos of regression to a basic, sustenance-based, rural lifestyle.\(^\text{30}\) The individual has a newfound place in the contemporary community context, in which personal freedom and fulfillment are valued and sought.\(^\text{31}\) Auroville is representative of all of the afore-mentioned trends, which will be examined in detail in different sections of this thesis.

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\(^{24}\) Ibid., 144.

\(^{25}\) Ibid., 141.

\(^{26}\) Ibid., 144-145

\(^{27}\) Schehr, \textit{Dynamic Utopia}, 44.

\(^{28}\) Ibid., 44

\(^{29}\) Ibid., 44, 46.

\(^{30}\) Ibid., 46.

\(^{31}\) Ibid.
2) **Foundations: Ideological, Governmental, International**

“Auroville wants to be a universal town where men and women of all countries are able to live in peace and progressive harmony above all creeds, all politics and all nationalities. The purpose of Auroville is to realise human unity.” The Mother, 1965.\(^{32}\)

Among the distinguishing features of Auroville, compared with other contemporary and historical intentional communities, is its embeddedness in both the national and governmental Indian context, and within the international framework of the United Nations. Auroville has a Foundation Act in the Indian legislature, and has been the subject of multiple endorsing UN resolutions.\(^{33}\) This section will examine the historical circumstances and ideological context out of which Auroville was founded and this unique symbiosis emerged.

The incorporation of Auroville into the Indian governmental structure requires an understanding of the revered Indian revolutionary and seer, Sri Aurobindo.\(^{34}\) Sri Aurobindo was born in Calcutta in 1872, and educated at Cambridge University, during which time he became increasingly critical of the colonial relationship between the UK and India. He chose to return to his home country, and became involved in the fight for India’s independence, emerging as one of the leaders of the nationalist liberation. He was asked to take the presidency of the Indian National Congress in 1920, but declined, as result of his shift towards spirituality, which he believed would be all-encompassing, and more powerful than a political endeavor.\(^{35}\) Pursued by the British government for his subversive activities, Sri Aurobindo found political refuge in the French colonial town of Pondicherry. There, he began devoting himself to spiritual practice, and though he never professed to be a guru, became increasingly revered by many, both Indian and non-Indian, as a spiritual leader.

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\(^{32}\) Quoted on the home page of the Auroville website, accessed April 18, 2015, auroville.org.in.

\(^{33}\) See Appendix.

\(^{34}\) For a biography of Sri Aurobindo, see: Peter Heehs, *Sri Aurobindo, a brief biography* (Delhi, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

The French born Mirra Alfassa, who would found Auroville in 1968, was among these. After visiting Sri Aurobindo in 1914, she returned in 1920 to support Sri Aurobindo in his vision and practice of Integral Yoga. Taking on all of the practical aspects of managing the people who flocked to be near the increasingly recluse Sri Aurobindo, she became known as “The Mother,” and established the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1927 – a residential, spiritual homestead for those who wished to devote themselves to a spiritual life of practice. Following Sri Aurobindo’s passing in 1950 (three years after India achieved independence on his birthday, August 15th) the Mother registered the Sri Aurobindo Society under the Societies Registration Act with the aim of promoting the ideals of Integral yoga and the “attainment of a spiritualized society as envisioned by Sri Aurobindo,” in 1960.36 The Indian Government recognized the SAS as a not-for-profit research institute of national importance.37

By 1954, the Mother had drafted a document called “A Dream,” a blueprint for a new, alternative form of society based on the spiritual insights of her and Sri Aurobindo’s practice. The document opened with the statement “There should be somewhere on earth a place which no nation could claim as its own, where all human beings of goodwill who have a sincere aspiration could live freely as citizens of the world and obey one single authority, that of the supreme Truth.”38 In 1968, the Mother founded Auroville as a practical attempt to realize the objectives set forth in “A Dream,” under the umbrella of the SAS, which awarded Auroville a legal status with benefits such as tax exemption for social and scientific research, and acted as its financial and administrative overseer.39

37 Ibid.
38 The Mother, A Dream (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, 1954). Note: “Truth” is here best understood within the context of Sri Aurobindo’s Integral Yoga as an omnipresent spiritual force.
As early as 1966, the SAS, under the presidency of the Mother, petitioned the Indian government to present Auroville to UNESCO, purposefully timed to coincide with UNESCO’s 20th anniversary. UN endorsement of Auroville was proposed as an act of commemoration and celebration. The Indian government was a founding member of UNESCO and one of the few countries to have always had members as part of the executive board. From the very inception of UNESCO in 1945, leaders of the Indian delegations promoted spiritual values as central to the UNESCO mission of world peace. At the first UNESCO session, Radhakrishnan stated: “The present perilous condition of the world is due… to its flight from spiritual values. To improve the world we have to return to an idealist view, to philosophic thought, to spiritual values”; in her speech at one of the founding UNESCO conferences, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur expressed her conviction that the roots of international cooperation lay in spiritual values, and that UNESCO should champion these through multi-cultural education. The language of the UNESCO constitution recognizes that human solidarity was based on moral sensibilities and cross-cultural understanding, whose cultivation was a ‘sacred duty’:

That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed;
That ignorance of each other’s ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world …
That the wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfil in a spirit of mutual assistance and concern;
That a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must therefore be

40 Ibid.
41 Ibid., 98.
43 Kaur, an Indian aristocrat educated at Oxford university, returned to India and joined the nationalist movement. She was a member of the first independent Indian Cabinet, the first woman to hold Cabinet rank, and also became the first female (and Asian) president of the WHO in 1950.
founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.\textsuperscript{45}

The Indian proclivity for a spiritual basis of human unity was met in the Auroville project, which would be the model for such an ideal. Its close association with Sri Aurobindo, a revered political and spiritual figure who had expressed that independent India could become the spiritual leader of nations,\textsuperscript{46} solidified its status in the eyes of India’s leaders, who actively promoted the project to UNESCO. The latter, having defined itself as a key actor in the spreading of multicultural and moral values for the advancement of international human solidarity, recommended Auroville to its member states, resulting in the passing of several resolutions in 1966, 1968, and 1970.\textsuperscript{47} In these resolutions, Auroville was associated with several UN declarations: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideas of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples, and the Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Cooperation.\textsuperscript{48} With the ideological and financial support of both the Indian government and UNESCO,\textsuperscript{49} Auroville was founded in February of 1968.

Present for the first few years of the Auroville project, and shepherding its establishment, Mother passed away in 1973, leaving no designated authority or leadership in charge of Auroville. The SAS began to assume control, which was perceived by Aurovilians as antithetical to the project, and actively resisted.\textsuperscript{50} Mismanagement of Auroville affairs by the SAS, including the withholding of funds explicitly donated for Auroville,\textsuperscript{51} resulted in the involvement of the Indian government. After much debate, it passed the Auroville Bill in 1988, which resulted in the

\textsuperscript{45}Preamble to the UNESCO constitution, signed in London on 16 November 1945.
\textsuperscript{46}Robert Minor, \textit{The Religious, the Spiritual, and the Secular}, 20.
\textsuperscript{47}Ibid., 59. See Appendix for a full reproduction of these resolutions.
\textsuperscript{48}Ibid., 105.
\textsuperscript{49}Ibid. Note: The Indian Central government contributed Rs. 2,614,000; Indian state governments contributed Rs. 6,650,000; UNESCO contributed less than Rs. 40,000.
\textsuperscript{50}Ibid., 69.
\textsuperscript{51}Ibid., 70.
“Auroville Foundation Act.” The Act established Auroville as a separate entity, a “foundation,” in the Indian legislature, and involved the central government in Auroville affairs. The bill was the object of much parliamentary debate, those who opposed it argued that Auroville was a religious project, and therefore it would be inappropriate for India, as a secular state, to legally endorse it; some even pointed to the (embarrassing) failure of guru-centric religious utopias established in the US as a reason for the government not to support Auroville. These remained highly contested minority opinions in Parliament, and the Supreme Court ruled that Auroville was not a religious institution, based on its self-, the founders’, and UNESCO’s definition as a non-religious and non-political body, and on the fact that no rites were practiced, and people from all religions were welcomed. In standing for unity irrespective of religion, many parliamentary members viewed Auroville as secular par excellence, “conceived on lines that fulfill the highest ideals of secularism as understood in India under our Constitution.”

The Central government stood for Auroville as a model of human unity, and has continued to do so. In his pronouncement of the Auroville Foundation Bill in Parliament in September of 1988, P. Shiv Shankar, then Minister of Human Resources Development, stated:

Auroville is to be looked upon as a vision which has a great potentiality, and this can be of tremendous service to our country and the world at large. The aim of Auroville is to discover a new life, deeper and more complete, and to show the world that tomorrow will be better than today. The Government is determined to help the process of development of Auroville in such a way that its aims and goals are made more and more realizable.

In 2004, on an official visit to Auroville, the President of India, His Excellency Dr. A. P.J. Abdul Kalam addressed Aurovilians by saying: “Friends, I have come as a pilgrim to this place,

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52 Ibid., 143.
53 Ibid., 94.
54 Ibid., 137, 88.
55 Ibid., 128.
Auroville, and why I say pilgrim is because you have a mission bigger than mine; the mission you are having is larger than that of any individual.”

UNESCO, too, has continued to uphold the project, with regular visits and statements of support from Deputy and Director-Generals, the hosting of Auroville celebrations at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, and a new resolution renewing its commitment to the township to mark its 40th anniversary in 2008. And as of 2009, a bronze statue of Sri Aurobindo stands at the UNESCO HQ, unveiled by Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura and Dr. Karan Singh, Chairman of the Auroville Foundation, symbolizing the shared effort on the part of Auroville, the Government of India and UNESCO in finding long-term solutions to the crises of the modern world, for which Sri Aurobindo’s teachings resonate.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, paying his tributes to the Sri Aurobindo statue at UNESCO HQ in Paris, April 10, 2015.

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58 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
61 Posted on Prime Minister Modi’s official Facebook page on April 10, 2015.
III. Auroville: Ideology

“Greetings from Auroville to all men of good will. Are invited to Auroville all those who thirst for progress and aspire to a higher and truer life.” The Mother, February 28th, 1968.62

1) Founding Ideology

Auroville was founded on February 28th, 1968. Among the approximately 5000 people present were youth representing 124 countries (each UNESCO member states), and 23 Indian states.63 As part of the inauguration ceremony, each placed a handful of their native soil in an urn, symbolizing their solidarity in this quest for human unity. The hand-written, original version of the Auroville Charter, drafted by the Mother, was also placed in the urn before it was sealed. The Mother, who had just turned ninety years old, read the charter (in French) from her room in the Sri Aurobindo Ashram; it was broadcast live at the ceremony by All India Radio, as was its translation in sixteen languages – starting with Tamil (the local language), then Sanskrit, and followed by English.64 The charter read:

1. Auroville belongs to nobody in particular. Auroville belongs to humanity as a whole. But, to live in Auroville, one must be a willing servitor of the divine consciousness.
2. Auroville will be the place of an unending education, of constant progress, and a youth that never ages.
3. Auroville wants to be the bridge between the past and the future. Taking advantage of all discoveries from without and from within, Auroville will boldly spring towards future realisations.
4. Auroville will be a site of material and spiritual researches for a living embodiment of an actual human unity.65

The Auroville Charter, and a manifesto, *To Be a True Aurovilian*, were the only provisos the Mother drafted to serve as guidance for Aurovilians participating in the experimental township. Until her passing in 1973, she was sought out for practical counsel, and the vast

63 For a complete listing of the countries and states present, see “The Inauguration of Auroville,” http://www.auroville.org/contents/537.
64 “The Inauguration of Auroville.”
majority of those interactions have been recorded, supplementing her drafted guidance. However, she left no explicit instructions on how to run Auroville. This would have been antithetical to Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy, which viewed man as a transitional being in a process evolution, whose union with a collective consciousness would rest on “free and harmonious consent and self-adaptation.” According to Aurobindo, this spiritual realization would result in the shaping and governance of the external “by an internal truth” rather than the constraint of “the inner by the tyranny of the external form and structure.” This understanding is reflected in the document, To Be a True Aurovilian, in which Mother states: “One should organise one’s life not according to outer and artificial rules, but according to an organised inner consciousness.”

2) The Spiritual Dimension and Foundation of Human Unity

The overarching aim, as stated by the Mother, was for Auroville “to be a universal town where men and women of all countries are able to live in peace and progressive harmony above all creeds, all politics and all nationalities. The purpose of Auroville is to realize human unity.”

Human unity, in the context of Sri Aurobindo’s Integral Yoga, is understood to be a spiritual ideal, and therefore, achieving it requires spiritual growth on the part of the individuals involved. This is what is implied, in the first clause of the charter, by the condition “to live in Auroville, one must be a willing servitor of the Divine Consciousness.” The following dialogue, which consists of questions being asked of the Mother, and her responses, is further evidence of the spiritual dimension and requisite for achieving human unity:

Q.: How can humanity become one?
   By becoming conscious of its origin.
Q.: What is the way of making the consciousness of unity grow in man?

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

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

Q.: How can a change of consciousness change the life upon earth?
A change in human consciousness will make it possible for the manifestation upon earth of a higher Force, a purer Light, a more total Truth.70

A reader familiar with Plato’s philosophy will immediately recognize the ideas expressed by the Mother in this exchange as Platonic. Plato argues that there is a spiritual realm which men are identified with before birth, and which they forget in their earthly existence.71 Just as the Mother answers that human unity can be achieved by reconnecting to this spiritual origin, so does Plato advance in “The Allegory of the Cave” that the human soul must transcend the illusory existence of the cave and gain an understanding of the ultimate reality (the sun) in order to live an enlightened life on earth.72 This process is akin to the change of consciousness, and the resulting birth into a higher level of existence, that the Mother describes. Furthermore, Plato affirmed that education was essential for attaining an understanding of the ultimate reality.73 The Mother evidently is in agreement with this, prescribing an education that is primarily spiritual. However, Plato reserved this higher level of education to an intellectual élite, who would then become the enlightened rulers of society.74 Although he believed that education was critical to the construction of a higher society, he did not believe that all members of the society needed to have an understanding of the ultimate reality in order to participate in one.75

72 Ibid., 453.
73 Haberman and Stevenson, Ten Theories of Human Nature, 94.
74 Ibid., 95.
75 Ibid., 104.
however, each individual, regardless of individual proficiency, is expected to pursue a spiritual practice “according to his/her personal understanding and commitment.” This is an essential requirement for participating in the community, as evidenced by the afore-quoted first clause of the Auroville charter, the second, “Auroville will be a place of unending education, of constant progress,” and the first point of the Mother’s document, *To Be a True Aurovilian*:

The first necessity is the inner discovery in order to know what one truly is behind social, moral, cultural, racial and hereditary appearances. At the centre there is a being free, vast and knowing, who awaits our discovery and who ought to become the active centre of our being and our life in Auroville.

The aim of this subjective spiritual practice, or education, is for individuals to come into contact with what in Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy - which the Mother espoused, and on which Auroville is based - is called ‘the psychic being,’ or soul, and to direct all action from this center, as described in the preceding quote. For, just as Plato did, Sri Aurobindo identifies different planes and parts of the being, which need to become harmoniously organized around the inmost center or psychic being for right action to prevail. Plato identifies a tripartite being, and asserted that once man had “bound these elements into a single controlled and orderly whole, and so unified himself, he will be ready for action of any kind.” For Sri Aurobindo, then, just as for Plato, “the divine is identified with reason in the universe.” Auroville was founded on the belief, which Plato shares, that there is such a thing as divinity, that individuals can achieve an understanding of it through means of adequate education, and that this will result in the realization of an ideal society. Whereas Plato contends that only the rulers need to be possessed

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77 Ibid.
78 Ibid.
79 Ibid.
80 Haberman and Stevenson, *Ten Theories of Human Nature*, 100.
81 Ibid., 92.
with this understanding in order for an ideal society to be realized, Auroville asks that each of its members live “a spiritually based and motivated life,”\textsuperscript{82} constantly striving to better themselves spiritually, regardless of their level of ability. Auroville’s ethos is that each individual must pursue his or her own spiritual development in order for society as a whole to progress, and that the aim of Auroville – to become a model society of human unity – will manifest from this collective aspiration.

\textsuperscript{82} “Spiritual life/practices.”
IV. Auroville: Design & Implementation

“But the plan is not finished. On the contrary, the city is still to be invented, everything has still to be done through the daily experience and rhythm of the Aurovilians... everything is flexible, nothing is fixed.” Roger Anger, Auroville Masterplan Architect.83

1) Design and Implementation

The Mother appointed Roger Anger, a French architect, to design the city, based on her original 1965 conception.84 At the epicenter stood the Matrimandir, which she described as “the soul of Auroville,”85 a structure for silent individual spiritual contemplation and concentration, surrounded by gardens and a body of water. Organized around the central “Peace Area” were four zones of activity essential to the city (industrial, international, cultural and residential).86

Roger Anger’s final design, the Masterplan for Auroville, is known as the “Galaxy Concept”; inspired by the pattern and outline of galaxies, the four zones appear as though they spin out from the center.87 The Green Belt, a circular area as wide as that of the City Area (1.25km), forms the outer sheath of the plan, a zone for forest and farming activities, and environmental conservation.88 Four parks, extending from the Green Belt all the way to the Peace Area form uninterrupted nature corridors from center to periphery.

The urban and environmental design of Auroville is reflective of its founding ideology. First and foremost, that at its center would exist an area of spiritual contemplation and practice, the ultimate aim of Auroville being one of spiritual realization. The Matrimandir was designed by Roger Anger, and the building was recently completed (2008), while work on the gardens is

84 “The Galaxy Concept of the City”
86 “The Galaxy Concept of the City”
87 Ibid.
still in progress and the lake is projected. Aurovilians, Newcomers, Guests, Volunteers and Visitors all have free access to the Matrimandir, at select times, for elective and unprescribed quiet meditation practice.\textsuperscript{89} As per the Mother’s directive, to deter from religionism and its distraction from an inner spirituality, there are no organized collective meditations, rites or objects of rite (images, incense, flowers, invocations, etc.).\textsuperscript{90}

The City Area consists of the four zones of community activity. The largest is the Residential Zone (189 hectares), and is comprised of distinct communities – best understood as neighborhoods – that may share an architectural style, resources (i.e. wells, water catchment systems, solar or wind power), and communal facilities such as a central kitchen. Each community is unique and forms its own guidelines, hence a wide variation between levels and forms of communal features and integration between communities is apparent.\textsuperscript{91} The Residential Zone is not complete – at capacity (50,000),\textsuperscript{92} its built surface area will comprise 45% of the total area, with the majority, 55%, designated as green areas. The zone also borders parks on three sides.\textsuperscript{93} This urban/nature balance and integration are reflective of Auroville’s ethos of environmental sustainability.

The second largest zone, the Industrial Zone (109 hectares), is the designated site for small and medium scale industries, commercial arts & crafts units, and training centers. In addition, the Industrial Zone also houses the city’s administration.\textsuperscript{94} Unifying the broad diversity of industrial and arts & crafts endeavors\textsuperscript{95} is a commitment to uphold and reflect the ideals of

\textsuperscript{90} “Matrimandir – Soul of the City.”
\textsuperscript{91} Field observations.
\textsuperscript{92} “Auroville in Brief.”
\textsuperscript{93} “Auroville in Brief.”
\textsuperscript{94} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{95} See pp. 35-36 of this thesis.
Auroville through practices that are ethical, sustainable, and progressive.\textsuperscript{96} Significant innovations and praxes have emerged from Auroville’s industrial and commercial landscape, ones that have had a reach far beyond the immediate sphere of the community. For example, AuroRE, an industrial unit developing solar technology, won the Ashden Award for Sustainable Energy in 2004 for its “great triumph in acting as a catalyst for small-scale solar businesses across India, helping this vast country start to unlock its huge potential for solar power.”\textsuperscript{97} Many more such examples bear mentioning, but it is not within the limited scope of this paper to do so.

The Cultural Zone (93 hectares) is the area for educational and artistic research and expression, and houses numerous educational, cultural, arts and sports facilities, such as schools, arts and music studios, performing arts centers and exhibition halls. Notably, there is an exceptional diversity of schools – as Auroville is a center for experimentation, many institutions have emerged, each exploring different educational approaches, yet sharing in the overarching aim of an “integral education.”\textsuperscript{98}

The International Zone (74 hectares) is designed to host cultural and national pavilions celebrating the genius of each nation/culture and its contribution(s) to humanity as a whole, promoting the spirit of “human unity in diversity.”\textsuperscript{99} Several pavilions have already been completed (i.e. The Pavilion of India, Pavilion of Tibetan Culture), whereas others (i.e. African Pavilion, Canadian Pavilion) are in progress. The first pavilion to be completed was the Pavilion of Tibetan Culture; His Holiness the Dalai Lama is its patron. He both laid its foundation stone in 1993, and inaugurated it in 2009, stating

\textsuperscript{98} Discussed in preceding Ideology section of this thesis.
\textsuperscript{99} “Auroville in Brief.”
I feel that Tibetan culture with its unique heritage has developed some kind of energy, which is useful, and very helpful, towards cultivating peace of mind and a joyful life. I feel that there is a potential for Tibet to help humanity... I feel very strongly that Tibetan culture will have a future role to play in humanity.100

In addition to the pavilions, the International Zone also hosts institutions that serve or promote multilateral linkages and collaborations, such as the Auroville Visitor’s Centre, the Auroville Volunteer & Internship Service, the Auroville International Office, and the Centre for International Research on Human Unity.101

The Green Belt acts in part as an environmental buffer between these zones of the city area and the surrounding region, which, like much of India, is developing rapidly. The Green Belt is host to a wide variety of ecological practices, most notably successful afforestation and restoration projects of the Tropical Dry Evergreen Forest (TDEF), endemic to South-East India and Sri Lanka, and known for its exceptional species abundance, but on the verge of extinction.102 Several Auroville nurseries, herbariums and botanical gardens are dedicated to the cultivation of TDEF species. In addition, the Green Belt is also the farming area of community, which aims for self-sufficiency. Over two dozen farms provide sustenance to the community, using a variety of sustainable practices (organic, biodynamic, permaculture, etc.).103

2) External Challenges & Internal Contentions

One of the biggest challenges facing the fulfillment of the Masterplan is the fact that Auroville only owns 60% of the land on which the design is laid out and lacks the funding to

100 Quoted in “Pavilion of Tibetan Culture,” last modified April 1, 2015, http://www.auroville.org/contents/1411.
purchase the remaining land, whose price has escalated by 500% in the last decade.\textsuperscript{104}

Furthermore, Indian settlements exist on remaining land, and Indian landowners are not necessarily keen to part with property that may be lucratively developed in what is a growing hub of international tourism.\textsuperscript{105} The obvious disparity between the local Tamil population and the international residents of Auroville, in terms of economic, social and human capital, is in glaring contradiction with the ideals of the township. Namakkal’s criticism is that Auroville, true to the utopian imaginary, was designed on a blank slate – just as Thomas More’s fictional utopia was –, but upon implementation was confronted with negotiating the complex socio-economic and racial contingencies of the post-colonial situation in which it was unavoidably embedded.\textsuperscript{106}

Aside from challenges arising from Auroville’s interaction with external actors and pressures, there are internal criticisms arising from contentious with the “top-down” design and implementation of the Masterplan. A key criticism of Roger Anger’s Masterplan is that it was conceived as a theoretical model, as opposed to using a “bottom up” approach to design based on a situated assessment of the environmental and socio-infrastructural features of the landscape and region.\textsuperscript{107} Its implementation is met by a similar criticism, that the community and its current and evolving needs are not sufficiently involved and integrated into the ongoing planning and development process.\textsuperscript{108}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[105] Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
V. Auroville: Governance

“Q. What political organisation do you want for Auroville?
An amusing definition occurs to me: a divine anarchy. But the world will not understand. Men must become conscious of their psychic being and organise themselves spontaneously, without fixed rules and laws - that is the ideal. For this one must be in contact with one's psychic being, one must be guided by it and the ego's authority and influence must disappear.” The Mother, December 28th, 1972.109

1) Membership

Today, close to 2500 people of 50 nationalities live in Auroville, and are endeavoring to inform and infuse day-to-day governance and practices with its founding ideology.110 The majority are Indian, followed by the French; the USA is in 6th place.111 Every continent (except for Antarctica) is represented. As the Mother emphasized, any person who has a calling to do so is invited to join Auroville. The Auroville community welcomes new members, who go through an admissions process facilitated by the Entry Service.112 Individuals or families address their application to this group, which recommends that people with little to no familiarity with the community spend a period of three months as guests, exploring and acquainting themselves with different aspects of Auroville. Applicants meet with the Entry Service and express their inspiration for wanting to join Auroville, and their intentions for community participation and contribution. Information about the applicant is shared with the community, to give members the opportunity to submit their feedback. Based on the outcome of both of these processes, applicants are accepted for a Newcomer probationary period of one year, where they participate and contribute towards the community while covering their own cost of living.

109 “The Mother on Auroville.”
111 Ibid.
period, feedback is sought from the actors and organizations the newcomers in question are involved with, and are accepted as Aurovilians if the Entry Service assesses that they have fully and harmoniously integrated with community ideals and practices.\textsuperscript{113}

2) \textit{Modes, Instruments, and Philosophies of Governance}

This growing body of people is actively experimenting with and pioneering new models and systems that would best support the progress towards Sri Aurobindo’s foundational ideal of a spiritualized society embodied by a human unity. What form of governance can best serve this ideal? Internally, Auroville has rejected the Platonic concept that enlightenment is reserved to an intellectual élite to whom the responsibility of governance is delegated, embracing, instead, Rousseau’s concept of the Sovereign People.\textsuperscript{114} For Rousseau, the sovereign should have no existence outside of the body politic.\textsuperscript{115} Given the practical reality that Auroville is located on Indian land, and exists within the legal structure of the Indian government, it is not independently and indigenously governed by the community itself. However, Auroville benefits from a special relationship with the Government of India, which grants considerable autonomy to the community. The Auroville Foundation Act of 1988 established the Auroville Foundation as a separate legal entity with three bodies: The Governing Board, the International Advisory Council (IAC) and the Resident’s Assembly. The Government of India appoints the Governing Board, a group composed of seven members, two of whom are representatives of the Government of India, five of whom are dedicated to the ideals of Auroville and have pursued their advancement, but are not Aurovilians themselves.\textsuperscript{116} This Governing Board is advised by the International Advisory Council, a multinational group of 5 eminent individuals, devoted to ideals of peace,

\textsuperscript{113} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{114} Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “The Origin of Civil Society,” in \textit{A World of Ideas}, ed. Lee A Jacobus, 8\textsuperscript{th} ed. (Boston: Bedford/St Martin’s, 2010), 69.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{116} Government of India. \textit{The Auroville Foundation Act of 1988}. 
progress and human unity, nominated by the UNESCO branch of the Indian government’s human resources development ministry. Prominent members of the advisory council have included the Indian Nobel laureate and economist Amartya Sen, UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayer, and the leading Indian industrialist, Mr. Tata. The Governing Board and the Resident’s Assembly (Auroville’s body politic, the entire population of Aurovilians over the age of 18) are together vested with the task of governance. The Governing Board meets in Auroville twice a year (once a year in conjunction with the International Advisory Board); although they are involved in the big decisions, the Resident’s Assembly (RA) is in charge of daily governance. In addition, the Government of India appoints a Secretary to the Auroville Foundation (usually a high-level officer of the Indian Administrative Service), responsible to the Chairman of the Governing Board, to reside in Auroville for a three-year term and oversee the RA’s governing practices.

Given the fact that it would be impractical for every member of the community to participate in and ratify every decision, the Resident’s Assembly selects two governing bodies, one to liaise with the Governing Board (the Working Committee), the other to manage internal matters (The Auroville Council). Those bodies are formed of community members who serve for a term, and thus have no ongoing power. In addition, the formation of specialized groups, which undertake the management of certain aspects of the community – economy, health,

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118 Ibid. Refer to for a complete list of IAC members.
119 Ibid.
122 Ibid.
housing, agriculture etc. – is encouraged and has been heavily implemented.¹²³ All groups remain answerable to the community at large; groups submit their proposals in the “News & Notes,” the Auroville newsletter, with a deadline for feedback from the community.¹²⁴ Unless significant objections are raised, the group is free to implement those proposals. As such, Auroville remains a non-hierarchical society, with members acting as stewards, but not as authorities.

The absence of consensus and of arbitrary decision-making power almost routinely results in lengthy processes for getting decisions implemented.¹²⁵ This is certainly a drawback of the current system, but Auroville is committed to the experimentation required to find alternatives to existing ideologies of governance. The Resident’s Assembly does not have a formal process by which decisions are formulated. Based on Mira Alfassa’s description of the ideal organization as “flowing and organic,” rather than establishing a system that is rigid and stratified, Aurovilians attempt to allow for one which is “adapting, growing, changing, according to the community's needs and its vision of itself.”¹²⁶ This bears resemblance to Rousseau’s statement that “an arbitrary government can be legitimate only on condition that each successive generation of subjects is free to accept or reject it, and if this is so, then the government will no longer be arbitrary.”¹²⁷ In the Resident’s Assembly, all Aurovilians have an equal voice. As a body politic, the Resident’s Assembly strives towards Rousseau’s concept of General Will:

At one time it was said that the Residents' Assembly's fundamental function is to arrive at an agreement. This statement is good, but not sufficient. It is not an instrument of

¹²³ Ibid.
¹²⁴ Ibid.
¹²⁵ Ibid.
¹²⁶ Ibid.
agreement and disagreement. The starting-point is wrong… It is to mature, constantly, the sense of all of us as a collectivity, devoted to the Divine's will.¹²⁸

Professor Norman Myers (former member of the IAC) has described Auroville’s process of organization as a “creative anarchy,” declaring he was impressed with the way Aurovilians “discuss and discuss issues until a decision bubbles to the surface - you don't so much take a decision as see what emerges.”¹²⁹ As Kireet Joshi, a member of the Governing Board, emphasized, Auroville should be a living body. If you are going to create the kind of machinery that is used by every Parliament in the world, there is no experiment. We are not going forward. Sri Aurobindo wrote, ‘The State is bound to act crudely … It is incapable of that free, harmonious … varied action which is proper to organic groups. For the State is not an organism. It is a machinery. And it works like a machine … It tries to manufacture. But what humanity is here to do is to grow, and create.’ This is what we are here to do in Auroville.¹³⁰

**Structure of the Auroville Foundation¹³¹**

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¹³⁰ David C., “How to govern Utopia.”
¹³¹ “The Auroville Foundation.”
VI. Auroville: Economy

“The aim of its [a spiritualized society] economics would be not to create a huge engine of production, whether of the competitive or the cooperative kind, but to give men – not only to some but to all men in his highest possible measure – the joy of work according to their own nature and free leisure to grow inwardly, as well as simply a rich and beautiful life for all” Sri Aurobindo.\textsuperscript{132}

1) A Communal Economy

The first clause of the Auroville charter begins: “Auroville belongs to nobody in particular. Auroville belongs to humanity as a whole."\textsuperscript{133} As we have seen, this philosophy is the basis for a system of governance or organization in which no particular individual or group of individuals is sovereign, rather, the whole body politic of Auroville is sovereign, so that, in Rousseau’s famous words: “whoso gives himself to all gives himself to none.”\textsuperscript{134} This philosophy also informs the economic ideology of Auroville, which has many parallels with that proposed by Karl Marx. Marx was concerned by the alienation that arises between individuals in the capitalist system, where competition “conflicts with the ideal of solidarity with other human beings,” and suggested an alternative in \textit{The Communist Manifesto}.\textsuperscript{135} Communism sought to create a classless society by abolishing bourgeois private property – which Marx defined as capital, the ownership of the means of production and of the fruit of the labor of others – and with it, alienation.\textsuperscript{136} According to Marx, “the abolition of [bourgeois] private property is the abolition of alienation.”\textsuperscript{137} Marx saw alienation between members of society as resulting from the fact that individuals were not organized as a community, and, therefore, their work did not

\textsuperscript{134} Rousseau, “The Origin of Civil Society,” 68.
\textsuperscript{135} Haberman and Stevenson, \textit{Ten Theories of Human Nature}, 132.
\textsuperscript{136} Ibid., 146.
\textsuperscript{137} Ibid., 142.
contribute to the community as a whole, nor benefit them as a member of the community, but favored a bourgeois class.\textsuperscript{138}

In \textit{The Communist Manifesto}, Marx proclaims: “Capital is a collective product…Capital is therefore not a personal, it is a social power.”\textsuperscript{139} What he proposes is a conversion of capital into common property, “into the property of all members of society.”\textsuperscript{140} This is essentially the rule for property in Auroville, which is not surprising given the afore-mentioned first clause of the Auroville Charter. The Auroville Foundation, which is the Government of India’s appointed body for Auroville, is the holder of all Auroville land and assets: “All is essentially collective property; there is no private ownership of land or utilities within Auroville.”\textsuperscript{141} No individual in Auroville privately owns the land they live on, the house they live in, or the commercial or service units they may have developed in Auroville.\textsuperscript{142} In investing in the latter, “Aurovilians are constantly investing in the collectively owned land, housing and business.”\textsuperscript{143} Individuals who build homes in Auroville may occupy those homes for as long as they remain Aurovilians, but they do not own them, Auroville does. We see here a rappel to Rousseau, who spoke of the right of first occupancy: “As owners they are Trustees for the Commonwealth…From ceding their property to the State - and thus, to themselves - they derive nothing but advantage, since they have, so to speak, acquired all that they surrendered.”\textsuperscript{144} This goes beyond Marx’s communist proviso, which stipulates “[T]he distinguishing feature of Communism is not the abolition of

\begin{thebibliography}{9}

\bibitem{138} Ibid., 143.
\bibitem{140} Ibid.
\bibitem{141} The Auroville Foundation.”
\bibitem{142} Ibid.
\bibitem{143} Ibid.
\bibitem{144} Rousseau, “The Origin of Civil Society,” 73.
\end{thebibliography}
property generally, but [exclusively] the abolition of bourgeois property.”

It is important to note that the Auroville Charter does not call for a complete abolition of private property either; it is not the case that every member’s private property becomes common property.

A key point Marx makes in The Communist Manifesto, is that “Communism deprives no man of the power to appropriate the products of society: all that it does is to deprive him of the power to subjugate the labor of others by means of such appropriation.” This thinking is directly implemented in the Auroville economic system. Everyone in Auroville works for the benefit of the community. In exchange for their work, of whatever nature it may be, they receive a stipend (“Maintenance”) from the common fund (the “Unity Fund”). Therefore, as Marx intended, every individual benefits from the products of society, but no individual income is directly extracted from the labor of others. This is what Marx foresaw as the future of communism, “From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.” In addition, it addresses another concern of Marx’s: alienation between oneself and one’s labor. He saw this as an insurmountable issue in the capitalist system, in which the division of labor fixates an individual’s sphere of social activity. For Marx, communist society would be one in which nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity, but each can be accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticise after dinner

Such conditions are essential for the spiritual dimension of work in Auroville.

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146 Ibid., 486.
149 Ibid.
2) **The Yoga of Work**

It is important to note that the ultimate purpose of work, as understood within the context of Auroville and of its Integral Yoga philosophy, is not economic gain or productiveness. Rather, its supreme aim is spiritual growth. The fourth point of Mother’s *To Be a True Aurovilian* specifically speaks of the nature of work – “Work, even manual work, is something indispensable for the inner discovery. If one does not work, if one does not put his consciousness into matter, the latter will never develop”\(^{150}\) –, emphasizing both its role in the spiritual advancement of the individual, and its role in infusing “matter,” that is, the manifest environment, with consciousness. Elsewhere, Mother had stated specifically that Auroville “is for those who want to do the Yoga of work,” stressing: “Aurovilians must take up a work and do it as Yoga.”\(^{151}\) The concept of working as a spiritual practice is delineated in the larger Indian yogic system, which identifies service as one of the four main yogic paths. Karma yoga is intended as a practice of selfless offering, for the individual to act for, and as the instrument of, a divine consciousness. The concept was introduced in the previously quoted first clause of the Auroville charter that calls for each member to be “a willing servitor of the Divine consciousness,” a statement which is left open to individual contemplation and discipline.

3) **Economic Sufficiency & Services**

The Unity Fund – Auroville’s communal fund – is financed by Auroville’s commercial units, guest and other services, which are required to donate 33% of their net profit to it, as well as by grants from international institutions and private donors.\(^{152}\) In addition, individuals who have funds in low interest bank accounts are encouraged to transfer those to their Auroville

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\(^{150}\) See Appendix.


account (Auroville has its own banking system), and allow the Auroville Financial Service to invest it as it sees fit, and donate any surplus generated by that investment to the Unity Fund.\textsuperscript{153} Despite these provisions, Auroville is not yet economically self-sufficient; this is one of the important challenges it faces. As reported on the Auroville website, 30\% of Unity Fund income was Aurovilian, 25\% Foreign (both governmental and non-governmental sources), 22\% Indian, and 23\% from the Government of India.\textsuperscript{154,155}

The Budget Coordination Committee (BCC) is vested with the task of allocating Unity Fund income to community development and member maintenances (stipends).\textsuperscript{156} All Unity Fund contributions and disbursements are public; annual reports are shared with the community in the internal newsletter, the Auroville News & Notes. These reports include the aggregate amounts contributed by for example, commercial units, as well as a breakdown of contributions per individual units – and also reports units who have not met the targeted contribution. Similarly, Unity Fund disbursements per category, for example, education, and per individual schools are reported. Maintenances (the community member stipends) per category i.e. health, city planning, children, are also included. In the last two years, the largest Unity Fund disbursements went to education, children & youth, farms & forests, and organization.\textsuperscript{157}

The commercial unit and services landscape is rich and diverse. Commercial units include a wide variety of arts and crafts endeavors (currently 45 are registered) i.e. ceramics,

\textsuperscript{154} “Unity Fund and Auroville Fund”
\textsuperscript{155} For a complete list of donors, please see “Unity Fund and Auroville Fund.”
fashion, home décor and jewelry (several of which are successful, global brands), boutique (8), food processing units (8) i.e. spirulina or soya products, restaurants (11), architecture firms (7), travel agencies (2), recording studios (2), sustainable energy systems developers i.e. wind pumps and solar panels. Aurovilians are technically not permitted to work outside of Auroville, and if they are not Indian, they cannot legally work in India, as the visas the Indian government provides Aurovilians only allow for residency. Therefore, the only avenue for interaction between Auroville’s internal economy and external ones is through its commercial units (I include here commercial guest services) – both outside of and within Auroville.

Services belong to one of 5 overarching categories: (1) “Prosperity Services,” which cater to the basic needs of Aurovilians, i.e. housing, health, and food; (2) “Municipal Services,” which address the demands of the township, i.e. transport, waste management, water; (3) “Administrative Services,” for organizational concerns; (4) “Education and Culture Services,” i.e. schools, arts & culture facilities, performances and exhibitions; (5) “Outreach Services,” which attend to the guest industry, the bioregion, and promotion/fundraising for Auroville. Services do not operate with the intention of generating a profit, and are either free for Aurovilians (all Education and Culture Services, some Prosperity Services) or require a fixed or scaling contribution to avail of the services provided (i.e. Prosperity Services that are not fully funded or self-sufficient). With the exception of Outreach Services, services operate exclusively within Auroville, whereas commercial units may have branches in other locales, even in other countries.

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158 See, for example, “Maroma.” www.maroma.com.
162 Auroville Visitor Center Manager, email message to author, March 16, 2015.
VII. Conclusion

“Q. Is Auroville the only solution to the misery of mankind and the disorders of society?
Not the only solution. It is a centre of transformation, a small nucleus of men who are transforming themselves and setting an example to the world. This is what Auroville hopes to be.” The Mother, December 28th, 1972.163

Auroville does not profess to be a utopia. It defines itself as “a universal township in the making,” and aims to become a model for humanity.164 Given that it has garnered international endorsement from its inception, and continues to attract the support of governmental and non-governmental institutions, and the attention of prominent individuals and daily visitors,165 such aspirations merit consideration. The fundamental question is whether it is indeed relevant to society at large, and if so whether its practices are translatable into other, larger, social contexts.

As previously mentioned, noteworthy contributions of past intentional communities have been institutional in nature, and of social consequence (i.e. free public education and libraries, and women’s suffrage).166 In addition to these types of social influences, ICs have also added to scientific innovations and environmental stewardship (New Harmony was the site of the first geological survey in the US), and to personal development modalities (such as Gestalt therapy).167 It is undeniable that Auroville has already made important contributions in the latter two areas, and predictable that it will make many more. Aside from AuroRE’s trail-blazing work in establishing the use of solar power in India, many other of Auroville’s renewable and sustainable technology companies have been recognized for wide-ranging impactful work in their fields. As another example, The Auroville Earth Institute (AVEI), which specializes in cost-

163 “The Mother on Auroville.”
164 “Auroville in Brief.”
165 Up to 10,000 per day on major holidays such as Christmas and New Year, reported by the Auroville Visitor Centre Manager to the author in a personal conversation, January 10th, 2014.
166 Frances Wright, one of the leaders of the women’s suffrage movement, was a member of New Harmony. See Bouvard, The Intentional Community Movement, 20.
effective and sustainable earthen building techniques, is a world leader in this technology. It is
the Asian center of the UNESCO Chair of Earthen Architecture, Constructive Cultures and
Sustainable Development, and has trained over 10,000 people in its methods. AVEI has
constructed landmark buildings in Auroville, such as the Visitor’s Centre, and throughout the
world, notably the Al Medy Mosque in Saudi Arabia, for which it won an award. In the area of
personal development, and as an example of an innovation I can personally speak to, an
educational program called “Awareness Through the Body” stands out. ATB is a program
informed by Sri Aurobindo’s Integral Yoga, cultivating key cognitive faculties such as attention
and concentration, kinesiological awareness, sensory awareness, relaxation, emotional
intelligence and self-management, and interpersonal competencies through partner exercises and
team activities, such as cooperative games. I was among the first students of the ATB program at
the age of four, and the practice, having fostered a discipline and ethos of self-inquiry and
equanimitiy, informs my life to this day. I feel that it would be not only of individual, but also of
significant collective benefit to society for new generations to be educated with an embodied
capacity for consciousness self-direction, and harmonious self-management. Given the current
adoption of mindfulness programs in education, and the growing scientific body of work
endorsing the effectiveness of such methods, ATB and other such modalities may prove to be a
leading fringe at the growing edge of education.

A program such as ATB, whose aim is for individuals to integrate around their “inmost
centre,” raises questions of selfhood that are important to consider when thinking of Auroville
as a model. One of the foundational beliefs of Auroville and of Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy is

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169 See www.awarenesssthroughthebody.com
170 Ibid.
that there is such a thing as divinity, and that at the core of every being there is an authentic self that is divine in its essence. There are contradictory conceptions of selfhood in the Western philosophical tradition; Sartre, for example, asserts that existence precedes essence.\textsuperscript{171} Furthermore, the success of Auroville is based on the expectation that as a society, we can attain a divine state of human unity through means of a spiritually oriented education, one that enables the embodiment of a divine state within each individual. This would in turn ensure that each individual acts in accordance with the highest ideals, and necessarily promotes the highest good for society as a whole. This thinking is characteristic of Rousseauian philosophy, which is why there are parallels to be drawn between his provisos for governance and Auroville’s practices. However, there exist competing theories on the nature of man, with significantly different implications for society. Notably, Hobbes posits that men are intrinsically competitive, and therefore a coercive sovereign is necessary to maintain peace.\textsuperscript{172} The assumptions about selfhood encoded in the Auroville ideology and which inform its governance are therefore problematic in considering a potential ‘universal’ application of its endemic practices. Even within Auroville, progress towards an enlightened mass capable of embodying the divine will is not established, and certainly challenging to evaluate. Anyone attending an RA meeting, or perusing \textit{Auronet} – Auroville’s internal blog – can testify that Auroville’s body politic is far from unified.

However, the fact that Auroville has survived for forty years, with no single governing body with autonomous executive power, to me, is a testament to a degree of success of this experiment in human unity – certainly, to the commitment of community members. The fact that it continues to experiment with forms of governance and economy that set it apart from other existing systems, by virtue of their communal character, signals towards progress in terms of the


making of a universal city based on human unity. Although modern democratic nation-states have arguably advanced toward a utopian state, by expanding political representation, protecting individual rights, and increasingly securing the welfare of citizens, most would agree that they are still far from it. So is Auroville, but, motivated by a spiritual ideal, it is more decidedly devoted to striving towards one.

What naturally follows is the question of whether this ethos could be simulated without the spiritual figureheads of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. The first half of this thesis clearly situates Auroville in the intentional, and not the religious community framework. However, it is undeniable that the Mother, when she was alive, exuded a charismatic authority over Aurovilians, although she was never a resident of the community. She wrote the founding texts that Auroville continues to direct itself by, and many Aurovilians, whether they met her in person or not, draw inspiration from the Mother and Sri Aurobindo’s teachings, and include these in debates over current community developments. The influence of these two foundational figures actively lives on in Auroville. Without it, what would form the rallying point, the inspirational bedrock and resource for a collective model of community?

Criticism is an easy task. It is also an important one, when shedding light on non- or only partially conscious assumptions and practices. The primordial undertaking remains to construct something worthy of an educated critique. As one of my fellow Auroville youth aptly expressed:

People sometimes come to Auroville and don’t understand… why we haven’t achieved the utopia we dreamt of… And that’s understandable that they don’t understand. But I don’t think it’s important that we haven’t achieved anything… to that level… what’s important…is that we’re… waking up every morning and trying.174

174 Jonah, in Auroville: The city the earth needs, directed by Olivier Barot & Christine Devin, (Auroville: Auroville Visitor’s Centre, 2014), DVD.
There should be somewhere on earth a place which no nation could claim as its own, where all human beings of goodwill who have a sincere aspiration could live freely as citizens of the world and obey one single authority, that of the supreme Truth; a place of peace, concord and harmony where all the fighting instincts of man would be used exclusively to conquer the causes of his sufferings and miseries, to surmount his weaknesses and ignorance, to triumph over his limitations and incapacities; a place where the needs of the spirit and the concern for progress would take precedence over the satisfaction of desires and passions, the search for pleasure and material enjoyment. In this place, children would be able to grow and develop integrally without losing contact with their souls; education would be given not for passing examinations or obtaining certificates and posts but to enrich existing faculties and bring forth new ones. In this place, titles and positions would be replaced by opportunities to serve and organise; the bodily needs of each one would be equally provided for, and intellectual, moral and spiritual superiority would be expressed in the general organisation not by an increase in the pleasures and powers of life but by increased duties and responsibilities. Beauty in all its artistic forms, painting, sculpture, music, literature, would be equally accessible to all; the ability to share in the joy it brings would be limited only by the capacities of each one and not by social or financial position. For in this ideal place money would no longer be the sovereign lord; individual worth would have a far greater importance than that of material wealth and social standing. There, work would not be a way to earn one’s living but a way to express oneself and to develop one’s capacities and possibilities while being of service to the community as a whole, which, for its own part, would provide for each individual’s subsistence and sphere of action. In short, it would be a place where human relationships, which are normally based almost exclusively on competition and strife, would be replaced by relationships of emulation in doing well, of collaboration and real brotherhood.

The earth is certainly not ready to realise such an ideal, for mankind does not yet possess sufficient knowledge to understand and adopt it nor the conscious force that is indispensable in order to execute it; that is why I call it a dream.

And yet this dream is in the course of becoming a reality; that is what we are striving for in Sri Aurobindo’s Ashram, on a very small scale, in proportion to our limited means. The realisation is certainly far from perfect, but it is progressive; little by little we are advancing towards our goal which we hope we may one day be able to present to the world as a practical and effective way to emerge from the present chaos, to be born into a new life that is more harmonious and true.

The Mother, 1954.
APPENDIX B: Auroville Charter

Scan of the original Auroville Charter, handwritten and signed by the Mother.

APPENDIX C: To Be a True Aurovilian¹⁷⁷

1. The first necessity is the inner discovery in order to know what one truly is behind social, moral, cultural, racial and hereditary appearances. At the centre there is a being free, vast and knowing, who awaits our discovery and who ought to become the active centre of our being and our life in Auroville.

2. One lives in Auroville in order to be free from moral and social conventions; but this freedom must not be a new slavery to the ego, to its and ambitions. The fulfilment of one’s desires bars the way to the inner discovery which can only be achieved in the peace and transparency of perfect disinterestedness.

3. The Aurovilian should lose the sense of personal possession. For our passage in the material world, what is indispensable to our life and to our action is put at our disposal according to the place we must occupy. The more we are consciously in contact with our inner being, the more are the exact means given to us.

4. Work, even manual work, is something indispensable for the inner discovery. If one does not work, if one does not put his consciousness into matter, the latter will never develop. To let the consciousness organise a bit of matter by means of one’s body is very good. To establish order around oneself helps to bring order within oneself. One should organise one’s life not according to outer and artificial rules, but according to an organised inner consciousness, for if one lets life go on without subjecting it to the control of the higher consciousness, it becomes fickle and inexpressive. It is to waste one’s time in the sense that matter remains without any conscious utilisation.

5. The whole earth must prepare itself for the advent of the new species, and Auroville wants to work consciously to hasten this advent.

6. Little by little it will be revealed to us what this new species must be, and meanwhile the best course is to consecrate oneself entirely to the Divine.

The Mother, June 13th, 1970.

APPENDIX D: UNESCO resolution on Auroville, 1966

Resolution 4.36 (Oct.–Nov. 1966)

The General Conference,
Being apprised that in connection with the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of UNESCO, the Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry, India, a non-governmental organization affiliated to the Indian National Commission for UNESCO, proposes to set up a cultural township known as “Auroville,” where people of different countries will live together in harmony in one community and engage in cultural, educational, scientific and other pursuits,
Noting that the township will have pavilions intended to represent the cultures of the world, not only intellectually but also by presenting different schools of architecture, painting, sculpture, music, etc., as part of a way of living,
Appreciating that one of the aims of “Auroville” will be to bring together in close juxtaposition the values and ideals of different civilisations and cultures,
Expresses the belief that the project will contribute to international understanding and promotion of peace and commends it to those interested in UNESCO’s ideals.

APPENDIX E: UNESCO resolution on Auroville, 1968

Resolution 4.02 (Oct.–Nov. 1968)

The General Conference,
Recalling that in connection with commemoration of the 20th anniversary of UNESCO, the Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry, India, had taken steps to establish an international cultural township known as Auroville where people of different countries will live together in one community and engage in cultural, educational and other pursuits, and that this project has been commended to all those interested in UNESCO’s ideals in resolution 4.36 passed at the 14th sessions of the General Conference,
Considering that Member States, believing in the pursuit of truth and the free exchange of ideas and knowledge, have agreed and determined to develop and increase the means of communication between their peoples,
Considering also that, despite the technical advance which facilitates the development and dissemination of knowledge and ideas, ignorance of the way of life and customs of peoples still presents an obstacle to friendship among the nations, to peaceful co-operation, and to the progress of mankind,
Taking account of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideas of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples and the Declaration of the Principles of International Co-operation,

Noting that the foundation-stone of Auroville has been laid on 28 February 1968 and that the youth of many nations participated in the solemn ceremony symbolizing the coming together of nations in a spirit of human unity,
Confident that Auroville with its many interrelated sub-projects will add a new dimension to UNESCO’s activities for the promotion of international co-operation and understanding and appreciation of cultural and human values,
Invites Member States and international non-governmental organizations to participate in the development of Auroville as an international cultural township designed to bring together the values of different cultures and civilisations in a harmonious environment with integrated living standards which correspond to man’s physical and spiritual needs.

APPENDIX F: UNESCO resolution on Auroville, 1970

Resolution 3.323 (Oct.–Nov. 1970)

The General Conference,
Recalling resolutions 4.36 and 4.131 concerning Auroville which were adopted by the 14th and 15th sessions of the General Conference,
Noting that the Charter of Auroville aims inter alia at establishing “a place of unending education, of a youth that never ages”, and a “living embodiment of an actual human unity”,
Recognizing the progress made in Auroville since the foundation stone was laid on the 28th of February 1968,
Conscious of the new responsibilities cast on UNESCO in the wake of growing unrest from youth from almost every part of the world; and which has taken the form of an open dispute with the universities and society,
Aware of the urgent need to welcome the “newly vocal young as allies in the search for a better world,” and in keeping with the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for the promotion among youth of ideas of peace, mutual respect and understanding between peoples, and in conformity with the Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Co-operation,
Noting further that towards this end Auroville is already preparing and creating an instrument of education capable of meeting the formidable demands of our age, linking East and West in a new relationship,
Considering that UNESCO’s Major Project on the Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values gave a pioneering start, and recognizing that Auroville can be an effective and integrated follow-up to this project,
Request the Director-General to take such steps as may be feasible within the budgetary provisions, to promote the development of Auroville as an important cultural programme.

APPENDIX G: UNESCO Resolution on Auroville, 2007\textsuperscript{181}

(177 EX/70 and Add: 177 EX/INF. 11; 177 EX/78; 177 EX/79 Part II)

Commemorative activities for the 40th anniversary of the establishment of Auroville, an international township

The Executive Board,

Recalling the foundation of the international township of Auroville, in South India, in February 1968, when the youth of 124 Member States participated in the ceremony by depositing the soil of their countries in the foundation urn to symbolize the coming together of the nations of the world.

Noting that the Charter of Auroville, announced at the Foundation Ceremony, declares that Auroville belongs to nobody in particular but to humanity as a whole.

Recognizing that the aims of Auroville are to promote international understanding, peace, innovative education, a learning society, and all-round material and spiritual development for harmonious individual and collective growth, and that such aims contribute to the advancement of the objectives of UNESCO, especially dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions, cultural diversity, and culture as a factor for development,

Recalling that in 1983 the General Conference adopted a resolution inviting Member States and international non-governmental organizations to participate in the development of Auroville as an international cultural township,

Conscious therefore of the broad range of activities undertaken by governments, National Commissions for UNESCO, and international non-governmental organizations to promote the development of Auroville as an important international cultural programme,

Recognizing the value of such civilizing experiences as an invaluable and integral part of the commonly shared human experience,

Also recognizing that Auroville is a successful and unique model project, proving the capacity of an international community, after 40 year of existence, to continue to live up to its initial founding ideals of peace and international harmony and within the spirit of mutual respect and sustainable development which are also UNESCO's own values and principles, as well as some of its major priorities,

Noting that 28 February 2008 will mark the 40th anniversary of the setting up of Auroville project,

Invites the Director-General to reinforce the association of UNESCO, and in particular its Culture Sector, with Auroville in the context to the commemorative activities for its 40th anniversary.

\textsuperscript{181} UNESCO, \textit{Decisions Adopted by the Executive Board at its 177\textsuperscript{th} Session} (Paris: UNESCO, 2007), 54-55.
### APPENDIX H: Auroville 2013-2014 City Services Report excerpts

**Table 2: Total Income, Year to Year Comparison (in Rs. Lakhs)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Headings</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>% Total</th>
<th>Variation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Units</td>
<td>34,393,228</td>
<td>43,808,294</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>9,415,066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guest Houses &amp; Guests</td>
<td>11,640,331</td>
<td>13,120,404</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>1,539,855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services</td>
<td>34,781,219</td>
<td>38,552,834</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>8,140,892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>18,013,005</td>
<td>17,964,554</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>3,876,151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Internal</strong></td>
<td><strong>98,827,783</strong></td>
<td><strong>113,446,086</strong></td>
<td><strong>93%</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,897,377</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td>9,683,909</td>
<td>9,022,516</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2,241,943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>108,511,692</strong></td>
<td><strong>122,468,602</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>15,139,320</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4: Total Disbursements: Year to Year Comparison per Category (Rs. Lakhs)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heading</th>
<th>2012-14</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>Variation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>22,100,924</td>
<td>28,720,598</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>6,619,674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children &amp; Youth</td>
<td>11,127,478</td>
<td>12,578,007</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1,450,529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farms &amp; Forests</td>
<td>11,016,715</td>
<td>9,681,299</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-1,335,417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>9,903,192</td>
<td>11,012,310</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1,109,118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>8,997,692</td>
<td>10,248,981</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1,251,289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Education</td>
<td>8,345,143</td>
<td>9,042,430</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>697,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Services</td>
<td>6,948,701</td>
<td>8,372,633</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1,423,932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture &amp; Sports</td>
<td>4,567,328</td>
<td>4,552,914</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>-14,414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prosperity Services</td>
<td>4,475,530</td>
<td>7,644,975</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3,169,445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land</td>
<td>3,796,175</td>
<td>4,318,209</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>522,034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>3,377,098</td>
<td>3,883,179</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>506,081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>3,112,031</td>
<td>4,672,707</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1,560,676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matrimandir</td>
<td>2,388,829</td>
<td>2,251,254</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>-137,575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>2,309,907</td>
<td>2,578,407</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>268,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads, Cycle Paths, &amp; Transport</td>
<td>1,066,127</td>
<td>1,784,314</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>718,187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Planning</td>
<td>725,700</td>
<td>774,914</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>49,214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>415,168</td>
<td>761,983</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>346,815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td>198,903</td>
<td>223,338</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>24,435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>104,872,642</strong></td>
<td><strong>123,102,452</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,787,850</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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APPENDIX I: Overview of the Auroville city plan\textsuperscript{183}

The Galaxy Model of Auroville\textsuperscript{184}:

\textsuperscript{183} “Auroville in Brief.”

\textsuperscript{184} “The Galaxy Concept of the City.”
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