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Ed-Av Programme

auroville
programme of education

Equals One as the journal of Auroville is publishing here a short preview of what education in Auroville will be when it begins to be the city of youth, the city of the children of tomorrow.

This resume is written by Yvonne Artaud, whom The Mother has charged with the creation of

aureducation

the service responsible for making the whole city an integral educational organism.

The draft presented here was preceded by a series of interviews with The Mother in which she made it clear that she did not want education in Auroville to be a copy or a repetition of anything done elsewhere.

Yvonne Artaud needs no introduction to our readers. She has written "The Great Curve" in Communication = 1, and most of the articles in our three issues on education:

Education = 1, Child = 1 and Univercity = 1.

She has been a teacher of an experimental class at the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education and is now conducting a seminar for the future youth guides of Auroville.

dearest mother,

You have asked me to produce our plans for a new education so that they may be published. I am therefore presenting here the principal force lines and steps which are leading to this education of the future.

These are not mere theories; they are a practical working basis with which I have experimented, a basis which we hope will make education what it should always have been: literally, the most natural thing in the world.

The first of these force lines has its origin in

a global vision of the world

seen in the light of the new consciousness, the new structure of the universe which Sri Aurobindo brought within human range: a new way of being one and being many, – a new way of seeing, of understanding and of loving. That is what we try to realize in = 1, and I should like to make it more concrete in booklets and films that could be an initiation for both children and adults.

How old are you?

Who is your mother?

Where do you come from?

These questions that are as old as man will now receive new answers.

In this hour of videotellevision we should be able to present a new way of looking at the universe.. something unique, for Auroville is essentially a new way of being, a new way of seeing and of becoming.

The second line of force, which has inspired our work in the field of education, is

the transfiguration of the mind into a mind of light

What is the mind of light?

a mind capable of living in the truth, capable of being truth-conscious and manifesting in its life a direct in place of an indirect knowledge...

the great passage, the transition between the mind and the supermind...

a stepping beyond humanity into the superhumanity.

/ Sri Aurobindo

This transformation demands that one leave behind the heavy burden of an 'education' based on the accumulation of 'facts'.

The new education will not bear down upon the child but will invite him to build a mental instrument for himself. This he can do with the help of a very simple mental gymnastic: the establishment of multiple relationships among all the things he knows, against the luminous background of their ultimate relationship – unity.

Each element, each being, each thing is first enriched in the mind of the child with a multitude of aspects and is found to be related to all others like a sun which is related by its light to the rest of the universe.

This simple, habitual solar practice of linking everything with everything else induces physically in the child's brain the formation of a whole network of intercellular connections, so that his intelligence need not function in the limited way to which we are so accustomed today.

The new intelligence of this child will not be doomed to remember facts as ours is because it has already related everything to everything else. It will not have to think in a linear way as we adults do – along lines which become poorer and poorer. It will be a mind capable of discovering new

open vistas to follow within itself, new possibilities, new movements of intuition and creation, leading to a total activation and illumination of its whole knowledge, its whole thinking and feeling.

He will unite thought with thought, word with word, till the human intelligence is rich and harmonious enough to support and become the divine idea.

/ Sri Aurobindo

The third line of force, the most dynamic and transforming, is

the evolution of our concept of time

Time is starting to open itself for conquest just as, in the beginning of our manhood, space opened itself. And we can peep out into its moving landscapes, whose fabulous features we are as yet unable to recognize and to name:

It will be possible however to develop a mind of luminous inspiration which will be more at home among the greater potentialities of the time movement.

/ Sri Aurobindo

One thing is certain: in this direction lie the possibilities of an integral transformation.

These possibilities become especially visible in the life of the fetus and the very young baby. At this biological age one has only to do what is called for at a given moment in time, when the child requires a very small turn or movement or specific exercise to liberate instantly new capacities for the future.

For example, whatever presents itself to the child in a happy way during the first twenty-four hours after birth he is ready to adopt as his mother or as his intimate self.

So the Polynesian puts his newborn on the quiet water of the lagoon. The child bends his head back and floats, and he will never be afraid of the ocean; to him she is his mother. But the opportunity for this activation lasts only a few days after birth.

The great French animal trainer, Bouglione, was put into a cage with a lioness shortly after his birth. Because of his father's foresight, Bouglione was thereafter one with the lions.

Of course we must know long before this what our children want to be.

Prenatal life and early childhood are particularly full of these unique potential moments which should not be missed.

The brief crucial time when a possibility crops up requires that it be consciously activated. Once this has been done, all that is needed is to feed, tenderly and patiently, the newly incarnated feasibility so that the child may develop it and thus realize himself in his fullness.

An exact understanding of the process of our becoming – the structure of time – could accomplish in a few centuries what would otherwise take millenia of evolution.

This is the only true education: by reinforcing an evolutionary blueprint in the child, to replace old limitations by new emergent possibilities. Anything else is a traumatic intervention and a psychic destroying.

Nothing can be taught to the mind which is not already concealed as potential knowledge ...

Self-knowledge and an increasing consciousness are the means and the process.

/ Sri Aurobindo

The fourth line of force is that of

the socialization of man and the planetization of earth

These developments will become effective the day our children can consider all adult human beings as their fathers and mothers; the day they feel themselves welcome, helped and loved everywhere,

by everyone. It is only then that children will be able to develop fully and to deploy completely their new dimensions of being.

In the same way that in certain protected spots on the earth birds of paradise evolved, the children of this new earth will become the psychic flowering of a mankind ultimately liberated from its tribal limitations and cultural backwardness.

Such a transformation presupposes the acceptance and protection by man not only of all other human beings, but of all forms of life, for it is only by an evolution of evolution in its entirety, explains Sri Aurobindo, that we can enter into the new age.

Evolution would itself evolve.

/ Sri Aurobindo

The integration of everybody and everything into our aspiration and yoga demands that we find for each being, each race, each species of life, as well as for each cell of our body, its true role, its true place where it can receive from the whole of the universe the highest and widest possible education, and thus fulfil its unique creative destiny.

HOW SRI AUROBINDO'S TEACHING CAN BE APPLIED TO AUROVILLE

There may be six centres of application, or six aspects of this town, which are entirely devoted to education.

The first centre will be

the town as a whole within itself

In this city one may obtain knowledge – education – everywhere. The place where a person thinks or works, the entire surrounding atmosphere where this thought and this work are created, offer the best condition for the transmission of that particular skill or knowledge or inspiration.

One should look at the entire city as an immense educative play whose elements are the streets, the gardens, the banks, drugstores and hospitals, the hotels and stores, the workshops, studios and laboratories, the telecommunication and agricultural services, and of course all the residents.

Everywhere the child will find a section or a privileged corner where he is invited to participate, and where each specialist devotes part of his time to education.

Thus the enormous educative potential of a society at work will be utilized and liberated. Indeed it is this which constitutes the univocity of the future: a town open to all those who want to learn, a society where work, education and play are no longer separate, but instead profit from one another and complement one another to develop in a single cultural whole, in a consciously evolving society.

In our family life also, an opening is necessary to permit the child to choose freely one or several families, one or several tutors, who will be responsible for him and who will have the same rights and duties as his biological parents.

The principle of psychological adoption will thus protect the autonomy of the child and at the same time be the first step toward the socialization of men and the conscious planetization of the earth.

The second centre of education will be the centre of information, open to everyone:

the bank of knowledge

Here everyone can study, by himself, whatever he likes: a foreign language, nuclear physics, cosmology, or even how to read and write – with the help of magnetic tapes, card catalogues, books, video tapes, films, educative games, and if he desires, also with the help of human or mechanical monitors.

The Bank of Knowledge demonstrates the great self-service aspect of this new education.

The third centre, the Garden of Becoming,

aurodevenir

will be a botanical, zoological, cultural and cosmic garden interspersed with delightful pavilions. This garden, though specially conceived for children, may be open to visitors too. Here the children will find within their reach the possibility of seeing many things, of manipulating and experimenting with many things, and of meeting themselves and others.

The Garden of Becoming is based on the principle that each object held in a child's hand, each symbol he manipulates, each creative act he performs, each situation he encounters invokes in him an archetype or a knowledge, a power or an aspiration to understand, to become and to be.

With its natural botanical and zoological riches, with its children's museums, theatres and circus, its workshops, laboratories, videotheques, 'world game' centres, its playfields and stadium and golden beaches, with its small pavilions where wise guidance can be found, its school of wild animals where children can initiate themselves into the ecological problems of our biosphere and prepare

themselves for the great meeting with non-humans, the Garden of Becoming will set the stage for a spontaneous environmental education.

The fourth centre of education will be

the centre of impregnation

destined to help future mothers, and children of less than four years. This is the age when all the child's capacities of imitation, assimilation and identification reach their greatest magnitude, when he is most impressionable and able to recognize himself in everything, from the oneness of his origin to the glory of his individual and cosmic destiny.

This is the time to present to the newly-born the stimulating varied whole of manifestation in its deepest truth, so that he may choose what he really wants to become. This is the time to initiate him to all the beautiful things of earth, to all the wisdom man has inherited in ontology, science and futurology, even to transmit much of the knowledge which our universities reserve for their post-graduates.

This is the age of the continuous miracle, the Age of Education: an education which can create that new being which evolution anticipates.

The fifth centre of education

the youth centre

will give a meaning and a deep significance to the great migration of the youth of the Occident toward the Orient and to their search for the promised land. They know they will not find, unprepared, this land which calls them; they know too that it is not enough to erect the buildings. Rather, they must first build themselves. Still they would like someone to show them the way; they are looking for the imposition of the discipline necessary to realize this promised society.

In answer to this appeal, we should offer to the young people of the world the possibility of living in Auroville for a while, doing voluntary service and leading a monastic existence – though in a modern, evolved form – an accelerated apprenticeship into a life of service for the divinization of earth.

The role of the sixth centre of education will be to give special

help to the village children

First, they should be allowed to benefit from the right of psychological adoption in the same manner as all other Auroville children; and it should be a duty for each adult Aurovilian to adopt psychologically, as soon as possible, a Tamil child, to take care of him, and to facilitate his integration into Auroville and thus into the new age of spiritual technology.

A great problem in all economically less-developed countries is the severe lack of amino acids in the people's diet, a condition which is particularly disastrous to the foetus and developing child.

A newborn infant will be a diminished being all his life if he does not acquire, at that critical age, the essential building materials for his body and especially for his developing brain.

But physical food is not all. Mental stimulation too is indispensable for the growth of the newly born. Recent experiments in the U.S.A. and in Israel have proved that culturally underdeveloped environments produce mentally underdeveloped children if no other source of stimulation reaches them before they enter the kindergarten.

To break this stalemate will be the purpose of the sixth centre.

It will see that every Tamil mother of Auroville receives the necessary basic foods for herself and her baby, and that her young child has the opportunity to participate in stimulating and enriching

activities. It is this type of simple, scientific approach that will enable us to build in a progressive, intelligent and loving way a new future for the Tamil residents of Auroville and its surroundings.

To summarize, the message of Aureducation is this:

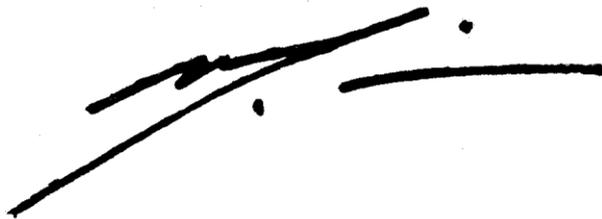
Our society must be dedicated to the service of the child, because this is its only opportunity to transform itself.

We need to concentrate on the development of the child at the age when everything he eats, feels, sees and hears is of the utmost importance, for it is then that his wide future potential is gathered and activated.

It is through this joyous dedication to the child that our society can prepare in the simplest and most direct way for the coming of the new age.

Yvonne Artaud

*Voici un excellent
programme qui il faut réaliser
avec mes bénédictions*



The Mother's comment -

"This is an excellent programme which must be realized -
with my blessings."