

All Is She

*...it is woman that can build a bridge
between the old world and the supramental world.*



**A Compilation on Woman
from the Works of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother**

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Sri Aurobindo Society

AUROPUBLICATIONS

POWERFUL THOUGHTS, INSPIRING VISION

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the old world and the supramental world.)***

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© 2017 AuroPublications, Sri Aurobindo Society,
Puducherry
www.aurosociety.org
Year of Publication 2017

Compilation and Proof reading done by Archana
Udaykumar

Cover Painting – Priti Ghosh (Ashram Artist)

Help in making e-book by Uttam Mondal

"Man and woman find their equal right before God; for the divine Spirit is no respecter of persons or of social distinctions and restrictions: all can go straight to him without intermediary or shackling condition. 'If' says the divine Teacher 'even a man of very evil conduct turns to me with a sole and entire love, he must be regarded as a saint, for the settled will of endeavour in him is a right and complete will.'"

(CWSA 19: 334)

"According to my experience, **the soul is divine**, an eternal portion of the Supreme Divine, and therefore it cannot be limited or bound by any law whatever, except its own. These souls are emanated by the Lord to do His work in the world, and each one comes on earth with a particular purpose, for a particular work, and with a particular destiny; each has its own law which is binding on itself alone and cannot be made a general rule. So in the eternity of the becoming, every possible case, imaginable and unimaginable, must obviously occur."

14 July 1960

(CWM 17: 356)

Foreword

All over the world, there is a growing interest in Spirituality and Yoga. There is a search for the true meaning and purpose of life, for deeper solutions to the problems which confront us all, and how we can contribute to the evolutionary change and progress.

In this search, more and more persons are turning to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother for guidance and enlightenment. But in their voluminous literature, they do not know where to find the answers they are looking for.

In this regard the Mother has said,

“It is not by books that Sri Aurobindo ought to be studied but by subjects—what he has said on the Divine, on Unity, on religion, on evolution, on education, on self-perfection, on supermind, etc., etc.” (CWM 12: 206)

On another occasion she said:

“If you want to know what Sri Aurobindo has said on a given subject, you must at least read all he has written on that subject. You will then see that he seems to have said the most contradictory things. But when one has read everything and understood a little, one sees that all the

contradictions complement one another and are organised and unified in an integral synthesis.” (CWM 16: 309-310)

While there are several compilations which are now available, many sincere spiritual seekers have felt the need of Comprehensive Compilations from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on specific subjects, where the contents are further organised into sub-topics, so that one can get all that one is looking for at one place.

These books are an effort to fulfill this need and thus help spiritual seekers in their journey and sadhana. We hope these compilations will help us to get a greater mental clarity about a subject so that we can channel our efforts in the right direction. For Sri Aurobindo has written:

“It is always better to make an effort in the right direction; even if one fails the effort bears some result and is never lost.” (CWSA 29: 87)

We will be glad to get suggestions and feedback from the readers.

Vijay

Compiler's Note

I humbly place this compilation at the Lotus Feet of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother.

What I gathered from Our Masters' powerful and soul-stirring words is that every atom of matter is flowing towards its Divine Origin and perfection, preparing itself to embrace the New Divine Consciousness/New Creation. I hope this compilation brings out this very essence. There is no difference between the masculine element and the feminine element. All of us are floating on the Divine ocean on Mother's ship (Her experience on February 3, 1958—the Supramental ship), guided and led by the Divine Captain who is the *Jagat Janani* (Creator of the Universe)—The Divine Mother Herself.

I immensely thank Mr. Jamshedji who held my hand in making this compilation come together. He was the one who supported and inspired me to collect Their precious words on this subject.

Thanks to Priti di whose painting is used as the cover of this book. I also extend my gratitude to Puja from Sri Aurobindo Society, who helped to fine-tune by adding her valuable suggestions.

Nothing we think or do is void or vain;
Each is an energy loosed and holds its course.

(*Savitri*, p. 378)

Compiler
Archana Udaykumar

Preface

Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother is the journey of the soul to unite with the One—The Supreme—The Divine. All souls in their outer manifestation take the physical form—man/woman. They all have the same ultimate aim; few of them know it inwardly, for most this aim is masked by external happenings. By taking up this Yoga we consciously walk on the path paved out by our highest aspirations and thus this journey becomes delightful.

Through Sri Aurobindo's and The Mother's writings we come close to understanding the journey of a conscious being. For the material existence and for the purpose of progress and evolution the soul chooses its path and lives the experience either as man or as woman.

Maa Yashoda saw the whole universe in little Krishna's mouth. We are all beings of Delight living in HIM, with HIM and through HIM.

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1. Origin of the Problem of Women

The problem of women

"I wish to speak to you about the problem of woman, a problem as old as mankind in appearance, but infinitely older in origin. For if we want to find the law that governs and solves it, we must go back to the origin of the universe, even beyond the creation.

Some of the most ancient traditions, perhaps even the most ancient, ascribed the cause of the creation of the universe to the will of a Supreme Absolute to manifest by his own self objectification; and the first act of this objectification was said to be the emanation of the creative Consciousness. Now, these ancient traditions usually speak of the Absolute in the masculine gender and of the Consciousness in the feminine, thus making this primordial gesture the origin of the differentiation between man and woman and at the same time giving a kind of priority to the masculine over the feminine. In fact, although they are one, identical and coexistent before the manifestation, the masculine took the original decision and emanated the feminine to carry it out, which amounts to saying that while there is no creation without the feminine, neither is there any feminine manifestation without the previous decision of the masculine.

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We could certainly ask whether this explanation is not a little too human. But, to tell the truth, all the explanations that men can give must always necessarily be human, at least in their formulation. For, in their spiritual ascent towards the Unknowable and Unthinkable, certain exceptional individuals have been able to transcend human nature and identify themselves with the object of their seeking in a sublime and, in a way, unformulable experience. But as soon as they sought to share the benefit of their discovery with others, they had to formulate it, and in order to be comprehensible their formula had, of necessity, to be human and symbolic.

We could also ask whether these experiences and their disclosure are responsible for the sense of superiority which man nearly always feels towards woman, or whether, on the contrary, it is this widespread sense of superiority that is responsible for the form given to the experiences....

In any case, the indisputable fact remains: man feels superior and wants to dominate, woman feels oppressed and revolts, openly or secretly; and the eternal quarrel between the sexes is perpetuated from age to age, identical in essence, innumerable in its forms and hues.

Of course man throws the whole blame on woman, just as woman throws the entire blame on man. In truth the blame should be equally distributed between the two

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and neither can boast of being superior to the other. Moreover, until this notion of superiority and inferiority is eliminated, nothing and no one can put an end to the misunderstanding that divides the human species into two opposite camps, and the problem will not be solved.

So many things have been said and written on this problem, it has been approached from so many angles, that a whole volume would not be enough to expound all its aspects. Generally speaking, the theories are excellent, or, in any case, all have their own virtues; but the practice has proved less successful and I do not know whether from the point of view of realisation we have made any headway since the Stone Age."

(CWM 12: 102–103)

Man and woman are despotic masters and pitiable slaves to each other

"For in their mutual relationships, man and woman are at once rather despotic masters and somewhat pitiable slaves to each other.

Yes, slaves; for so long as one has desires, preferences and attachments, one is a slave of these things and of the people on whom one is dependent for their satisfaction.

Thus woman is enslaved to man because of the attraction she feels for the male and his strength,

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because of the desire for a home and the security it brings, and lastly because of the attachment to motherhood. Man too on his side is enslaved to woman, because of his possessiveness, his thirst for power and domination, because of his desire for sexual relations and because of his attachment to the little comforts and conveniences of married life.

That is why no law can liberate women unless they liberate themselves; likewise, men too, in spite of all their habits of domination, will cease to be slaves only when they have freed themselves from all inner enslavement.

And this state of veiled struggle, often unavowed but always present in the subconscious even in the best cases, seems unavoidable, unless human beings rise above their ordinary consciousness to identify themselves with the perfect consciousness and unite with the Supreme Reality. For as soon as one attains this higher consciousness one realises that the difference between man and woman reduces itself to a purely physical difference."

(CWM 12: 103–104)

Since the beginning of creation, why is there this difference between male and female?

"Mother, since the beginning of creation, why is there this difference between male and female?"

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Since the beginning of which creation? Which creation are you speaking about? ... Of the Earth?

Yes.

First, this is not correct. There are species in which there is no difference; and in the beginning there wasn't any—first point. Second point, the terrestrial creation is a purely material creation and is a sort of materialisation and condensation of the universal creation, but in the universal creation this difference does not necessarily exist. All the possibilities are there, and all things possible have existed and still exist, and **this differentiation is not at all the basis of creation.**

So your question does not stand, for it is incorrect.

But why in the material creation?

I am telling you it has not been like that from the beginning. A zoologist could tell you that there are species which are not like that at all. Nature has tried this method—it tries many things, it has made all possible species, made the two in one, made every possible thing.... It tries like this because probably this appears more practical to it! I don't know. That's all.

But on the other planes, even in the terrestrial world, the more subtle planes of the terrestrial world,

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even in the subtle physical and the vital and mental, there are beings divided in two like this, but also beings which are neither male nor female. They exist. For instance, in the vital world, it is extremely rare to come across differentiations of sex, the beings are usually sexless. And I strongly suspect that the world of the gods as described to us by men, has been largely influenced by human thought. In any case, there are many deities who are without sex. In all the stories told of the pantheons of all countries, there is a good deal that has been strongly influenced by human thought. So, this difference is simply a means used by Nature to achieve its aim, that's all, nothing more than that. We must take it like that. It is not an eternal symbol—not at all.

Now, there are many people who are very keen on this distinction—they may keep it if they like!—but it is not at all something final or eternal ... or perfect in itself. It was perhaps the ideal of the overmind creation, that is possible ... and yet, even then not totally, only partially. But still those who are so fond of this differentiation—let them keep it if they like! If it gives them pleasure. ... It has its advantages and disadvantages, many disadvantages.”

(CWM 9: 104–105)

Slaves of their form

"Sweet Mother, here it is said: 'All men are feminine in many respects and all women are masculine in many traits, especially in modern societies.'"

Yes, there is no pure type.

Then why is there a complex still?

Because they don't know themselves. They don't know themselves and then they are the slaves of their form. Because when they look at themselves in a mirror they see that they are men, and the women see that they are women—and they are slaves of the physical form. It is only because of that.

But moreover, I have often met men who were extremely feminine from certain points of view, but not in a very pleasant way, and it was they who asserted most their masculine rights and had most the sense of their superiority. Besides, I have also met, especially at the beginning of the feminist movement ... all the women who wanted to take part in feminism used to wear false collars, cravats, vests, they cut their hair, they looked ... they tried to look as masculine as they could. But they were deplorably feminine, *deplorably* ! (*Laughter*) They wanted to please, wanted to attract attention; and if by ill-luck a man treated them like men, they were extremely

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angry. (*Laughter*) For this—much time is needed to be transformed.

And then?"

(CWM 7: 153)

Trick of nature

"Mother, you said precisely that you had the experience of this witness who does not move, then that is the Purusha!

Ah! I don't know. (*Laughter*) Purusha, if you like. But I did not find it particularly masculine! You understand, what ... what I object to is the male element and female element. Well, I find that it is not true, and I shall always say: IT IS NOT TRUE. There is an element like this and another like that (*Mother turns her hand from one side to the other*). There is an activity like this and an activity like that. But why on earth do you want one to be masculine and the other feminine? It is not like that. **This, this masculine-feminine business is a trick of Nature**, it has arranged things here like that. Now, let me tell you: when one descends from above, well, right up there one has no idea of masculine and feminine and all that nonsense; as you come down and arrive here, it starts to become something real. So you tell yourself, 'Well, well! That's how Nature has arranged things.' Good! But what I

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say is that these conceptions—these very conceptions which make one element masculine and the other feminine—this is a conception which has come from below, that is, has come out of man's brain which cannot think otherwise than of MAN and WOMAN—because he is still an animal. There you are! And that's how I feel—I have always felt this, I have said it from the beginning and will repeat it till the very end..."
(CWM 6: 119)

Movement called feminism

"Yes, because it is difficult to separate them. I didn't mean that it is a problem that women have to solve; I meant that it is the problem which life on earth has posed because of women.

Men, until not very long ago, were perfectly satisfied with themselves and what they had done. It is a little more than a century ago that women began to protest. Before, they seemed to say nothing or in any case they had no opportunity to say something. However, quite recently—it is not so long ago—women began to say, 'Excuse us, but we indeed are not satisfied.' Formerly, if ever they dared to say such a thing, probably they received a knock and were told, 'Keep quiet, it's no business of yours.' Yet things went on in spite of everything, and it was at the end of the century that

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there began a public protest of women against the way men treated them; because all the laws made by men were to man's advantage, and all the social organisations made by men were to man's advantage, and woman always had a lower position and sometimes an absolutely detestable one. In certain countries it is still like that...

However, till then, if they had protested it must have been either individually or in a rather hidden fashion, because it did not become a public question. But at the end of the last century there was a **movement called feminism** and women began to protest violently against things as they were, saying, 'Excuse us, we find that you have failed in all your affairs, and you have not managed anything well. All that you have done seems absolutely bad. You have not succeeded in doing anything, except in fighting among yourselves, killing one another and making life unbearable for everybody. We are beginning to say that we have something to say, and we mean that this won't do and that it must improve.' That is how it began. Then, you see, protestations, fights, mockery ... They tried to stifle them with ridicule. But it was the men who made fools of themselves, it was not the women (*Mother laughs*), and finally, they gained one thing: they can now put in their word in the affairs of State.

It began ... it was a frightful scandal but now it is a recognized fact, and we even find that in certain

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countries, slightly less backward than others, women are admitted in the government. And I must say that, as far as I know, the first country where this happened was Sweden. I knew it at the beginning of this century. It was then that it happened. Women were admitted into Parliament in Sweden, and in the government, and the first thing they did, that they managed to do, was to abolish drunkenness." (CWM 7: 151–152)

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Fundamental spiritual equality

“To reduce the woman’s part to solely interior and domestic occupations, and the man’s part to exclusively exterior and social occupations, thus separating what should be united, would be to perpetuate the present sad state of things, from which both are equally suffering. It is in front of the highest duties and heaviest responsibilities that their respective qualities must unite in a close and confident solidarity...

It is no longer the moment for frail competitions and self-interested claims; all human beings, men or women, must associate in a common effort to become conscious of the highest ideal which asks to be realised and to work ardently for its realisation. The question to be solved, the real question is then not only that of a better utilisation of their outer activities, but above all that of an inner spiritual growth. Without inner progress there is no possible outer progress.

Thus the problem of feminism, as all the problems of the world, comes back to a spiritual problem. For the spiritual reality is at the basis of all others; the divine world, the Dhammata of Buddhism, is the eternal foundation on which are built all the other worlds. In regard to this Supreme Reality **all are equal, men and women**, in rights and in duties; the only distinction

which can exist in this domain being based on the sincerity and ardour of aspiration, on the constancy of the will. And it is in the recognition of this fundamental spiritual equality that can be found the only serious and lasting solution for this problem of the relation of the sexes. It is in this light that it must be placed, it is at this height that must be sought the focus of action and new life, around which will be constructed the future temple of Humanity.”

(CWM 2: 149–150)

The true relation of the two sexes is an equal footing of mutual help and close collaboration

“For we are living in an exceptional time at an exceptional turning point of the world’s history. Never before, perhaps, did mankind pass through such a dark period of hatred, bloodshed and confusion. And, at the same time, never had such a strong, such an ardent hope awakened in the hearts of the people. Indeed, if we listen to our heart’s voice, we immediately perceive that we are, more or less consciously, waiting for a new reign of justice, of beauty, of harmonious good-will and fraternity. And this seems in complete contradiction with the actual state of the world. But we all know that never is the night so dark as before the dawn...

... And in this momentous, endless, many-sided work, what can be the part of womanhood? It is true

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that, as soon as great events and works are in question, the custom is to relegate women to a corner with a smile of patronising contempt which means: this is not your business, poor, feeble, futile creatures. ... And women, submissive, childlike, lazy perhaps, have accepted, at least in many countries, this deplorable state of things. I dare to say that they are wrong. In the life of the future, there shall be no more room for such division, such disequilibrium between the masculine and the feminine. The true relation of the two sexes is an **equal footing of mutual help and close collaboration.**"

(CWM 2: 159)

Man and women are both children of the same infinite Mother

"Why make a distinction between the two?

They are both human beings trying to become fit instruments for the divine work, above questions of sex, caste, creed and nationality; they are all children of the same infinite Mother and aspirants to the one and eternal Godhead."

(CWM 8: 242)

Are really one and each is incomplete without the other

"Existence turned towards manifestation has a double aspect, Male and Female, positive and negative; He is the origin of the birth of things and He is the receptacle of the birth and it is to the Male aspect of Himself that the word Purusha predominatingly applies. The image often applied to these relations is that of the man casting his seed into the woman; his duty is merely to originate the seed and deposit it, but it is the woman's duty to cherish the seed, develop it, bring it forth and start it on its career of manifested life. The seed, says the Upanishad, is the self of the Male, it is spirit, and being cast into the Female, Prakriti, it becomes one with her and therefore does her no hurt; spirit takes the shaping appearance of matter and does not break up the appearances of matter, but develops under their law. The Man and the Woman, universal Adam and Eve, **are really one and each is incomplete without the other**, barren without the other, inactive without the other. Purusha the Male, God, is that side of the One which gives the impulse towards phenomenal existence; Prakriti the Female, Nature, is that side which is and evolves the material of phenomenal existence; both of them are therefore unborn & eternal. The Male is Purusha, he who lurks in the Wide; the Female is Prakriti, the working of the Male, and sometimes called Rayi, the universal movement

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emanating from the quiescent Male. Purusha is therefore imaged as the Enjoyer, Prakriti as the enjoyed; Purusha as the Witness, Prakriti as the phenomena he witnesses; Purusha as the *getter* or father of things, Prakriti as their *bearer* or mother.”

(CWSA 18: 395)

Woman Can Build a Bridge Between the Old World and The Supramental World

“Sri Aurobindo used to say: it is woman that can build a bridge between the old world and the supramental world.”

(Vol. 13 page 110)(Mother’s Agenda)

True union of these two complementary halves of humanity

“You have asked me what I think of the feminist movement and what will be the consequences of the present war for it.

One of the first effects of the war has certainly been to give quite a new aspect to the question. The futility of the perpetual oppositions between men and women was at once made clearly apparent, and behind the conflict of the sexes, only relating to exterior facts, the gravity of the circumstances allowed the discovery of the always

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existent, if not always outwardly manifested fact, of the real collaboration, of the **true union of these two complementary halves of humanity.**

Many men were surprised to see how easily women could replace them in most of the posts they occupied before, and to their surprise was added something of regret not to have found sooner a real partner of their work and their struggles in her whom more often they had only considered as an object of pleasure and distraction, or at best as the guardian of their hearth and mother of their children. Certainly woman is that and to be it well requires exceptional qualities, but she is not only that, as the present circumstances have amply proved."

(CWM 2: 147)

From the spiritual point of view, men and women are equal in their capacity to realise the divine

"What should be the ideal of a modern woman in ordinary life?"

In ordinary life, women can have all the ideas they like, it is not very important.

From the spiritual point of view, men and women are equal in their capacity to realise the Divine. Each one must do so in his (or her) own way and according to his (or her) own possibilities."

(CWM 10: 299–300)

Equal right before God

"Man and woman find their equal right before God; for the divine Spirit is no respecter of persons or of social distinctions and restrictions: all can go straight to him without intermediary or shackling condition. 'If' says the divine Teacher 'even a man of very evil conduct turns to me with a sole and entire love, he must be regarded as a saint, for the settled will of endeavour in him is a right and complete will. Swiftly he becomes a soul of righteousness and obtains eternal peace.' "

(CWSA 19: 334)

Servitors of the Divine

"All the universe has been created to express the Divine Power, and human beings, men or women, have for special mission to become conscious of and to manifest that Eternal Divine Essence. Such is their object and none other. And if they knew and remembered that more often, men and women would cease to think of petty quarrels about priority or authority; they would not see a greater mark of respect in the fact of being served than of serving, for all would **consider themselves equally as servitors of the Divine**, and would make it their honour to serve ever more and ever better."

(CWM 2: 151)

Girls or boys, are human beings equally endeavouring to find, become and manifest the Divine

"I have already asked of you all not to think that you are girls or boys, but human beings equally endeavouring to find, become and manifest the Divine."

(CWM 12: 157)

Relation between a sadhak and sadhika in Yoga

"In a general way the only method for succeeding in having between a man and a woman the free and natural Yogic relations that should exist between a sadhak and a sadhika in this Yoga is to be able to meet each other without thinking at all that one is a man and another a woman—both are simply human beings, both sadhaks, both striving to serve the Divine and seeking the Divine alone and none else. Have that fully in yourself and no difficulty is likely to come."

(CWSA 31: 306)

When you speak to anyone it should be to the one Divine in every being

"You tell us that there won't be any difference, but so far there is still a great difference."

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From what point of view? If it is the physical appearance, I agree—and yet, not so much as all that, but still ...
From what point of view?

From the point of view of the idea of sex, that there are two different sexes. That still exists.

The idea! But that's the fault of the person who thinks! One can very well dispense with thinking. You know, these very petty limits of thought are things which ought to disappear before you can even attempt to transform your body. If you still have these very petty ideas which are purely animal, there is not much hope that you could begin the least process for the transformation of your body. You must first transform your thought. ... For that is something which is still crawling far down below. If you are not able to feel that a conscious and living being can be quite free, even in a certain definite form, from all feeling of sex, it ... it means that you are still up to your neck in the original animality.

In the inner thought one feels it, but in the actuality of material life...

What about the actuality?

In the outer life I haven't yet realised that. In the inner...

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You spend your time thinking about it?

But one may live twenty-four hours out of twenty-four without giving a single thought to this difference! You must really be hypnotised by this affair. Do you suppose that when I speak to you I think that you are a man and when I speak to Tara I think she is a woman?

Still there is a difference!

Ah! but it is not at all necessary.

In theory I understand.

In theory! What theory?

That there is no difference. But when I am in contact with someone, either I am speaking to a man or a woman.

Well, it's a great pity both for you and for the other person.

No, it is just the very opposite of what ought to happen! When you are in contact with someone and speaking with him, it is precisely to what surpasses all animality that you should speak; it is to the soul you must speak, never to the body. Even more is asked of you, for you are asked to address the Divine—not even the soul—the one Divine in every being, and to be conscious of that.”

(CWM 9: 132–134)

No special ideal for physical education of girls and boys

"I don't see why there should be one special ideal for the physical education of girls and another for the education of boys.

Physical education aims at developing all the possibilities of the human body—possibilities of harmony, strength, suppleness, skill, endurance—and increasing the mastery of the functions of its members and organs, making the body a perfect instrument at the disposal of the conscious will. **This programme is excellent for all** human beings equally; there is no reason for wanting to have another one for girls."

(CWM 8: 241–242)

*"Sweet Mother,
Girls are always at a disadvantage: they cannot do what they want, as boys can.*

Why not?

There are hundreds of proofs to the contrary."
(CWM 16: 278)

"People who make very strict distinction between man and woman (I don't know why, for one is as good as the other), say that man is mental and vital and woman physical and psychic. There is some truth in it. But

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naturally it involves all possible exception and complication. These are arbitrary simplification. In fact the physical being has a simplicity and even a goodwill (which is not always very enlightened, far from it), but still a simplicity and goodwill which put it in a closer relation with the psychic than the passion of the vital or the pretensions of the mind.”

(CWM 6:5–6)

Beyond the manifestation there is no differentiation

“Sweet Mother, here you speak of the Supreme Mother. Is she the same as the one Sri Aurobindo speaks of in 'The Mother'?”

Yes.

Then the conception of the Supreme Mother is purely human? Or she too in her origin has no gender?

No.

But I have never said that it was purely human. I said that it was the formulation which was human. I haven't said that it was purely human; nowhere have I said that it was purely human. One could say that this explanation is a little too human but I don't mean that she is purely human.

Then in her origin she has a gender?

Beyond the manifestation there is no differentiation, that is, there are not *two*, there is only *one*. It was at the moment of creation that it became two. But before that it was one, and there was no difference; as it was one, it was only one. There were countless possibilities, but it was one, in fact it was one, and it was only in the creation that it became two. The differentiation is not something eternal and co-existent. It is for the creation, and in fact for the creation of this world only. There were perhaps many worlds created in an absolutely different way from this our universe. Not only were they there, but perhaps at this moment there are countless universes with which we have no contact and of which therefore we are totally ignorant and which may exist.”

(CWM 7: 153–155)

No reason to make categorical distinction between men and women

“What we claim is this, that in similar conditions, with the same education and the same possibilities, there is no reason to make a categorical distinction, final and imperative, between what we call men and women. For us, human beings are the expression of a single soul. It is true, as I said at the beginning, that Nature has

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differentiated her expressions for the satisfaction of her needs and the realisation of her purpose, but if our needs and purposes are of *another* kind and we don't recognise the physical ends conceived by Nature as final, and absolute, then we can try to develop consciousness on another line.

Unfortunately, we have noticed one thing. As the years pass and the little girls grow up into big girls, suddenly we find that they begin to remember that they are girls, that they must be pretty, they must please, must dress up in a special way, put on little affectations to attract attention—and the whole result of our work collapses.

There are some—there are always exceptions to the rule—who have understood and who try to realise. But even among these there is still in the background that kind of little satisfaction of not being quite 'like the others', of being able to do what the others cannot, and for this to be clearly seen, well, they must compare themselves with the others!

So that is exactly the occasion of what I have just told you. It is a question from one of you which has given rise to another question, and I hope that if I explain to you once more in detail, insisting on the fact, we shall perhaps be able to start anew and realise something more complete and more clear.

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We come down altogether to earthly things: somebody has been very successful in athletics and has come first in one event. This somebody is a 'she', for convenience in speaking. And so, ah! besides the satisfaction of having done well, there was a little satisfaction in having done better than the others, and she came to ask:

"Why are women's records not announced?"

We have, I believe, repeated and reiterated that there are no 'women's' and no 'men's' records, there are only group records. There is the green group—the various green groups—there is the red group, the grey group, the blue group, the khaki group, the white group. You may tell me that some of these groups are exclusively men's or women's. I shall answer what I have just said, that unless one comes here very young, it is difficult to change one's habits, and that is what has made this separation necessary—but it is not the ideal. And if we made it a habit to announce gloriously: 'This very remarkable girl has done what no other girl could do before', oh, la, la, what a fall it would be! Not to mention that this encourages vanity—which is not good—it is also an assertion that this fact is remarkable *because it is a girl*; now it is not at all a remarkable fact that it is a girl: it is remarkable because she has done very well, and there are many boys who have not done so well. But if one

wants to magnify this fine fact by comparing her with other girls who have not done as well, it becomes deplorable.

So this question was brought to me. I believe that person has been given the answer which I have just told you, that there are only group records and no records of sexes."

(CWM 8: 238–239)

Same programme of physical education for boys and girls

"There are some who consider it a scandal; some consider it a glaring error from the physical, material point of view. 'Why aren't girls treated in a special way and quite differently from boys?'—then the great argument—'*as it is done everywhere.*' Ah! thank you. Then why do we have an Ashram? Why do we have a Centre of Education? If everywhere the same things are done, we don't need to repeat them, we won't do them any better than others.

And when they put this argument in my way, they couldn't tell me anything that appears more utterly stupid to me. It is done everywhere? That is just the reason for not doing it; for if we do what others do, it is not worth the trouble doing anything at all. We want precisely to introduce into the world something which is not there; but if we keep all the habits of the world, all the

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preferences of the world, all the constructions of the world, I don't see how we can get out of the rut and do something new.

My children, I have told you, repeated it in every tone, in every way: if you really want to profit by your stay here, try to look at things and understand them with **a new vision and a new understanding based on something higher, something deeper, vaster, something more true**, something which is not yet but will be one day. And it is because we want to build this future that we have taken this special stand.

I tell you that we have had quite material proofs of the correctness and truth of our position, but ... they are not lasting. Why? Because it is extremely easy to fall back into the ordinary consciousness, and there is nothing more difficult than to always stand on the top of the ladder and try to look at the world from up there.

We *don't want* to obey the orders of Nature, even if these orders have millions of years of habits behind them. And one thing is certain, the argument of Nature when she is opposed to things changing, is: 'It has always been thus.' I claim this is not true. Whether she likes it or not, things change, and a day will come when it will be said: 'Ah! yes, there was a time when it was like that, but now it is different.'

Well, grant only for some time, in a way which is still that of faith and trust, that we are in fact bringing

about this change, that we have come to a point where things are going to take a turn and a new orientation. You are simply asked to have just a little faith and trust and allow yourselves to be guided. Otherwise, well, you will lose the advantage of being here, that's all. And you will go back with the same weaknesses and same habits one sees in life as it is outside. There you are."

(CWM 8: 239–241)

"As a matter of fact, there may have been on earth in the beginning a pure masculine type and a pure feminine type, each with its own special and clearly differentiated characteristics; but in course of time, the inevitable mixture, heredity, all the sons that looked like their mothers, all the daughters that looked like their fathers, social progress, similar occupations—all this has made it impossible today to discover one of these pure types: **all men are feminine in many respects and all women are masculine in many traits, especially in modern societies.** But unfortunately, because of the physical appearance, the habit of quarrelling is perpetuated, perhaps even aggravated by a spirit of rivalry.

In their best moments, both man and woman can forget their difference of sex, but it reappears at the slightest provocation; the woman feels she is a woman, the man knows he is a man and the quarrel is revived

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indefinitely in one form or another, open or veiled, and perhaps all the more bitter the less it is admitted. And one wonders whether it will not be so until there are no longer any men or women, but **living souls expressing their identical origin in sexless bodies.**

For one dreams of a world in which all these oppositions will at last disappear and where a being will be able to live and prosper who will be the harmonious synthesis of all that is best in the human race, uniting conception and execution, vision and creation in one single consciousness and action.

Until such a happy and radical solution is reached, India remains, on this point as on many others, the land of violent and conflicting contrasts, which can nevertheless be resolved by a very wide and comprehensive synthesis.

Indeed, is it not in India that we find the most intense adoration, the **most complete veneration of the Supreme Mother**, creatrix of the universe, conqueror of all enemies, mother of all the gods and all the worlds, dispenser of all boons?

And is it not in India too that we find the most radical condemnation, the uttermost contempt for the feminine principle, Prakriti, Maya, corrupting illusion, cause of every fall and every misery, Nature that deceives and defiles and lures away from the Divine?

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The whole life of India is shot through with this contradiction; she suffers from it in both mind and heart. Every where feminine deities are erected on her altars; the children of India await salvation and liberation from their Mother Durga. And yet is it not one of her children who said that the Avatar would never incarnate in the body of a woman, because no right-minded Hindu would recognise him! Fortunately, the Divine is not affected by such a narrow sectarian spirit or moved by such petty considerations. And when it pleases him to manifest in a terrestrial body, he cares very little whether or not he is recognized by men. Besides, in all his incarnations, he seems always to have preferred children and simple hearts to the learned.

In any case, until the manifestation of a new conception and consciousness compels Nature to create a new species which would no longer have to yield to the necessity of animal procreation and thus be under the obligation of dividing into two complementary sexes, the best that can be done for the progress of the present human race is to treat both sexes on a footing of perfect equality, to give them the same education and training and to teach them to find, through a constant contact with a Divine Reality that is above all sexual differentiation, the source of all possibilities and harmonies.

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And it may be that India, the land of contrasts, will also be the land of new realisations, even as she was the cradle of their conception.”

(CWM 12: 104–106)

“The self-protecting genius in our clay

Divined the goddess in the woman’s shape...”

(CWSA 33–34: 367; *Savitri*, BOOK IV: The Book of Birth and Quest, CANTO II: The Growth of the Flame)

Mother’s Assurance

“There will be a new creation, the supramental creation. Well, there’s no reason why this creation may not have ... may not take a different form from the one which has been here up till now. And as for me, what I say there is that this is the only solution to the problem, that instead of there being this division, it may be a creation, a being which will be ... which will unite ‘conception and execution, vision and creation in one single consciousness and action’—because that’s what has produced the differentiation, the fact that there was the conception and then the execution of this conception, the vision of what had to be and the creation of this vision, that is, the objective realization of this vision; well, there is no reason why it should be divided; the two things can be done by the same being and therefore there should be only one single being.

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Instead of there being two lines, one masculine and one feminine, there should be one single being, and that's what I conceive as the solution of all problems—all problems, not only this one—and as the prototype of the supramental creation.”

(CWM 7: 155–156)

3. Woman's Exceptional Qualities

Exceptional gifts in organising faculties

"In going to tend the wounded in the most difficult material conditions, actually under the enemy's fire, the so-called weak sex has proved that its physical energy and power of endurance were equal to those of man. But where, above all, women have given proof of **exceptional gifts is in their organising faculties.** These faculties of administration were recognised in them long ago by the Brahmanic India of before the Mohammedan conquest.

... The present war has shown that in refusing the co-operation of women the governments deprived themselves of precious help..."

(CWM 2: 147)

Intuitive

"Woman, by the very fact of her passivity, having more easily than man the intuition of the Supreme Power at work in the world, is more often, more naturally humble."

(CWM 2: 151)

Women have the power of execution

"But women, women are in principle the executive power. You must never forget that. And in order to receive the inspiration, you can take support from a masculine consciousness if you feel the need for it. There is the Supreme Consciousness which is more certain, but still, if you need an intermediary ... But for the execution, it is you who have the power to carry it out in all the details, with all the power of organisation. I am instilling this into our women Members of Parliament—you know, there are women in Parliament, and I am teaching them that: do not be submissive to men. It is you who have the power of execution. This will have its effect."

(CWM 12: 426)

Easier for women to discover their psychic being

"Women are not more bound to the vital and material consciousness than men are. On the contrary, as they have not, in general, the arrogant mental pretensions of men, it is easier for them to discover their psychic being and to allow it to guide them. In general, they are not conscious in a mental way which can be expressed in words, but they are conscious in their feelings and the best of them are so even in their actions."

(CWM 14: 289)

Energies used in human beings for reproduction should be sublimated and used for progress and higher development

*"Sweet Mother,
Nowadays in schools elsewhere, especially in the West,
much importance is given to 'sex-education'.*

What is 'sex-education'? What do they teach?

For myself, I don't like people to be preoccupied with these things. In my time we were never preoccupied with these things. Now children talk about them all the time—it is in their minds, in their feelings. It is disgusting. It is difficult, very difficult.

But if they talk about it elsewhere, we have to talk about it here too. They should be told the consequences of these things. Especially the girls ought to be told that the consequences can be disastrous. When I was young, in those days, people never spoke about all that, they never paid attention to these things. In those days, people did not talk about all that. Here, I did not want this subject to be discussed. That is why we do physical culture. In that way the energies are used to develop strength, beauty, skill and all that; and one is more capable of control. You will see, the ones who do a lot of physical culture, they are much more capable of mastering their impulses.

3. Woman's Exceptional Qualities

(*After meditation*) The **energies that are used in human beings for reproduction** and which take such a predominant place in their existence **should on the contrary be sublimated and used for progress and higher development**, to prepare the advent of the new race. But first the vital and the physical must be freed from all desire, otherwise there is a great risk of disaster.” (CWM 12: 377–378)

Forms descend towards the world to express beauty

“I was just walking in the street—to have had a kind of illumination, because there was a woman walking in front of me and truly she knew how to walk. How lovely it was! Her movement was magnificent! I saw that and suddenly I saw the whole origin of Greek culture, how all these forms descend towards the world to express Beauty—simply because here was a woman who knew how to walk! You understand, this is how all things become interesting.” (CWM 5: 49)

There have been many outstanding feminine figures in spiritual life

“There have been many outstanding feminine figures in spiritual life. But on one side women are more interested

3. Woman's Exceptional Qualities

by action than by mentalisation and intellectual expression, that is why very few women have recorded their spiritual experience and thus they have remained unknown.”

(CWM 14: 289–290)

Anusuya—has psychic capacity for total self giving

“The gods of the Puranas are merciless gods who respect only power and have nothing of the true love, charity or profound goodness that the Divine has put into the human consciousness—and which compensate psychically for all the outer defects. They themselves have nothing of this, they have no psychic.

But what does Anusuya represent?

She is a portrait of the ideal woman according to the Hindu conception, the woman who worships her husband as a god, which means that she sees the Supreme in her husband. And so this woman was much more powerful than all the gods of the Puranas precisely because she had this psychic capacity for total self-giving; and her faith in the Supreme's presence in her husband gave her a much greater power than that of all the gods.”

Mother's Agenda

(Vol. 1, pg. 141)

The ideal of physical beauty for a woman

"What is the ideal of physical beauty for a woman?"

Perfect harmony of proportions, suppleness and strength, grace and force, plasticity, endurance and, above all, an excellent health, unvarying, unchanging, the result of a pure soul, of a joyful trust in life and an unshakable faith in the divine Grace."

(CWM 8: 242)

Love in a woman

"When a woman loves or admires, her mind is instinctively moulded by the one she loves or admires, and this influence can last after the feeling itself has gone or appears to be gone."

(CWSA 35:516)

4. Man and woman have an equal need of one another

“Woman needs man not more than man needs woman; or rather, more exactly, **man and woman have an equal need of one another.**”

Even in the mere material domain, there are as many men who depend materially upon women as there are women who depend upon men. If humility were a result of that dependency, then, in the first case, the men ought to be humble and the women to have the authority.

Besides, to say that women should be humble because it is thus that they please men, is also erroneous. It would lead one to think that woman has been put on earth only for the purpose of giving pleasure to man—which is absurd.”

(CWM 2: 151)

Psychic relationship

“Even in the world there have been relations between man and woman in which sex could not intervene—purely psychic relations. The consciousness of sex difference would be there no doubt, but without coming in as a source of desire or disturbance into the relation. But naturally it needs a certain psychic development before that is possible.”

(CWSA 31: 306–307)

5. Areas Where Women Have to Progress

“This is not to say that only woman’s exceptional qualities have been revealed by the present war. Her weaknesses, her faults, her pettiness have also been given the opportunity of display, and certainly if women wish to take the place they claim in the governing of nations they must progress much further in the mastery of self, the broadening of ideas and points of view, in intellectual suppleness and oblivion of their sentimental preferences in order to become worthy of the management of public affairs.

It is certain that purely masculine politics have given proof of incapacity; they have foundered too often in their search of strictly personal interest, and in their arbitrary and violent action. Doubtless women’s politics would bring about a tendency to disinterestedness and more humanitarian solutions. But unfortunately, in their present state, women in general are creatures of passion and enthusiastic partisanship; they lack the reasoning calm that purely intellectual activity gives; the latter is undoubtedly dangerous because hard and cold and pitiless, nevertheless it is unquestionably useful to master the overflow of sentiment which cannot hold a predominant place in the ruling of collective interests.”

(CWM 2: 147–149)

5. Areas Where Women Have to Progress

“You say that you could not bring up your children properly because although you are well-educated and cultured you have no time to spare for them, and that your wife has time but she is uneducated, uncultured, good for nothing. Will you tell me who is responsible for her condition? For more than twenty-five years she has lived with you. What did you do in these twenty-five years to educate her or give her your ‘culture’—absolutely nothing. Even the idea did not occur to you. You never thought that even if you had given her one hour daily for her education, it would have made a big difference in twenty-five years. For you **she existed only as a machine** to look after your comforts and produce your children. You could not take her into your confidence, you could not do anything for her improvement, but there you stand with all your vanity, blaming her for being uneducated and uncultured.

I hold you responsible for all her shortcomings.”

(CWM 14: 294)

6. Idea of Marriage

The secret of lasting union

“To unite your physical lives, your material interests, to become partners in order to face together the difficulties and successes, the defeats and victories of life—that is the very foundation of marriage, but you already know that it is not enough.

To be united in your sensations, to have the same aesthetic tastes and enjoyments, to be moved in common by the same things, one through the other and one for the other—that is good, that is necessary, but it is not enough.

To be one in your deeper feelings, to keep a mutual affection and tenderness that never vary in spite of all the blows of life and can withstand every weariness and irritation and disappointment, to be always and on every occasion happy, extremely happy, to be together, to find in every circumstance tranquillity, peace and joy in each other—that is good, that is very good, that is indispensable, but it is not enough.

To unite your minds, to harmonise your thoughts and make them complementary, to share your intellectual preoccupations and discoveries; in short, to make your sphere of mental activity identical through a widening and enrichment acquired by both at once—that is good, that is absolutely necessary, but it is not enough.

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Beyond all that, in the depths, at the centre, at the summit of the being, there is a Supreme Truth of being, an Eternal Light, independent of all the circumstances of birth, country, environment, education; That is the origin, cause and master of our spiritual development; it is That which gives a permanent direction to our lives; it is That which determines our destinies; it is in the consciousness of That that you must unite. To be one in aspiration and ascension, to move forward at the same pace on the same spiritual path, that is the secret of a lasting union.”
(CWM 13: 237)

Only for Auroville

“Of course the whole idea of marriage is amusing because I consider the thing childish.

You know in Auroville there will be no marriages. If a man and a woman love each other and want to live together they may do so without any ceremony. If they want to separate they can also do so freely. Why should people be compelled to stay together when they have ceased to love each other?

A lot of crimes would be prevented if people were free in this respect. They would not have to hide things from one another or even commit crimes to be separated. Of course, if they truly love each other they will continue

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to live together always naturally, without being forced to do so by any law. That is why this ceremony and ritual of marriage is so childish.

Children born in Auroville will have no family name. They will have just the first name.”(CWM 13: 236)

To leave the family for spiritual life

“The tendency you speak of, to leave the family and social life for the spiritual life, has been traditional in India for the last 2000 years and more—chiefly among men, it touches only a very small number of women. It must be remembered that Indian social life has subordinated almost entirely the individual to the family. Men and women do not marry according to their free will; their marriages are mostly arranged for them while they are still children. Not only so, but the mould of society has been long of an almost iron fixity putting each individual in his place and expecting him to conform to it. You speak of issues and a courageous solution, but in this life there are no problems and issues and no call for a solution—a courageous solution is only possible where there is freedom of the personal will; but where the only solution (if one remains in this life) is submission to the family will, there can be nothing of that kind. It is a secure life and can be happy if one accommodates oneself to it and has no unusual aspirations beyond it or

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is fortunate in one's environment; but it has no remedy for or escape from incompatibilities or any kind of individual frustration; it leaves little room for initiative or free movement or any individualism. The only outlet for the individual is his inner spiritual or religious life and the recognised escape is the abandonment of the *samsāra*, the family life, by some kind of Sannyasa. The Sannyasi, the Vaishnava Vairagi or the Brahmachari are free; they are dead to the family and can live according to the dictates of the inner spirit. Only if they enter into an order or asram, they have to abide by the rules of the order, but that is their own choice, not a responsibility which has been laid on them without their choice. Society recognised this door of escape from itself; religion sanctioned the idea that distaste for the social or worldly life was a legitimate ground for taking up that of the recluse or religious wanderer. But this was mainly for men; women, except in old times among the Buddhists who had their convents and in later times among the Vaishnavas, had little chance of such an escape unless a very strong spiritual impulse drove them which would take no denial. As for the wife and children left behind by the Sannyasi, there was little difficulty, for the joint family was there to take up or rather to continue their maintenance.

At present what has happened is that the old framework remains, but modern ideas have brought a

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condition of in-adaptation, of unrest, the old family system is breaking up and women are seeking in more numbers the same freedom of escape as men have always had in the past. That would account for the cases you have come across—but I don't think the number of such cases can be as yet at all considerable, it is quite a new phenomenon; the admission of women to Asrams is itself a novelty. The extreme unhappiness of a mental and vital growth which does not fit in with the surroundings, of marriages imposed that are unsuitable and where there is no meeting-point between husband and wife, of an environment hostile and intolerant of one's inner life and on the other hand the innate tendency of the Indian mind to seek a refuge in the spiritual or religious escape will sufficiently account for the new development. If society wants to prevent it, it must itself change. As to individuals, each case must be judged on its own merits; there is too much complexity in the problem and too much variation of nature, position, motives for a general rule."

(CWSA 28: 439–441)

Reliance on the Divine will and call the help from above

"If your husband is in a perilous period of his life and suffering from ill-health and you feel for him, the best thing for him is still that you should tranquillise yourself

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and call the Divine to his help to pass through. Even in the ordinary life disquietude and depression create an unhelpful atmosphere for one who is ill or in difficulties. Once you are a sadhak, then whether for yourself or to help others for whom you still feel, the true spiritual attitude of reliance on the Divine Will and call for the help from above is always the best and most effective course.”
(CWSA 31: 321)

“To be truly a good wife is almost as difficult as to be a true disciple.”
(CWM 14: 290)

Only for the few exceptional individuals who follow spiritual ideal

“In reference to the view of some modern social thinkers expressing fear of the possible breakdown and disappearance of the family system, You have remarked that this breakdown ‘was, and is still, an indispensable movement to bring humanity to a higher and broader realisation.’

This raises some important questions which I state below for Your clarification:

1. Do You consider this dissolution of the family system indispensable only for the few exceptional individuals who

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follow some high mental or spiritual ideal or also for the general humanity?

Yes, only for the few exceptional individuals who follow some high mental or spiritual ideal.

2. If You advocate a complete dissolution of the family system for the entire humanity, do You consider it advisable for it to happen even before the new process of birth by direct materialisation has been normalised on earth?

More liberty and plasticity in the system are advisable. Fixed rules are harmful to evolution.

3. Do You also consider the abolition of the marriage system as equally indispensable as the abolition of the family system for the higher development of humanity? So long as the new process of birth has not been normalised, would not the present manner of sexual procreation continue? In that case, would not some form of marriage relationship be necessary?

Marriage will always take place, but legal ceremonies must not be enforced, to avoid illegality.

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4. So long as the new process of birth has not been normalised and the children continue to be born through the present sexual process, is not the family life and atmosphere best suited to their upbringing, especially in their early formative years? The other alternative is to provide for their care and upbringing through some other agency, like the State-nurseries, as was advocated by some Communist thinkers. But this view has not found many supporters, for it has been realised that the tender and affectionate care which the young children need could best be provided only in the intimate atmosphere of the family home by the parents. If this is true, then for the sake of the young children at least, would not the family be necessary, until the new method of birth becomes possible and normal in future?

Here also both things must be equally admitted and practised. There are many cases in which it would be a blessing for the baby to be separated from his parents.

A minimum of *rules*.

A maximum of *freedom*.

All possibilities must have equal scope for manifestation, then humanity will progress more rapidly.”
(CWM 14: 292–293)

Complimentary soul and marriage

“The first [*question*] was about a complementary soul and marriage. The answer is easy to give; the way of the spiritual life lies for you in one direction and marriage lies in quite another and opposite. All talk about a complementary soul is a camouflage with which the mind tries to cover the sentimental, sensational and physical wants of the lower vital nature. It is that vital nature in you which puts the question and would like an answer reconciling its desires and demands with the call of the true soul in you. But it must not expect a sanction for any such incongruous reconciliation from here. The way of the supramental Yoga is clear; it lies not through any concession to these things,—not, in your case, through the satisfaction, under a spiritual cover if possible, of its craving for the comforts and gratifications of a domestic and conjugal life and the enjoyment of the ordinary emotional desires and physical passions, but through the purification and transformation of the forces which these movements pervert and misuse. Not these human and animal demands, but the divine Ananda which is above and beyond them and which the indulgence of these degraded forms would prevent from descending, is the great thing that the aspiration of the vital being must demand in the sadhaka.

(CWSA 31: 310)

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"What are the correct ideas with regard to gārhasthya life?"

Gārhasthya life, meaning marriage and rearing of a family, is a social institution based on ego. It can only be a stage in the evolution of a spiritual man."
(CWSA 35: 718)

7. True Maternity Begins with the Conscious Creation of a Being

Conscious creation of a being

"To speak of children to the women of Japan is, I think, to speak to them of their dearest, their most sacred subject. Indeed, in no other country in the world have the children taken such an important, such a primordial place. They are, here, the centre of care and attention. On them are concentrated—and rightly—the hopes for the future. They are the living promise of growing prosperity for the country. They [children of Japan] are the living promise of growing prosperity for the country. Therefore, the most important work assigned to women in Japan is child-making. Maternity is considered as the principal role of woman. But this is true only so long as we understand what is meant by the word maternity. For to bring children into the world as rabbits do their young—instinctively, ignorantly, machine-like, that certainly cannot be called maternity! **True maternity begins with the conscious creation of a being**, with the willed shaping of a soul coming to develop and utilise a new body. The true domain of women is the spiritual. We forget it but too often.

To bear a child and construct his body almost subconsciously is not enough. The work really commences when, by the power of thought and will, we

7. True Maternity Begins with the Conscious Creation of a Being
conceive and create a character capable of manifesting
an ideal...

And do not say that we have no power for realising
such a
thing. Innumerable instances of this very effective power
could be brought out as proofs.

First of all, the effect of physical environment was
recognized and studied long ago. It is by surrounding
women with forms of art and beauty that, little by little,
the ancient Greeks created the exceptionally harmonious
race that they were.

Individual instances of the same fact are numerous.
It is not rare to see a woman who, while pregnant, had
looked at constantly and admired a beautiful picture or
statue, giving birth to a child after the perfect likeness of
this picture or statue. I met several of these instances
myself. Among them, I remember very clearly two little
girls; they were twins and perfectly beautiful. But the
most astonishing was how little like their parents they
were. They reminded me of a very famous picture
painted by the English artist Reynolds. One day I made
this remark to the mother, who immediately exclaimed:
'Indeed, is it not so? You will be interested to know that
while I was expecting these children, I had, hanging
above my bed, a very good reproduction of Reynolds'
picture. Before going to sleep and as soon as I woke, my
last and first glance was for that picture; and in my heart

7. True Maternity Begins with the Conscious Creation of a Being

I hoped: may my children be like the faces in this picture. You see that I succeeded quite well!’ In truth, she could be proud of her success, and her example is of great utility for other women.

But if we can obtain such results on the physical plane where the materials are the least plastic, how much more so on the psychological plane where the influence of thought and will is so powerful. Why accept the obscure bonds of heredity and atavism—which are nothing else than subconscious preferences for our own trend of character—when we can, by concentration and will, call into being a type constructed according to the highest ideal we are able to conceive? With this effort, maternity becomes truly precious and sacred; indeed with this, we enter the glorious work of the Spirit, and womanhood rises above animality and its ordinary instincts, towards real humanity and its powers.

In this effort, in this attempt, then, lies our true duty. And if this duty was always of the greatest importance, it certainly has taken a capital one in the present turn of the earth’s evolution.”

(CWM 2: 157–158)

Women’s role spiritual educator—Superman will have to be born of woman

“And from now, we must reassume our veritable position, take again our due place and assert our real importance—

7. True Maternity Begins with the Conscious Creation of a Being that of spiritual former and educator. Indeed, some men, perhaps a little vainglorious of their so-called advantages, may despise the apparent weakness of women (although even this exterior weakness is not quite certain) but: 'Do what he may, the superman will have to be born of woman all the same,' someone said very rightly.

The superman shall be born of woman, this is a big unquestionable truth; but it is not enough to be proud of this truth, we must clearly understand what it means, become aware of the responsibility it creates, and learn to face earnestly the task which is put before us. This task is precisely our most important share in the present world-wide work.

For that, we must first understand—at least in their broad lines—what are the means by which the present chaos and obscurity can be transformed into light and harmony.

Many means have been suggested: political, social, ethical, even religious. ... Indeed, none of these seem sufficient to face with any reliable success the magnitude of the task to be done. Only a new spiritual influx, creating in man a new consciousness, can overcome the enormous mass of difficulties barring the way of the workers. A new spiritual light, a manifestation upon earth of some divine force unknown until now, a Thought of God, new for us, descending into this world and taking a new form here.

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And here we come back to our starting point, to our duty of true maternity. For this form meant to manifest the spiritual force capable of transforming the earth's present conditions, this new form, who is to construct it if not the women?

Thus we see that at this critical period of the world's life it is no longer sufficient to give birth to a being in whom our highest personal ideal is manifested; we must strive to find out what is the future type, whose advent Nature is planning. It is no longer sufficient to form a man similar to the greatest men we have heard of or known, or even greater, more accomplished and gifted than they; we must strive to come in touch mentally, by the constant aspiration of our thought and will, with the supreme possibility which, exceeding all human measures and features, will give birth to the superman.

Once again Nature feels one of her great impulses towards the creation of something utterly new, something unexpected. And it is to this impulse that we must answer and obey.

Let us try first to discover where this impulse of Nature will lead us. And the best way for that is to look back on the lessons given to us by the Past.

We see that each progress of Nature, each manifestation of a new capacity and principle upon earth is marked by the appearance of a new species. In the same way, the progressive forms of the life of races, of

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peoples, of individuals, follow each other through the human cycles, ceaselessly inspired, fecundated, renewed by the efforts of the guides of humanity. And all these forms aim at the same goal, the mysterious, the glorious goal of Nature.

It is to this call of Nature that we must answer, to this magnificent, to this grandiose work that we must devote ourselves. Let us try to make as clear as we can the steps of our advance on this difficult and as yet unexplored path.

First of all we must be careful, in our attempt to conceive the future man or superman, not to adopt an actual type of man, perfecting or aggrandising him. To avoid as much as possible this mistake we should study the teachings of life's evolution. We have already seen that the appearance of a new species always announces the manifestation on earth of a new principle, a new plane of consciousness, a new force or power. But, at the same time, while the new species acquires this formerly unmanifested power or consciousness, it may lose one or many of the perfections which were the characteristics of the immediately preceding species. For instance, to speak only of the last step of Nature's development, what are the greatest differences between man and his immediate predecessor, the ape? In the monkey we see vitality and physical ability reaching the utmost perfection, a perfection that the new species had to abandon. For man,

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there has been no more of that marvellous climbing up trees, somersaults over abysses, jumps from summit to summit, but in exchange he acquired intelligence, the power of reasoning, combining, constructing. Indeed with man it is the life of mind, of intellect which appeared on earth. Man is essentially a mental being; and if his possibilities do not stop there, if he feels in himself other worlds, other faculties, other planes of consciousness beyond his mental life, they are only as promises for the future, in the same way as the mental possibilities are latent in the monkey.

It is true that some men, very few, have lived in that world beyond, which we may call the spiritual; some have been, indeed, the living incarnations of that world on earth, but they are the exceptions, the forerunners showing the way to the race, leading it towards its future realisation, not the average man. But that which was the privilege of a few beings scattered through time and space, shall become the central characteristic of the new type which is to appear.

At present, man governs his life through reason; all the activities of the mind are of common use for him; his means of knowledge are observation and deduction; it is by and through reasoning that he takes his decision and chooses his way—or believes he does—in life.

The new race shall be governed by intuition, that is to say, direct perception of the divine law within. Some

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human beings actually know and experience intuition—as, undoubtedly, certain big gorillas of the forests have glimpses of reasoning.

In mankind, the very few who have cultivated their inner self, who have concentrated their energies on the discovery of the true law of their being, possess more or less the faculty of intuition. When the mind is perfectly silent, pure like a well-polished mirror, immobile as a pond on a breezeless day, then, from above, as the light of the stars drops in the motionless waters, so the light of the supermind, of the Truth within, shines in the quieted mind and gives birth to intuition. Those who are accustomed to listen to this voice out of the Silence, take it more and more as the instigating motive of their actions; and where others, the average men, wander along the intricate paths of reasoning, they go straight their way, guided through the windings of life by intuition, this superior instinct, as by a strong and unfailing hand.

This faculty which is exceptional, almost abnormal now, will certainly be quite common and natural for the new race, the man of tomorrow. But probably the constant exercise of it will be detrimental to the reasoning faculties. As man possesses no more the extreme physical ability of the monkey, so also will the superman lose the extreme mental ability of man, this ability to deceive himself and others.

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Thus, man's road to supermanhood will be open when he declares boldly that all he has yet developed, including the intellect of which he is so rightly and yet so vainly proud, is now no longer sufficient for him, and that to uncase, discover, set free this greater power within, shall be henceforward his great preoccupation. Then will his philosophy, art, science, ethics, social existence, vital pursuits be no longer an exercise of mind and life for themselves, in a circle, but a means for the discovery of a greater Truth behind mind and life and the bringing of its power into our human existence. And this discovery is that of our real, because our highest self and nature."
(CWM 2: 159–164)

Soul that incarnates ... struggles to find its true path

"Last week I spoke to you about birth: how souls enter a body; and I told you that the body is formed in a very unsatisfactory way for almost everyone—exceptions are so rare that one can hardly speak of them.

I told you that due to this obscure birth one arrives with a whole physical baggage of things which generally have to be got rid of, if one truly wants to progress, and someone has quoted my own sentence which runs like this: 'You are brought here by force, the environment is imposed on you by force, the laws of atavism of the

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Of course I could have been more explicit, but I thought I had been clear enough.

The body is formed by a man and a woman who become the father and mother, and it is they who don't even have the *means* of asking the being they are going to bring into the world whether it would like to come or whether this is in accordance with its destiny. And it is on this body they have formed that they impose by force, by force of necessity, an atavism, an environment, later an education, which will almost always be obstacles to its future growth.

Therefore, I said here and I am repeating it—I thought I had been clear enough—that it was about the physical parents and the physical body I was speaking, nothing else. And that the soul which incarnates, whether it be in course of development or fully developed, has to struggle against the circumstances imposed on it by this animal birth, struggle in order to find its true path and again discover its own self fully. That's all."

(CWM 8: 199–200)

Aspiration to have an exceptional child

"...woman who has a psychic aspiration herself and, for some reason or other, without knowing why or how,

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would like to have an exceptional child, answering certain exceptional conditions; if at this moment there is this aspiration upon earth, it creates a vibration, a psychic light which the psychic being sees immediately and, without hesitation it rushes towards it. Then, from that moment (which is the moment of conception), it watches over the formation of the child, so that this formation may be as favourable as possible to the plan it has; consequently its influence is there over the child even before it appears in the physical world.

If all goes well, if there is no accident (accidents can always happen), if all goes well at the moment the child is about to be born, the psychic force (perhaps not in its totality, but a part of the psychic consciousness) rushes into the being and from its very first cry gives it a push towards the experiences it wants the child to acquire. The result is that even if the parents are not conscious, even if the child in its external consciousness is not quite conscious (a little child does not have the necessary brain for that, it forms slowly, little by little), in spite of that, it will be possible for the psychic influence to direct all the events, all the circumstances of the life of this child till the moment it becomes capable of coming into conscious contact with its psychic being (physically it is generally between the age of four and seven, sometimes sooner, sometimes almost immediately, but in such a case we deal with children who are not 'children',

7. True Maternity Begins with the Conscious Creation of a Being who have 'supernatural' qualities, as they say—they are not 'supernatural', but simply the expression of the presence of the psychic being). But there are people who have not had the chance or rather the good fortune if one may call it that, of meeting someone, physically, who could instruct them. And yet they have the feeling that every step of their existence, every circumstance of their life is arranged by someone conscious, so that they may make the maximum progress.”
(CWM 4: 145–146)

Can it happen that the psychic being does not fall at the place where it wanted to take birth?

“If a psychic being sees from its psychic world a light on the earth, it may rush down there without knowing exactly where it is. Everything is possible. But if the psychic being is very conscious, sufficiently conscious, it will seek the light of aspiration in a precise place, because of the culture, the education it will find there. This happens much more frequently than one believes, especially in somewhat educated circles. An intelligent woman with some artistic or philosophical culture, a beginning of conscious individuality, may aspire that the child she is going to have may be the best possible according to her idea or according to what she has read. Hence it is not so very complicated to find a place. The number of psychic beings born constantly being

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(CWM 4: 168)

Is it possible for the parents to give birth to or to ask for the soul they want?

“Sweet Mother, is it possible for the mother and father to give birth to ... to ask for the soul they want?”

To ask? For that they must have an occult knowledge which they don’t usually have. But anyway, what is possible is that instead of doing the thing like an animal driven by instinct or desire and most of the time, without even wanting it, they do it at will, with an aspiration, putting themselves in a state of aspiration and almost of prayer, so that the being they are going to form may be one fit to embody a soul which they *can* call down to incarnate in that form. I knew people—not many, this does not often happen, but still I knew some who chose special circumstances, prepared themselves through special concentration and meditation and aspiration and sought to bring down, into the body they were going to form, an exceptional being.

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In many countries of old—and even now in certain countries—the woman who was going to have a child was placed in special conditions of beauty, harmony, peace and well-being, in very harmonious physical conditions, so that the child could be formed in the best possible conditions. This is obviously what ought to be done, for it is within the reach of human possibilities. Human beings are developed enough for this not to be something quite exceptional. And yet it is quite exceptional, for very few people think of it, while there are *innumerable* people who have children without even wanting to.

That was what I wanted to say.

It is possible to call a soul, but one must be at least a little conscious oneself, and must want to do what one does in the best conditions. This is very rare, but it is possible....

Inevitably, parents have a particular formation, they are particularly healthy or unhealthy; even taking things at their best, they have a heap of atavisms, habits, formations in the subconscious and even in the unconscious, which come from their own birth, the environment they have lived in, their own life; and even if they are remarkable people, they have a large number of things which are quite opposed to the true psychic life—even the best of them, even the most conscious. And besides, there is all that is going to happen. Even if one takes a great deal of trouble over the education of one's

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children, they will come in contact with all sorts of people who will have an influence over them, especially when they are very young, and these influences enter the subconscious, one has to struggle against them later on. I say: even in the best cases, because of the way in which the body is formed at present, you have to face innumerable difficulties which come more or less from the subconscious, but rise to the surface and against which you have to struggle before you can become completely free and develop normally.”

(CWM 8: 200, 203)

The source of a mother's love for her child

“At the risk of removing many illusions in your consciousness, I must tell you something about the source of a mother's love for her child. It is because this child is made of her very own substance, and for quite a long time, relatively long, the material link, the link of substance, between mother and child is *extremely* close—it is as though a bit of her flesh had been taken out and put apart at a distance—and it is only much later that the tie between the two is completely cut. There is a kind of tie, of subtle sensation, such that the mother feels exactly what the child feels, as she would feel it in herself. That then is the material basis of the mother's attachment for the child. It is a basis of material identity, nothing else

7. True Maternity Begins with the Conscious Creation of a Being but that. Feeling comes much later (it may come earlier, that depends on people), but I am speaking of the majority: feeling comes only long afterwards, and it is conditioned. There are all kinds of things. ... I could speak to you for hours on the subject. But still this must not be mixed up with love. It is a material identification which makes the mother feel intimately, feel quite concretely and tangibly what the child is feeling: if the child receives a shock, well, the mother feels it. This lasts at least for two months."

(CWM 6: 106–107)

The education of a child should begin even before birth and continue throughout his life

"Indeed, if we want this education to have its maximum result, it should begin even before birth; in this case it is the mother herself who proceeds with this education by means of a twofold action: first, upon herself for her own improvement, and secondly, upon the child whom she is forming physically. For it is certain that the nature of the child to be born depends very much upon the mother who forms it, upon her aspiration and will as well as upon the material surroundings in which she lives. To see that her thoughts are always beautiful and pure, her feelings always noble and fine, her material surroundings as harmonious as possible and full of a great simplicity—this

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is the part of education which should apply to the mother herself. And if she has in addition a conscious and definite will to form the child according to the highest ideal she can conceive, then the very best conditions will be realised so that the child can come into the world with his utmost potentialities. How many difficult efforts and useless complications would be avoided in this way!

Education to be complete must have five principal aspects corresponding to the five principal activities of the human being: the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual. Usually, these phases of education follow chronologically the growth of the individual; this, however, does not mean that one of them should replace another, but that all must continue, completing one another until the end of his life.

We propose to study these five aspects of education one by one and also their interrelationships. But before we enter into the details of the subject, I wish to make a recommendation to parents. Most parents, for various reasons, give very little thought to the true education which should be imparted to children. When they have brought a child into the world, provided him with food, satisfied his various material needs and looked after his health more or less carefully, they think they have fully discharged their duty. Later on, they will send him to school and hand over to the teachers the responsibility for his education.

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There are other parents who know that their children must be educated and who try to do what they can. But very few, even among those who are most serious and sincere, know that the first thing to do, in order to be able to educate a child, is to educate oneself, to become conscious and master of oneself so that one never sets a bad example to one's child. For it is above all through example that education becomes effective. To speak good words and to give wise advice to a child has very little effect if one does not oneself give him an example of what one teaches. Sincerity, honesty, straightforwardness, courage, disinterestedness, unselfishness, patience, endurance, perseverance, peace, calm, self-control are all things that are taught infinitely better by example than by beautiful speeches. Parents, have a high ideal and always act in accordance with it and you will see that little by little your child will reflect this ideal in himself and spontaneously manifest the qualities you would like to see expressed in his nature. Quite naturally a child has respect and admiration for his parents; unless they are quite unworthy, they will always appear to their child as demigods whom he will try to imitate as best he can.

With very few exceptions, parents are not aware of the disastrous influence that their own defects, impulses, weaknesses and lack of self-control have on their children. If you wish to be respected by a child, have

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respect for yourself and be worthy of respect at every moment. Never be authoritarian, despotic, impatient or ill-tempered. When your child asks you a question, do not give him a stupid or silly answer under the pretext that he cannot understand you. You can always make yourself understood if you take enough trouble; and in spite of the popular saying that it is not always good to tell the truth, I affirm that it is always good to tell the truth, but that the art consists in telling it in such a way as to make it accessible to the mind of the hearer. In early life, until he is twelve or fourteen, the child's mind is hardly open to abstract notions and general ideas. And yet you can train it to understand these things by using concrete images, symbols or parables. Up to quite an advanced age and for some who mentally always remain children, a narrative, a story, a tale well told teach much more than any number of theoretical explanations.

Another pitfall to avoid: do not scold your child without good reason and only when it is quite indispensable. A child who is too often scolded gets hardened to rebuke and no longer attaches much importance to words or severity of tone. And above all, take good care never to scold him for a fault which you yourself commit. Children are very keen and clear-sighted observers; they soon find out your weaknesses and note them without pity.

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When a child has done something wrong, see that he confesses it to you spontaneously and frankly; and when he has confessed, with kindness and affection make him understand what was wrong in his movement so that he will not repeat it, but never scold him; a fault confessed must always be forgiven. You should not allow any fear to come between you and your child; fear is a pernicious means of education: it invariably gives birth to deceit and lying. Only a discerning affection that is firm yet gentle and an adequate practical knowledge will create the bonds of trust that are indispensable for you to be able to educate your child effectively. And do not forget that you have to control yourself constantly in order to be equal to your task and truly fulfil the duty which you owe your child by the mere fact of having brought him into the world."

Bulletin, February 1951

(CWSA 12: 9–11)

8. Lines of Sex in Rebirth

“Not sex exactly [*is present in the psychic being*], but what might be called the masculine and feminine principle. It is a difficult question [*whether a man can be reborn as a woman or a woman as a man*]. There are certain lines the reincarnation follows and so far as my experience goes and general experience goes, one follows usually a single line. But the alteration of sex cannot be declared impossible. There may be some who do alternate. The presence of feminine traits in a male does not necessarily indicate a past feminine birth—they may come in the general play of forces and their formations. There are besides qualities common to both sexes. Also a fragment of the psychological personality may have been associated with a birth not one’s own. One can say of a certain person of the past, ‘That was not myself, but a fragment of my psychological personality was present in him.’ Rebirth is a complex affair and not so simple in its mechanism as in the popular idea.

(CWSA 28: 548–549)

“All the instances I have heard of in the popular accounts of rebirth are of man becoming man and woman becoming woman in the next life—except when they become animal, but even then I think the male becomes

8. Lines of Sex in Rebirth

a male animal and the female a female animal. There are only stray cases quoted like Shikhandi's in the Mahabharata for variations of sex. The Theosophist conception is full of raw imagination, one Theosophist even going so far as to say that if you are a man in this birth you are obliged to be a woman in the next and so on."

(CWSA 28: 549)

"Sweet Mother,

If a soul has taken birth as a boy in one life, does it always remain a boy in future lives, or can it be born as a girl?

Theories differ greatly according to school and sect, and each teaching gives excellent reasons to support its contentions.

Certainly there is an element of truth in all these statements; and not only are all cases possible, but they must have occurred in the course of the earth's history and still do.

The only thing I can speak of with certainty on this subject, is my own experience.

According to my experience, **the soul is divine**, an eternal portion of the Supreme Divine, and therefore it cannot be limited or bound by any law whatever, except its own. These souls are emanated by the Lord to do His

8. Lines of Sex in Rebirth

work in the world, and each one comes on earth with a particular purpose, for a particular work, and with a particular destiny; each has its own law which is binding on itself alone and cannot be made a general rule. So in the eternity of the becoming, every possible case, imaginable and unimaginable, must obviously occur.”

(CWM 17: 356)

9. The Supramental Body Will Be Unsexed

"The supramental body will be unsexed, since the need for animal procreation will no longer exist.

The human form will retain only its symbolic beauty, and one can foresee even now the disappearance of certain ungainly protuberances, such as the genital organs of man and the mammary glands of woman."
(CWM 15: 281)

"I had an experience which was for me interesting, because it was for the first time. It was yesterday or the day before, I do not remember. X was there just in front of me, and I saw her psychic being, dominating over her by so much (*gesture indicating about twenty centimetres*), taller. It was the first time. Her physical being was small and her psychic being was so much bigger. And it was an unsexed being, neither man nor woman. Then I said to myself (possibly it is always so, I do not know, but here I noticed it very clearly), I said to myself, 'But it is the psychic being, it is that which will materialize itself and become the supramental being!'

I saw it, it was so. There were particularities, but these were not well-marked, and it was clearly a being that was neither man nor woman, having the combined characteristics of both. And it was bigger than the person and in every way overtopped her by about so much

9. The Supramental Body Will Be Unsexed

(gesture surpassing the physical body by about twenty centimetres); she was there and it was like this (*same gesture*). And it had this colour ... this colour ... which if it became quite material would be the colour of Auroville (*orange*). It was fainter, as though behind a veil, it was not absolutely precise, but it was that colour. There was hair on the head, but ... it was somewhat different. I shall see better perhaps another time. But it interested me very much, because it was as though that being were telling me, 'But you are busy looking to see what kind of being the supramental will be—there it is! There, it is that.' And it was there. It was the psychic being of the person.

So, one understands. One understands: the psychic being materialises itself ... and that gives continuity to evolution. This creation gives altogether the feeling that there is nothing arbitrary, there is a kind of divine logic behind and it is not like our human logic, it is very much superior to ours—but there is one, and that was fully satisfied when I saw this.

It is really interesting. I was very interested. It was there, calm and quiet, and it said to me, 'You were looking, well, there it is, yes, it is that!'

And then I understood why the mind and the vital were sent out of this body, leaving the psychic being—naturally it was that which had been always governing all the movements, so it was nothing new, but there are no

9. The Supramental Body Will Be Unsexed

difficulties any more: all the complications that were coming from the vital and the mental, adding their impressions and tendencies, all gone. And I understood: 'Ah! It is that, it is this psychic being which has to become the supramental being.'

But I never sought to know what its appearance was like. And when I saw X, I understood. And I see it, I am seeing it still, I have kept the memory. It was as though the hair on the head was red (but it was not like that). And its expression! An expression so fine, and sweetly ironical ... oh! extraordinary, extraordinary. And you understand, I had my eyes open, it was almost a material vision.

So one understands. All of a sudden all the questions have vanished, it has become very clear, very simple.

(Silence)

And it is precisely the psychic that survives. So, if it materializes itself, it means the abolition of death. But 'abolition' ... nothing is abolished except what is not in accordance with the Truth, which goes away ... whatever is not capable of transforming itself in the image of the psychic and becoming an integral part of the psychic.

It is truly interesting."

(CWM 11: 238–239)

9. The Supramental Body Will Be Unsexed

“For the first time, early in the morning, I saw myself, my body—I do not know whether it is the supramental body or ... (how to say it?) a body in transition, but I had a body altogether new, in the sense that it was sexless—it was not a woman nor was it a man.”

(CWM 11: 301)

10. What Needs to Be Got Rid Of

Perversion of a depraved mind at the service of the lowest appetites

"A group of visitors had asked permission to come to me and one evening they came to the Playground. They were rich people, that is, they had more money than they needed to live on. Among them there was a woman in a sari; she was very fat, her sari was arranged so as to hide her body. As she was bending down to receive my blessings, one corner of the sari came open, uncovering a part of her body, a naked belly—an enormous one. I felt a real shock. ... There are corpulent people who have nothing repugnant about them, but I suddenly saw the perversion, the rottenness that this belly concealed, it was like a huge abscess, expressing greed, vice, depraved taste, sordid desire, which finds its satisfaction as no animal would, in grossness and especially in perversity. **I saw the perversion of a depraved mind at the service of the lowest appetites.** Then, all of a sudden, something sprang up from me, a prayer, like a Veda: 'O Lord, this is what must disappear!'"

(CWM 9: 299–300)

Must be pretty, must dress up to attract attention

“As the years pass and the little girls grow up into big girls, suddenly we find that they begin to remember that they are girls, that they must be pretty, they must please, must dress up in a special way, put on little affectations to attract attention—and the whole result of our work collapses.

There are some—there are always exceptions to the rule—who have understood and who try to realise. But even among these there is still in the background that kind of little satisfaction of not being quite ‘like the others,’ of being able to do what the others cannot, and for this to be clearly seen, well, they must compare themselves with the others!”

(CWM 8: 238)

Dress has always been used by woman as an aid to her ‘sex appeal’ as it is now called and man has always been susceptible to it; women also often find dress in man a cause of attraction (e.g. soldier’s uniform). There are also particular tastes in dress—that a sari of a particular colour should attract is quite normal. The attraction works on the sense and the vital, while it is the mind that dislikes the psychological defects and gets cooled down by their exposure; but this repulsion of the mind cannot last as against the stronger vital attraction.”

(CWSA 31: 536)

Instinctive movement to please the male

"A smile or any movement, appearance or action of the woman can be the starting point for these vibrations. I don't suppose it is anything inherent in the smile itself, but all these things have been the habitual means by which sex has been excited in man (*havabhava*) and **the woman uses them, often unconsciously and by mere habit when coming into contact with man**, whether she has or has not any intention of pleasing or moving the man, it still comes up as an instinctive movement. X is of the type of woman who has this **instinctive movement to please the male**. But even when the woman smiles quite casually and without even the habitual instinctive movement, still there may be the vibration on the man's side owing to the habit of response in him to feminine attractions. These things are almost mechanical in their starting. As I wrote before it is the automatic answer of the physical or vital mind (imagination etc.) that prolongs it and makes it effective. Otherwise the vibrations would die away after a time."
(CWSA 31: 535–536)

Mixture of sex feeling

"As girls and boys are educated together here we have always insisted on the relations between them to be those of simple comradeship without any mixture of sex

feeling and sensuality; and to avoid all temptation they are forbidden to go in one another's room and to meet anywhere privately. This has been made clear to everybody. And if these rules are strictly followed, nothing unpleasant can happen."

(CWM 12: 156–157)

Sex-pull

"It is of course the universal sex-force that acts, but certain people are more full of it than others, have the sex-appeal as they now say in Europe. This sex-appeal is exercised especially by women even without any conscious intention of putting it on a particular person. Consciously they may turn it on a particular person, but it may exercise itself on many others whom they do not wish particularly to capture. All women have not the sex-appeal, but some force of sex-pull there is in most. There is of course a similar pull in men for women."

(CWSA 31: 536)

"The whole of yesterday I felt a dark power hanging over me. When I asked the Mother if it was the same universal dark power that, through woman, binds the soul to the earth, she replied, 'Why woman? Through man as well!' Yes, man as well—but is there not something which makes woman a more convenient, capacious and dangerous tool in its hand?"

That is what man thinks; it is his experience. Woman's experience is that man is the dangerous animal and instrument of all her sufferings and downfalls.

It is not man or woman; it is the Sex-Force which is the dangerous tool in the hands of the Ignorance."
(CWSA 35: 714)

Only women should cook

The idea that women should cook for males is against my principles. Are they slaves?
(CWM 14: 289–290)

No law can liberate women unless they liberate themselves

"No law can liberate women unless they liberate themselves.

What makes them slaves is:

- (1) Attraction towards the male and his strength,
- (2) Desire for home life and its security,
- (3) Attachment to motherhood.

If they get free from these three slaveries, they will truly be the equal of men.

Men also have three slaveries:

- (1) Spirit of possession, attachment to power and domination,
- (2) Desire for sexual relation with women,

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(3) Attachment to the small comforts of married life.

If they get rid of these three slaveries, they can truly become the equal of women.”

(CWM 14: 289)

11. Woman's Physiology

Monthly Periods Cannot Be the Cause of Any Weakness or Discomfort

"It is true that we are, in our inner being, a spirit, a living soul that holds within it the Divine and aspires to become it, to manifest it perfectly; it is equally true, for the moment at least, that in our most material external being, in our body, we are still an animal, a mammalian, of a higher order no doubt, but made like animals and subject to the laws of animal Nature.

You have been taught surely that one peculiarity of the mammal is that the female conceives the child, carries it and builds it up within herself until the moment when the young one, fully formed, comes out of the body of its mother and lives independently.

In view of this function **Nature has provided the woman with an additional quantity of blood which has to be used for the child in the making.** But as the use of this additional blood is not a constant need, when there is no child in the making, the surplus blood has to be thrown out to avoid excess and congestion.

This is the cause of the monthly periods. It is a simple natural phenomenon, result of the way in which woman has been made and there is no need to attach to it more importance than to the other functions of the body. It is not a disease and cannot be the cause of any

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weakness or real discomfort. Therefore a normal woman, one who is not ridiculously sensitive, should merely take the necessary precautions of cleanliness, never think of it any more and lead her daily life as usual without any change in her programme. This is the best way to be in good health.

Besides, even while recognising that in our body we still belong dreadfully to animality, we must not therefore conclude that this animal part, as it is the most concrete and the most real for us, is one to which we are obliged to be subjected and which we must allow to rule over us. Unfortunately this is what happens most often in life and men are certainly much more slaves than masters of their physical being. Yet it is the contrary that should be, for the truth of individual life is quite another thing.

We have in us an intelligent will more or less enlightened which is the first instrument of our psychic being. It is this intelligent will that we must use in order to learn to live not like an animal man, but as a human being, candidate for Divinity.

And the first step towards this realisation is to become master of this body instead of remaining an impotent slave.

One most effective help towards this goal is physical culture.

For about a century there has been a renewal of a knowledge greatly favoured in ancient times, partially

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forgotten since then. Now it is reawakening, and with the progress of modern science, it is acquiring quite a new amplitude and importance. This knowledge deals with the physical body and the extraordinary mastery that can be obtained over it with the help of enlightened and systematised physical education.

This renewal has been the result of the action of a new power and light that have spread upon the earth in order to prepare it for the great transformations that must take place in the near future.

We must not hesitate to give a primary importance to this physical education whose very purpose is to make our body capable of receiving and expressing the new force which seeks to manifest upon earth.

This said, I now answer the questions you put to me.

1. What attitude should a girl take towards her monthly periods?

The attitude you take towards something quite natural and unavoidable. Give it as little importance as possible and go on with your usual life, without changing anything because of it.

2. Should a girl participate in her normal programme of Physical Education during her periods?

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Certainly if she is accustomed to physical exercise, she must not stop because of that. If one keeps the habit of leading one's normal life always, very soon one does not even notice the presence of the menses.

3. Why are some girls completely run down during their periods and suffer from pain in the lower back and abdomen while others may have slight or no inconvenience at all?

It is a question of temperament and mostly of education. If from her childhood a girl has been accustomed to pay much attention to the slightest uneasiness and to make a big fuss about the smallest inconvenience, then she loses all capacity of endurance and anything becomes the occasion for being pulled down. Especially if the parents themselves get too easily anxious about the reactions of their children. It is wiser to teach a child to be a bit sturdy and enduring than to show much care for these small inconveniences and accidents that cannot always be avoided in life. An attitude of quiet forbearance is the best one can adopt for oneself and teach to the children.

It is a well-known fact that if you expect some pain you are bound to have it and, once it has come, if you concentrate upon it, then it increases more and more until it becomes what is usually termed as 'unbearable',

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although with some will and courage there is hardly any pain that one cannot bear.

4. How can a girl overcome her suffering and pain during periods?

There are some exercises that make the abdomen strong and improve the circulation. These exercises must be done regularly and continued even after the pains have disappeared. For the grown-up girls, this kind of pain comes almost entirely from sexual desires. If we get rid of the desires we get rid of the pain. There are two ways of getting rid of desires; the first one, the usual one, is through satisfaction (or rather what is called so, because there is no such thing as satisfaction in the domain of desire). That means leading the ordinary human-animal life, marriage, children and all the rest of it.

There is, of course, another way, a better way,—control, mastery, transformation; this is more dignified and also more effective.

5. Do you think there should be different types of exercises for boys and girls? Will a girl bring harm on her genital organs by practising the so-called manly sports?

In all cases, as well for boys as for girls, the exercises must be graded according to the strength and the

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capacity of each one. If a weak student tries at once to do hard and heavy exercises, he may suffer for his foolishness. But with a wise and progressive training, girls as well as boys can participate in all kinds of sports, and thus increase their strength and health.

To become strong and healthy can never bring harm to a body, even if it is a woman's body!

6. Will a girl's appearance change and become muscular like a muscular man's and make her look ugly if she practises vigorous exercises?

Weakness and fragility may look attractive in the view of a perverted mind, but it is not the truth of Nature nor the truth of the Spirit.

If you have ever looked at the photos of the women gymnasts you will know what perfectly beautiful bodies they have; and nobody can deny that they are muscular!

7. Will the practice of vigorous types of exercises bring difficulties in child-birth if the girls want to marry and have children afterwards?

I never came across such a case. On the contrary, women who are trained to strong exercises and have a muscular body go through the ordeal of child-formation and child-birth much more easily and painlessly.

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I heard the authentic story of one of these African women who are accustomed to walk for miles carrying heavy loads. She was pregnant and the time of delivery came during one of the day's marches. She sat on the side of the track, under a tree, gave birth to the child, waited for half an hour, then she rose and adding the new-born babe to the former luggage, went on her way quietly, as if nothing had happened. This is a splendid example of what a woman can do when she is in full possession of her health and strength.

Doctors will say that such a thing cannot occur in a civilized world with all the so-called progress that humanity has achieved; but we cannot deny that, from the physical point of view, this is a more happy condition than all the sensitiveness, the sufferings and the complications created by the modern civilisations.

Moreover, usually doctors are more interested in the abnormal cases, and they judge mostly from that point of view. But for us, it is different; it is from the normal that we can rise to the supernormal, not from the abnormal which is always a sign of perversion and inferiority.

8. What should be the ideal of physical education for a girl from the point of view of her sex?

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I do not see why there should be any special ideal of physical education for girls other than for boys.

Physical education has for its aim to develop all the possibilities of a human body, possibilities of harmony, strength, plasticity, cleverness, agility, endurance, and to increase the control over the functioning of the limbs and the organs, to make of the body a perfect instrument at the disposal of a conscious will. This programme is excellent for all human beings equally, and there is no point in wanting to adopt another one for girls.

9. What roles should man and woman play in our new way of life? What shall be the relation between them?

Why make at all a distinction between them? They are all equally human beings, trying to become fit instruments for the Divine Work, above sex, caste, creed and nationality, all children of the same Infinite Mother and aspirants to the one Eternal Godhead.

10. What should be the ideal of a woman's physical beauty?

A perfect harmony in the proportions, suppleness and strength, grace and force, plasticity and endurance, and above all, an excellent health, unvarying and unchanging,

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which is the result of a pure soul, a happy trust in life and
an unshakable faith in the Divine Grace.

One word to finish:

I have told you these things, because you needed
to hear them, but do not make of them absolute dogmas,
for that would take away their truth.”

(CWM 12: 191–197)

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“People are drawn together or one is drawn to another by a certain feeling of affinity, of agreement or of attraction between some part of one’s own nature and some part of the other’s nature. At first this only is felt; one sees all that is good or pleasant to one in the other’s nature and even attributes, perhaps, qualities to him that are not there or not so much there as one thinks. But with closer acquaintance other parts of the nature are felt with which one is not in affinity—perhaps there is a clash of ideas or opposition of feelings or conflict of two egos. If there is a strong love or friendship of a lasting character, then one may overcome these difficulties of contact and arrive at a harmonising or accommodation; but very often this is not there or the disagreement is so acute as to counteract the tendency of accommodation or else the ego gets so hurt as to recoil. Then it is quite possible for one to begin to see too much and exaggerate the faults of the other or to attribute things to him of a bad or unpleasant character that are not there. The whole view can change, the good feeling change into ill-feeling, alienation, even enmity or antipathy. This is always happening in human life. The opposite also happens, but less easily—i.e. the change from ill-feeling to good feeling, from opposition to harmony. But of course ill-opinion or ill-feeling towards a person need not arise from this cause alone. It happens

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from many causes, instinctive dislike, jealousy, conflicting interests, etc.

One must try to look calmly on others, not overstress either virtues or defects, without ill-feeling or misunderstanding or injustice, with a calm mind and vision.”

(CWSA 31: 299–300)

“All that [*vanity, jealousy, the sense of not being loved*] of course is not love, but self-love. Jealousy is only an ugly form of self-love. That is what people do not understand—they even think that demands and jealousy and wounded vanity are signs of love or at least natural attendants of it.”

(CWSA 31: 245)

“There are a number of women who can love with the mind, the psychic, the vital (heart), but they shrink from a touch on the body and even when that goes, the physical act remains abhorrent to them. They may yield under pressure, but it does not reconcile them to act which always seems to them animal and degrading. Women know this, but men seem to find it hard to believe; but it is perfectly true.”

(CWSA 31:493)

"Abnormal is a word which you can stick on anything that is not quite common, cheap and ordinary. In that way genius is abnormal, so is spirituality, so is the attempt to live by high ideals. The tendency to physical chastity in women is not abnormal, it is fairly common and includes a very high feminine type.

The mind is the seat of thought and perception, the heart is the seat of love, the vital of desire but how does that prevent the existence of mental love? As the mind can be invaded by the feelings of the emotional or the vital, so the heart too can be dominated by the mind and moved by mental forces.

There is a vital love, a physical love. It is possible for the vital to desire a woman for various vital reasons without love—in order to satisfy the instinct of domination or possession, in order to draw in the vital forces of a woman so as to feed one's own vital or for the exchange of vital forces, to satisfy vanity, the hunter's instinct of the chase etc. etc. [This is from the man's viewpoint—but the woman also has her vital motives] This is often called love, but it is only vital desire, a kind of lust. If however the emotions of the heart are awakened, then it becomes vital love, a mixed affair with any or all of these vital motives strong, but still vital love.

There may too be a physical love, the attraction of beauty, the physical sex-appeal or anything else of the kind awakening the emotions of the heart. If that does

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not happen, then the physical need is all and that is sheer lust, nothing more. But physical love is possible.

In the same way there can be a mental love. It arises from the attempt to find one's ideal in another or from some strong mental passion of admiration and wonder or from the mind's seeking for a comrade, a complement and fulfiller of one's nature, a *sahadharmī*, a guide and helper, a leader and master or from a hundred other mental motives. By itself that does not amount to love, though often it is so ardent as to be hardly distinguishable from it and may even push to sacrifice of life, entire self-giving etc. etc. But when it awakes the emotions of the heart, then it may lead to a very powerful love which is yet mental in its root and dominant character. Ordinarily, however, it is the mind and vital together which combine; but this combination can exist along with a disinclination or positive dislike for the physical act and its accompaniments. No doubt if the man presses, the woman is likely to yield, but it is *à contre-cœur*, as they say, against her feelings and her deepest instincts. It is an ignorant psychology that reduces everything to the sex-motive and the sex-impulse." (CWSA 31: 492–493)

"It is certainly easier to have friendship between man and man or between woman and woman than between man and woman, because there the sexual intrusion is

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normally absent. In a friendship between man and woman the sexual turn can at any moment come in in a subtle or a direct way and produce perturbations. But there is no impossibility of friendship between man and woman pure of this element; such friendships can exist and have always existed. All that is needed is that the lower vital should not look in at the back door or be permitted to enter.

There is often a harmony between a masculine and a feminine nature, an attraction or an affinity which rests on something other than any open or covert lower vital (sexual) basis—it depends sometimes predominantly on the mental or on the psychic or on the higher vital, sometimes on a mixture of these for its substance. In such cases friendship is natural and there is little chance of other elements coming in to pull it downwards or break it. It is also a mistake to think that the vital alone has warmth and the psychic is something frigid without any flame in it. A clear limpid goodwill is a very good and desirable thing—one has only to consider what a changed place the Asram would be if all had it for each other. But that is not what is meant by psychic love. Love is love and not merely goodwill. Psychic love can have a warmth and a flame as intense and more intense than the vital, only it is a pure fire, not dependent on the satisfaction of ego-desire or on the eating up of the fuel it embraces. It is a white flame, not a red one; but white heat is not

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inferior to the red variety in its ardour. It is true that the psychic love does not usually get its full play in human relations and human nature, it finds the fullness of its fire and ecstasy more easily when it is lifted towards the Divine. In the human relation the psychic love gets mixed up with other elements which seek at once to use it and overshadow it. It gets an outlet for its own full intensities only at rare moments. Otherwise it comes in only as an element, but even so it contributes all the higher things in a love that is predominantly vital—all the finer sweetness, tenderness, fidelity, self-giving, self-sacrifice, reachings of soul to soul, idealising sublimations that lift up human love beyond itself come from the psychic. If it could dominate and govern and transmute the other elements, mental, vital, physical, of human love, then love could be on the earth some reflection or preparation of the real thing, an integral union of the soul and its instruments in a dual life. But even some imperfect appearance of that is rare. Here we do not talk of psychic love between sadhaks, for the reason that that comes usually to be employed as a cover and excuse for things that are not at all psychic and have no place in the spiritual life.

Our view is that the normal thing is in Yoga for the entire flame of the nature to turn towards the Divine and the rest must wait for the true basis; to build higher things on the sand and mire of the ordinary consciousness is not safe. That does not necessarily

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exclude friendships or comradeships, but these must be subordinate altogether to the central fire. If anyone makes meanwhile the relation with the Divine his one absorbing aim, that is quite natural and gives the full force to the sadhana. Psychic love finds itself wholly when it is the radiation of the diviner consciousness for which we are seeking; till then it is difficult for it to put out its undimmed integral self and figure.

P. S. Mind, vital, physical are properly instruments for the soul and spirit; when they work for themselves then they produce ignorant and imperfect things—if they can be made into conscious instruments of the psychic and the spirit, then they get their own diviner fulfilment; that is the idea contained in what we call transformation in this Yoga.”

(CWSA 31: 307–308)

...the reality of love I speak of is above and beyond all gender, masculine or feminine; and when it incarnates in a human body, it does so indifferently in the body of a man or a woman according to the needs of the work to be done.

(CWM 12: 70–71)

“The true symbol for it [image of Krishna and Radha] would not be the human sex-attraction, but the soul, the psychic, hearing the call of the Divine and flowering into

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the complete love and surrender that brings the supreme Ananda. That is what Radha and Krishna by their divine union bring about in the human consciousness and it is so that you must regard it..."

(CWSA 29: 494)

"...in the proper sense of the word—they [Gopis] are extraordinary by their extremeness of love, passionate devotion, unreserved self-giving. Whoever has that, however humble his position in other respects, learning, external sanctity etc. etc., can easily follow after Krishna and reach him; that seems to me the sense of the symbol of the Gopis. There are many other significances, of course—that is only one among the many."

(CWSA 29: 493)

"But the four beings I first spoke to you about are sexless, they were neither man nor woman; and in the vital world there is an entire part of the vital creation which is the result of these beings, an entire part which has no sex. Besides, the gods too made a world which was sexless. It is the world of angels, what are called angels, what in occultism are called fashioners. But these are sexless spirits; they are represented with wings, you know, they are sexless spirits.

There are in the universe, already, beings who have no sex, who are neither men nor women, and there are

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many of them in the vital world. There are entities with sex in the vital world but in its most material part, the one closest to the earth, and not in its most important part; the most important part is sexless. This does not make them any better, however, since they are all beings hostile to the divine Will and divine realisation, but it gives them a terrific force. And so in return the gods too have created a whole set of beings who have no sex and whom men speak of as angels; how does one call it? 'Your guardian angel', or what else? It is especially 'angel'."

(CWM 7: 158)

13. Woman in Ancient India

Not denied civic rights

“It may be noted too that in law and theory at least women in ancient India, contrary to the sentiment of other ancient peoples, were not denied civic rights, although in practice this equality was rendered nugatory for all but a few by their social subordination to the male and their domestic preoccupation; instances have yet survived in the existing records of women figuring, not only as queens and administrators and even in the battlefield, a common enough incident in Indian history, but as elected representatives on civic bodies.”

(CWSA 20: 411)

Institution of slavery was practically absent

“In the case of the Mediterranean nations, two most important exceptions have to be made to the general participation of all individuals in the full civic and cultural life of the community; for that participation was denied to the slave and hardly granted at all in the narrow life conceded to the woman. In India the institution of slavery was practically absent and the woman had at first a freer and more dignified position than in Greece and Rome; but the slave was soon replaced by the proletariat, called in India the Shudra, and the increasing tendency to deny

the highest benefits of the common life and culture to the Shudra and the woman brought down Indian society to the level of its Western congeners. It is possible that these two great problems of economic serfdom and the subjection of woman might have been attacked and solved in the early community if it had lived longer, as it has now been attacked and is in process of solution in the modern State. But it is doubtful; only in Rome do we glimpse certain initial tendencies which might have turned in that direction and they never went farther than faint hints of a future possibility.”

(CWSA 25: 361–362)

“We may note also in passing that the Indian ideal of the relation between man and woman has always been governed by the symbolism of the relation between the Purusha and Prakriti (in the Veda Nri and Gna), the male and female divine Principles in the universe. Even, there is to some degree a practical correlation between the position of the female sex and this idea. In the earlier Vedic times when the female principle stood on a sort of equality with the male in the symbolic cult, though with a certain predominance for the latter, woman was as much the mate as the adjunct of man; in later times when the Prakriti has become subject in idea to the Purusha, the woman also depends entirely on the man, exists only for him and has hardly even a separate spiritual existence. In

the Tantrik Shakta religion which puts the female principle highest, there is an attempt which could not get itself translated into social practice,—even as this Tantrik cult could never entirely shake off the subjugation of the Vedantic idea,—to elevate woman and make her an object of profound respect and even of worship.”

(CWSA 25: 8)

The property of the man over the woman, in recent times been effectively challenged

“So too the subjection of woman, the property of the man over the woman, was once an axiom of social life and has only in recent times been effectively challenged. So strong was or had become the instinct of this domination in the male animal man, that even religion and philosophy have had to sanction it, very much in that formula in which Milton expresses the height of masculine egoism, ‘He for God only, she for God in him,’—if not actually indeed for him in the place of God. This idea too is crumbling into the dust, though its remnants still cling to life by many strong tentacles of old legislation, continued instinct, persistence of traditional ideas; the fiat has gone out against it in the claim of woman to be regarded, she too, as a free individual being.”

(CWSA 25: 630–631)

14. Divine as the Shakti (The Mother)

"The Divine Mother is the Consciousness and Force of the Divine—which is the Mother of all things."

(CWSA 32: 55)

"The idea of spiritual Motherhood is not an invention of this Asram; it is an eternal truth which has been recognized for ages past both in Europe and in Asia. The distinction I have drawn between the physical relation and the psychic and spiritual relation is also not a new invention; it is an idea known and understood everywhere and found to be perfectly plain and simple by all. It is the present confused state of your own mind which prevents you from understanding what men have found natural and intelligible everywhere."

(CWSA 32: 108)

"...the Mother is one but she comes before us with differing aspects; many are her powers and personalities, many her emanations and Vibhutis that do her work in the universe. The One whom we adore as the Mother is the divine Conscious Force that dominates all existence, one and yet so many-sided that to follow her movement is impossible even for the quickest mind and for the freest and most vast intelligence. The Mother is the

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consciousness and force of the Supreme and far above all she creates. But something of her ways can be seen and felt through her embodiments and the more seizable because more defined and limited temperament and action of the goddess forms in whom she consents to be manifest to her creatures.

There are three ways of being of the Mother of which you can become aware when you enter into touch of oneness with the Conscious Force that upholds us and the universe. Transcendent, the original supreme Shakti, she stands above the worlds and links the creation to the ever unmanifest mystery of the Supreme. Universal, the cosmic Mahashakti, she creates all these beings and contains and enters, supports and conducts all these million processes and forces. Individual, she embodies the power of these two vaster ways of her existence, makes them living and near to us and mediates between the human personality and the divine Nature.

The one original transcendent Shakti, the Mother stands above all the worlds and bears in her eternal consciousness the Supreme Divine. Alone, she harbours the absolute Power and the ineffable Presence; containing or calling the Truths that have to be manifested, she brings them down from the Mystery in which they were hidden into the light of her infinite consciousness and gives them a form of force in her omnipotent power and her boundless life and a body in

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the universe. The Supreme is manifesting her for ever as the everlasting Sachchidananda, manifested through her in the worlds as the one and dual consciousness of Ishwara-Shakti and the dual principle of Purusha-Prakriti, embodied by her in the Worlds and the Planes and the Gods and their Energies and figured because of her as all that is in the known worlds and in unknown others. All is her play with the Supreme; all is her manifestation of the mysteries of the Eternal, the miracles of the Infinite. All is she, for all are parcel and portion of the divine Conscious-Force. Nothing can be here or elsewhere but what she decides and the Supreme sanctions; nothing can take shape except what she moved by the Supreme perceives and forms after casting it into seed in her creating Ananda.

The Mahashakti, the universal Mother, works out whatever is transmitted by her transcendent consciousness from the Supreme and enters into the worlds that she has made; her presence fills and supports them with the divine spirit and the divine all-sustaining force and delight without which they could not exist. That which we call Nature or Prakriti is only her most outward executive aspect; she marshals and arranges the harmony of her forces and processes, impels the operations of Nature and moves among them secret or manifest in all that can be seen or experienced or put into motion of life. Each of the worlds is nothing but one play

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of the Mahashakti of that system of worlds or universe, who is there as the cosmic Soul and Personality of the transcendent Mother. Each is something that she has seen in her vision, gathered into her heart of beauty and power and created in her Ananda.

But there are many planes of her creation, many steps of the Divine Shakti. At the summit of this manifestation of which we are a part there are worlds of infinite existence, consciousness, force and bliss over which the Mother stands as the unveiled eternal Power. All beings there live and move in an ineffable completeness and unalterable oneness, because she carries them safe in her arms for ever. Nearer to us are the worlds of a perfect supramental creation in which the Mother is the supramental Mahashakti, a Power of divine omniscient Will and omnipotent Knowledge always apparent in its unfailing works and spontaneously perfect in every process. There all movements are the steps of the Truth; there all beings are souls and powers and bodies of the divine Light; there all experiences are seas and floods and waves of an intense and absolute Ananda. But here where we dwell are the worlds of the Ignorance, worlds of mind and life and body separated in consciousness from their source, of which this earth is a significant centre and its evolution a crucial process. This too with all its obscurity and struggle and imperfection is

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upheld by the Universal Mother; this too is impelled and guided to its secret aim by the Mahashakti.

The Mother as the Mahashakti of this triple world of the Ignorance stands in an intermediate plane between the supramental Light, the Truth life, the Truth creation which has to be brought down here and this mounting and descending hierarchy of planes of consciousness that like a double ladder lapse into the nescience of Matter and climb back again through the flowering of life and soul and mind into the infinity of the Spirit. Determining all that shall be in this universe and in the terrestrial evolution by what she sees and feels and pours from her, she stands there above the Gods and all her Powers and Personalities are put out in front of her for the action and she sends down emanations of them into these lower worlds to intervene, to govern, to battle and conquer, to lead and turn their cycles, to direct the total and the individual lines of their forces. These Emanations are the many divine forms and personalities in which men have worshipped her under different names throughout the ages. But also she prepares and shapes through these Powers and their emanations the minds and bodies of her Vibhutis, even as she prepares and shapes minds and bodies for the Vibhutis of the Ishwara, that she may manifest in the physical world and in the disguise of the human consciousness some ray of her power and quality and presence. All the scenes of the earth-play have been

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like a drama arranged and planned and staged by her with the cosmic Gods for her assistants and herself as a veiled actor.

The Mother not only governs all from above but she descends into this lesser triple universe. Impersonally, all things here, even the movements of the Ignorance, are herself in veiled power and her creations in diminished substance, her Nature body and Nature-force, and they exist because, moved by the mysterious fiat of the Supreme to work out something that was there in the possibilities of the Infinite, she has consented to the great sacrifice and has put on like a mask the soul and forms of the Ignorance. But personally too she has stooped to descend here into the Darkness that she may lead it to the Light, into the Falsehood and Error that she may convert it to the Truth, into this Death that she may turn it to godlike Life, into this world-pain and its obstinate sorrow and suffering that she may end it in the transforming ecstasy of her sublime Ananda. In her deep and great love for her children she has consented to put on herself the cloak of this obscurity, condescended to bear the attacks and torturing influences of the powers of the Darkness and the Falsehood, borne to pass through the portals of the birth that is a death, taken upon herself the pangs and sorrows and sufferings of the creation, since it seemed that thus alone could it be lifted to the Light and Joy and Truth and eternal Life. This is the great

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sacrifice called sometimes the sacrifice of the Purusha, but much more deeply the holocaust of Prakriti, the sacrifice of the Divine Mother.

Four great Aspects of the Mother, four of her leading Powers and Personalities have stood in front in her guidance of this universe and in her dealings with the terrestrial play. One is her personality of calm wideness and comprehending wisdom and tranquil benignity and inexhaustible compassion and sovereign and surpassing majesty and all-ruling greatness. Another embodies her power of splendid strength and irresistible passion, her warrior mood, her overwhelming will, her impetuous swiftness and world-shaking force. A third is vivid and sweet and wonderful with her deep secret of beauty and harmony and fine rhythm, her intricate and subtle opulence, her compelling attraction and captivating grace. The fourth is equipped with her close and profound capacity of intimate knowledge and careful flawless work and quiet and exact perfection in all things. Wisdom, Strength, Harmony, Perfection are their several attributes and it is these powers that they bring with them into the world, manifest in a human disguise in their Vibhutis and shall found in the divine degree of their ascension in those who can open their earthly nature to the direct and living influence of the Mother. To the four we give the four great names, Maheshwari, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi, Mahasaraswati.”

(CWSA 32: 14–18)

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“In all that is done in the universe, the Divine through his Shakti is behind all action but he is veiled by his Yoga Maya and works through the ego of the Jiva in the lower nature.

In Yoga also it is the Divine who is the Sadhaka and the Sadhana; it is his Shakti with her light, power, knowledge, consciousness, Ananda, acting upon the adhara and, when it is opened to her, pouring into it with these divine forces that makes the Sadhana possible. But so long as the lower nature is active the personal effort of the Sadhaka remains necessary.”

(CWSA 32: 6)

“The relations which arise out of this attitude towards the Divine, are that of the divine Father and the Mother with the child and that of the divine Friend. To the Divine as these things the human soul comes for help, for protection, for guidance, for fruition,—or if knowledge be the aim, to the Guide, Teacher, Giver of light, for the Divine is the Sun of knowledge,—or it comes in pain and suffering for relief and solace and deliverance, it may be deliverance either from the suffering itself or from the world-existence which is the habitat of the suffering or from all its inner and real causes. In these things we find there is a certain gradation. For the relation of fatherhood is always less close, intense, passionate, intimate, and therefore it is less resorted to in the Yoga which seeks for

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the closest union. That of the divine Friend is a thing sweeter and more intimate, admits of an equality and intimacy even in inequality and the beginning of mutual self-giving; at its closest when all idea of other giving and taking disappears, when this relation becomes motiveless except for the one sole all-sufficing motive of love, it turns into the free and happy relation of the playmate in the Lila of existence. But closer and more intimate still is the relation of the Mother and the child, and that therefore plays a very large part wherever the religious impulse is most richly fervent and springs most warmly from the heart of man. The soul goes to the Mother-Soul in all its desires and troubles and the divine Mother wishes that it should be so, so that she may pour out her heart of love. It turns to her too because of the self-existent nature of this love and because that points us to the home towards which we turn from our wanderings in the world and to the bosom in which we find our rest.”
(CWSA 23–24: 567–568)

“The Gita does not speak expressly of the Divine Mother; it speaks always of surrender to the Purushottama—it mentions her only as the Para Prakriti who becomes the Jiva, i.e., who manifests the Divine in the multiplicity and through whom all these worlds are created by the Supreme and he himself descends as the Avatar. The Gita follows the Vedantic tradition which leans entirely on the

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Ishwara aspect of the Divine and speaks little of the Divine Mother because its object is to draw back from world-nature and arrive at the supreme realisation beyond it; the Tantrik tradition leans on the Shakti or Ishwari aspect and makes all depend on the Divine Mother, because its object is to possess and dominate the world-nature and arrive at the supreme realisation through it. This Yoga insists on both the aspects; the surrender to the Divine Mother is essential, for without it there is no fulfilment of the object of the Yoga.

In regard to the Purushottama the Divine Mother is the supreme divine Consciousness and Power above the worlds, Adya Shakti; she carries the Supreme in herself and manifests the Divine in the worlds through the Akshara and the Kshara. In regard to the Akshara she is the same Para Shakti holding the Purusha immobile in herself and also herself immobile in him at the back of all creation. In regard to the Kshara she is the mobile cosmic Energy manifesting all beings and forces.”
(CWSA 29: 443–444)

“The faith in the divine Shakti must be always at the back of our strength and when she becomes manifest, it must be or grow implicit and complete. There is nothing that is impossible to her who is the conscious Power and universal Goddess all creative from eternity and armed with the Spirit’s omnipotence. All knowledge, all

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strengths, all triumph and victory, all skill and works are in her hands and they are full of the treasures of the Spirit and of all perfections and siddhis. She is Maheshwari, goddess of the supreme knowledge, and brings to us her vision for all kinds and widenesses of truth, her rectitude of the spiritual will, the calm and passion of her supramental largeness, her felicity of illumination: she is Mahakali, goddess of the supreme strength, and with her are all mights and spiritual force and severest austerity of tapas and swiftness to the battle and the victory and the laughter, the *aṭṭahāsyā*, that makes light of defeat and death and the powers of the ignorance: she is Mahalakshmi, the goddess of the supreme love and delight, and her gifts are the spirit's grace and the charm and beauty of the Ananda and protection and every divine and human blessing: she is Mahasaraswati, the goddess of divine skill and of the works of the Spirit, and hers is the Yoga that is skill in works, *yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*, and the utilities of divine knowledge and the self-application of the spirit to life and the happiness of its harmonies. And in all her powers and forms she carries with her the supreme sense of the masteries of the eternal Ishwari, a rapid and divine capacity for all kinds of action that may be demanded from the instrument, oneness, a participating sympathy, a free identity, with all energies in all beings and therefore a spontaneous and fruitful harmony with all the divine will

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in the universe. The intimate feeling of her presence and her powers and the satisfied assent of all our being to her workings in and around it is the last perfection of faith in the Shakti.”

(CWSA 23–24: 780–781)

Spiritual awakening as next necessity

“But certain races have the function more evolved or more ready for evolution than the generality of mankind, and it is these that will lead in the future evolution. In addition, the race has a mighty will-power which comes from the long worship of Shakti and practice of the Tantra that has been a part of our culture for many centuries. No other people could have revolutionised its whole national character in a few years as Bengal has done. The Bengali has always worshipped the Divine Energy in her most terrible as well as in her most beautiful aspects; whether as the Beautiful or the Terrible Mother he has never shrunk from her whether in fear or in awe. When the divine force flowed into him he has never feared to yield himself up to it and follow the infinite prompting, careless whither it led. As a reward he has become the most perfect *ādhāra* of Shakti, the most capable and swiftly sensitive and responsive receptacle of the Infinite Will and Energy the world now holds. Recently that Will and Energy has rushed into him and has been

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lifting him to the level of his future mission and destiny. He has now to learn the secret of drawing the Mother of Strength into himself and holding her there in a secure possession. That is why we have pointed to a religious and a spiritual awakening as the next necessity and the next inevitable development."

(CWSA 1: 365–366)

"The other day while I was having a nap in the afternoon, I had a vision of a very beautiful woman (pardon me, more than a woman) sitting under the sun. The rays of the sun were either surrounding her or were emanating from her body—I can't precisely say which. The appearance and dress seemed to be European.

It is not a woman. A woman does not radiate and is not surrounded by rays either. Probably a Sun Goddess or a Shakti of the inner Light, one of the Mother's Powers."

(CWSA 32: 278)

"The Devi with all her aspects, *kalās*, is there in the Woman; in the Woman we have to see Durga, Annapurna, Tara, the Mahavidyas, and therefore it is said in the Tantra, in the line quoted by Mr. Avalon in his preface, "Wherever one sees the feet of Woman, one should give worship in one's soul even as to one's guru." Thus this thought of the Shakta side of Hinduism

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becomes an uncompromising declaration of the divinity of woman completing the Vedantic declaration of the concealed divinity in man which we are too apt to treat in practice as if it applied only in the masculine. We put away in silence, even when we do not actually deny it, the perfect equality in difference of the double manifestation.”

(CWSA 1:571)

15. Other Quotes

"Sweet Mother,

A few days ago I noticed something very odd in the children of Group A2: the boys don't want to work with the girls; they don't even want to stand side by side. They cannot work together. How did this idea of difference come to these little children who are barely eleven years old! It is strange.

It is atavistic and comes from the subconscious.

This instinct is based both on masculine pride, the **foolish idea of superiority**, and on the still more foolish fear due to the idea that woman is a dangerous being who entices you into sin. In children, all this is still subconscious, but it influences their actions."

(CWM 16: 280)

"Sweet Mother,

You have explained that this separation of girls and boys is atavistic, but it remains to ask You what we captains should do about it. Personally, I think it is better to close one's eyes to it, but there are others who prefer to give advice or even to scold. I think that by closing one's eyes to it, one minimises the importance of the problem and thus this idea of difference between girls and boys will be less striking. What do You think?

15. Other Quotes

One cannot make a general rule; everything depends on the case and the occasion. Both methods have their good and bad points, their advantages and drawbacks. For the captains, the main thing is to have tact and sufficient inner perception to intervene when necessary or to close one's eyes when it is preferable not to see."

(CWM 16: 283)

"The virgin is really a feminine conception; men are repelled by the idea of eternal virginity. Many women would remain without any wakening of the sexual instinct if men did not thrust it on them and that cannot be said of many, perhaps of any man! But there is another side to the picture. Women are perhaps less physically sexual than men on the whole,—but what about vital sexuality? the instinct of possessing and being possessed etc. etc.?"

(CWSA 31: 534)

"The Divine is more than a man or woman, a stretch of land or a creed, opinion, discovery or principle. He is the Person beyond all persons, the Home and Country of all souls, the Truth of which truths are only imperfect figures. And can He then not be loved and sought for his own sake..."

(CWSA 29: 12)