Welcome to Vaasal. We would like this magazine to be an entrance into the world of Tamil ideas, art and culture for anyone in Auroville who is from another native uuru ( tamil வீரு, village, home, country, habitat, that place which belongs to you and you to it).

The word vaasal ( வாசல், entrance) comes from the word vaay ( வாய், mouth). The entrance is the most important part of any Tamil village, a place which needs protecting from alien forces which might cause chaos if not properly watched over. Notice the location of prominent temples and shrines at the outer perimeter of villages around Auroville - placed at strategic points like crossroads and waterways where they can make sure no harm comes to the residents.

The entrance of the home is equally important. It is where the protective kolam ( கோலம், floor mandala) is placed each morning. When you go to someone’s house to give them something, they will always step outside to receive your gift, or invite you in: nothing must be passed across the threshold of the vaasal that separates one world from another.

Our Vaasal intends to do the following things:

1) Enjoy: Showcase Tamil literature, music and art in a way that is accessible to everyone
2) Meet: Introduce senior Tamil Aurovillians to the community at large
3) Think: Introduce important ideas and rituals along with an open offer to participate
4) Speak: Act as a friendly first step into the Tamil language for those who are frustrated by their language inability and wish to learn to enjoy themselves in this beautiful language
5) Integrate: In light of Mother’s words that Tamil culture is an essential part of the integral yoga of Auroville, to bring the Tamil and non-Tamil parts of Auroville closer together.

How To Get Vaasal
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Stop Press! Vaasal Magazine is now available online, at www.vaasalmagazine.wordpress.com

Help us make Vaasal better!
What are we doing right? What are we doing wrong? Is there any particular subject you would like to read about in Vaasal? Would you or anyone you know like to contribute an article, a drawing, a suggestion?
Please send us your valuable thoughts, ideas and feedback to tamil@auroville.org.in.
We would love to hear from you. Also if you enjoyed reading Vaasal, please consider a small contribution to support our costs (A/c no. 102360).

Anbudan (with love only)
From Meenakshi, Varadharajan, Jonathan, Radhika, Azhagappan, Lourdes, B. Anandou, Ayyanar and all the team at Ilaignarkal School.
You may already know the Tamil way to wish happy birthday, *yen iniye pirandanaal vaařtukkal* (my sweet birthday greetings), and on the joyous occasion of Auroville’s fiftieth birthday, we recall a beautiful birthday blessing from deep within the soil of Tamil wisdom.

During the period of the Chořa dynasty, all the great poets of the land were summoned to the court to honour the King on his birthday. One by one, the poets stood in front of the supreme ruler and delivered great eulogies, each longer and more ardent than the one before in an effort to outdo one another with the beauty and effusiveness of their praise.

Finally came the turn of Avaiyyar, the famed poetess. She walked in front of the King’s throne, raised her palm and said:

*Varappu uyere! Let the bund grow tall!*

And then she walked back to the join the line of poets on the side. The assembled courtiers and dignitaries were shocked, and start to berate the poet.

“What can you insult the King with such a short poem?”

“What is the King not worthy of a longer eulogy?”

Avaiyyar replied simply: “These two words are enough.”

The King himself was intrigued. He asked his courtiers to bring Avaiyyar back to him.

“Could you explain what this means?” he asked.

Avaiyyar raised her palm again and declared:

- Varappu uyere, *If the bund grows,*
- Niyir uyerum, *The water will grow.*
- Niyir uyere, *If the water grows,*
- Nell uyerum, *The rice will grow.*
- Nell uyere, *If the rice grows,*
- Kudi uyerum, *The people will grow.*
- Kudi uyerum, *If the people grow,*
- Konn uyerum, *The king will grow.*

And so, on the occasion of Auroville’s birthday, all of us at the Ilaignarkal School and Vaasal magazine hold up our hand and wish to all of you with open hearts:

*Varappu uyere!*

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_last time we talked about how to speak English and Tamil at the same time: Tanglish. This time, let’s start by talking about the thing that is really stopping you from learning Tamil. We’re not talking about how busy you are, or how you aren’t a child with a sponge-like brain any more, or any other of those really convenient excuses significant obstacles._

There is, however, a perfectly good reason why Tamil can be hard to just ‘pick up’ - Tamil uses sounds that speakers of many other Indo-European languages just don’t use. This means, in reality, that we literally can’t hear what people are saying. And even if we concentrate, it is very hard for us to say anything back.

If you imagine watching someone speaking an Indo-European language, and someone speaking Tamil, you might see a physical difference in how the body is being used to make sound. In our languages, we are used to the front of the mouth being used a lot, so we can read people’s lips when we are learning to help comprehension. In Tamil, many sounds come from deeper inside - the palette inside the mouth, the back of the throat - so a lot of this visual information is hidden out of sight._
If you read the work of Alfred Tomatis, you’ll see that all languages have a unique distribution of sounds that they commonly use, a sonic fingerprint, if you like. English and French, for example, use very different sounds, which explains why it is so hard for English and French people to speak each other’s languages without a heavy foreign accent. Languages that have similar fingerprints are easy to learn if you already know one of them: others that don’t, aren’t.

Now it makes sense why you might have done some Tamil classes, but it just didn’t stick in your memory. You couldn’t hear the sounds in the first place. This means we just can’t try to learn Tamil the way we might try to learn another language - hearing and then writing things down in a book. Why? Because writing in class is just a way to recall sounds, and if we can’t hear what is being said, writing will only help us to recall something wrong. We need to try another technique altogether - using rhythms and sounds. The music of Tamil is our own vaisal into learning it.

Now that we have put away our writing books, and closed our eyes, we can get back to learning Tanglish, our mix of Tamil and English, which doubles as a first step in talking Tamil. It is very useful because even though the words are English, we can make them Tamil words by using Tamil sounds.

Some common vowel sounds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sign</th>
<th>English vowel sound</th>
<th>Tamil word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>a bigger</td>
<td>pan-ne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>hug much</td>
<td>va-na-kkam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aa</td>
<td>cars start</td>
<td>Aa-ro-vil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>six sick</td>
<td>Aa-ro-vil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>meals feel real</td>
<td>puu-rii-lle</td>
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Some English nouns like taxi, friend, snacks, cycle (sa-ii-kel) can be found all over the world, but Tamil Nadu has its own subset of words with the particular fragrance of Victorian England, eg jolly, as in

rum-ba jaa-li-ya i-re-ke  It’s very jolly
        (we had a great time)

Also last time we showed how to make a yes/no question by adding -aa, with stress at the end:

Va-dai ready-aa?  Are the vadai ready?

Our first and most important real Tamil word is i-re-ke (it is, there is/are, emphasis on the beginning), and its sister i-re-kaa (is it? is/are there? with emphasis on the last syllable). You can use these two with some rather formal English nouns in a way that can take some getting used to:

wo-re da-ut i-re-ke  One doubt is there
        (Can I ask a question?).

rum-ba we-it-a i-re-ke  Much weight is there
        (It’s too heavy for me)

rum-ba sa-un-da i-re-ke  Much sound is there
        (It’s too loud for me)

That’s it for this time. Next time, we’ll get stuck into greetings, a guaranteed way to make almost anyone give you a broad, welcoming smile.

Po-ii-ttu va-ren!

If you are interested in conversational Tamil classes, please send a note to us at tamil@auroville.org.in
Thirukkural, meaning holy short verses or couplets, is perhaps the most treasured work in all Tamil literature. Written by a poet named Thiruvalluvar, and dating back to anywhere between the 2nd century BC and the 8th century AD, it is written in the form of couplets with a dense concentration of meaning similar to Japanese Haiku. In its practical concerns, aphoristic insights into daily life, and timeless universality, Thirukkural has been compared to the great works of the literary world. It is considered as an “all-inclusive ethical guide” due to its focussed views on ethics and values beyond religious boundaries. It is said that at the time of its presentation to the King’s court, the Pandyan King was so overwhelmed that he insisted its greatness be made known to all poets and the public alike.

In the ritual tank at the famous Meenakshi temple of Madurai was a sacred golden lotus plank. The King told his priests to place palm-leaf manuscripts of all the best-known works of literature on the lotus plank and to watch as they floated away. One by one, the works slipped into the water, until only Thirukkural remained.

Thiruvalluvar took up the first three of the fourfold objects/purposes of life, namely dharma, artha, kaama and moksha (virtue, wealth, love and liberation), as given by the Vedic Rishis. He presented them in the three sections of the Thirukkural, known respectively as arathuppaal, porutpaal and kaamathuppaal. He left out moksha (liberation), for the simple reason that when the first three are set in order, the final state of God-realisation is attained naturally. He also recognised that moksha or liberation is to be realised, not just discussed.

The three sections - titled aram (virtue), porul (purpose) and inbam (happiness/love) - are further subdivided into 133 chapters that cover myriad aspects of life, from human psychology to the natural world, from warfare to love. Each chapter is comprised of ten kural, so that the whole Thirukkural is made up of 1330 couplets.

Thirukkural was written at a time when men and women gathered in the streets, in the taverns and public places, to apply their concentrated energies on the great questions of what ought to be considered as good and right, and what as evil and wrong. Its popularity and wisdom was such that it was soon known by other names such as tamil marai (Tamil Vedas), poyyamoři (Words That Never Fail), deiva nuul (Divine Treatise) and ulagappothumarai (Universal Book of Principles).

Sri Aurobindo in his book, The Foundations of Indian Culture, refers to the Thirukkural as ‘the Gnomic Poetry, the greatest in plan, conception and force of execution ever written in this kind.’

A couplet from the chapter Kalvi (Education), particularly beloved of parents of school-aged children is:

Karkka kasadara karpavai katrapin
nirka atharkku thaga

Whatever you may learn, learn it thoroughly, and let your conduct be worthy of your learning.

To sum up, we can say that the ancient Tamils knew how to condense the greatest meaning into a lot less than 140 characters. Perhaps the modern age can add another name for Thirukkural - the Great Book of #TamilTweets.
I was born in a place called Brahmadesam in Villupuram district. The person I hate most in my life is my father. And rich people. Why do I hate my father? Not only did he die because of his drinking habits, he ruined our life too – me, my mum, sister and my younger brother – by sinking us into poverty. And why do I hate rich people? Because they are like leeches, sucking the blood and life out of the poor.

I was 7 and studying in Grade 3 in the village school. My father came to my school one day drunk, dragged me out of my class and enrolled me in a tea shop. My job was to wash the glasses, and with my salary of 150 rupees he drank himself to oblivion. When I was in school, I used to get the day off for weekends and festivals like Deepavali, Pongal, Independence day, Republic day, Christmas, Gandhi Jayanthi, etc, but there were no holidays in brother Arunachalam's tea shop, not even for emergencies. My father died after a few days. Despite everyone in the family working hard - including my mum, sister and brother - we couldn't make ends meet. Such was the burden of debt left by my blessed dad. All this created in me a deep hatred for alcohol.

The tea shop was busy from three in the morning to ten at night. I must say – the owner, brother Arunachalam, treated me like his own son. The shop became my life. Even though I was uneducated, I developed my general knowledge by listening to people reading newspapers aloud. The shop became a meeting point where people would gossip about local and international politics. I used to observe them and listen to them, even when I washing glasses and plates or serving idlis and vadas. Had I gone to school, I would have had five different teachers for five different subjects. But here, I had more than fifty teachers teaching me general knowledge and current affairs right from three in the morning until ten at night. As a result of me being a full time student at the teashop school, I graduated very early in the lessons of life. I could smell a person within seconds.

I became the owner's trusted servant. I toiled in the shop as if it was my own. The owner had a bad habit – he was a chain smoker. Smoking took a toll on him and he was diagnosed with cancer. While he was lying on his deathbed at Pondicherry JIPMER Hospital he told me, “Dear brother, the tea shop is now yours. Please take care of it and make your life”. He died after 12 days.

Overnight I became a businessman. Unfortunately, I couldn't even run the shop for three months. The reason – all the customers were local and no one paid. Since they were all relatives I couldn't be strict with them. As a result, I had to close the shop. I moved to my sister’s place in Sedarapet near Pondicherry. I was 27 and I didn't know what to do with my life. What experience did I have? I didn't want to go and work for a tea shop ever in my life again. So what could I do? Bearing in mind that I was educated only until Grade 3, I decided to apply for a security job since I was well-built physically. It was easy in Sedarapet because it was an industrial area. I applied for jobs in several companies and eventually got one. The salary was Rs. 2500. It was more than enough for me as a bachelor. I started work the following day.

Having never experienced any kind of material happiness, my mother had had a difficult life. She committed suicide unable to pay the debts. Having learnt some tailoring skills, my sister got married into a poor family and carried on with her life in dignity. My brother lost his way chasing big dreams in a big city like Madras and ended up selling cheap sunglasses on the pavement in Burma Bazaar. Such was the never-ending life of misery for our family.

My rich boss used to arrive in an air-conditioned car, well-dressed in a good suit, to shout at and scold the workers. When I saw that, the hatred I had for my father turned towards God. I used to wonder why God didn't create everyone equal and spare the poor their share of misery...I could only wonder. Can I tip the scales? Or can I balance them? I am a daily wage worker. I get what I deserve. I did my job as a security guard with utmost sincerity and loyalty. My colleagues used to steal, lie, betray and fight. Everyone started asking “Does the company need security guards or do the guards themselves need to be monitored?” I remained impartial.

Yet a jealous worker called Sivalingam (who we all called Green Mouse) conspired against me and I lost the job. From my first salary payment of Rs.2500, I gave my sister a thousand rupees and
went to Madras with the remaining fifteen hundred. I begged for a job at a rich man’s house, swearing on my loyalty. I was lucky. The job was to look after an elderly man named Rasupillai who had made a business empire.

Unlike his name, he wasn’t young; he was well over 85, leading a retired life. A very short-tempered man. He used to scold everyone. His wife, Visalakshi Ammal got used to his temper over time. Being poor, I was the perfect man for the job. His sons used to get out of the house, busy talking on their phones and return home the same way, with phones glued to their ears. I used to drive the old man to Marina Beach for morning walks. I used to follow him. If I walked slowly, he would sprint like a fifteen year old, turn back and yell, “You stupid lazy fellow! Walk fast. I am young and you are like an old man”. I had to follow his orders and try to ignore his words. Later, we used to drive to an expensive hotel for breakfast. “Can we have pizza? Or an omelette for breakfast? What do you say?” he would ask and force me to have the same. Then we would return home. Once home, he will throw his temper all over his gardener, then his wife and so on. His wife would drag me in front of him and let me handle his temper. I used to take her share of abuse too. Then we would return home. Once home, he will throw his temper all over his gardener, then his wife and so on. His wife would drag me in front of him and let me handle his temper. I used to take her share of abuse too. Then we would return home. Once home, he would throw his temper all over his gardener, then his wife and so on. His wife would drag me in front of him and let me handle his temper. I used to take her share of abuse too. Then we would return home.

The old man’s family was very happy with my work and loyalty. They raised my salary to 15000 per month. Way above what I deserved. I was getting better benefits as my work progressed. I felt the loss of my mum – and wished she could have experienced a better life.

I never dreamt of becoming rich. I just wanted to be a better human, serving and helping people in need. I always had a thought about rich people – why don’t the rich give to charity and help the poor if they have so much money? Instead why waste so much on leading a lavish lifestyle? Obviously they have more than they need. Why don’t they help people in need of money?

Had Siddhartha been happy and satisfied with his princely lifestyle, we wouldn't have had a Buddha. Similarly, why can't the rich become satisfied and donate to the poor? No one is asking them to be a Buddha but becoming a better human is definitely within their reach. The richest and the poorest can only be found in India. Why? Whatever lessons life taught me, I tried to follow. I used my savings to clear my father’s debts in the first year. In the second year, I helped my brother and sister financially. I reclaimed the teashop in the third year and upgraded it to a restaurant. I handed it over to a bunch of bright young guys to manage it. I was satisfied. Apart from my job at the rich old man's house, I had a business. From the returns, I managed to help my villagers and the poor kids with their education. I found my purpose in life, going from my beginnings at the teashop to becoming a businessman. I hope you can find yours too!

If there is someone to guide you throughout your life, the path will lead straight to your destiny, don’t you think?

Original translation of Kai Katti Pesugirathu by Yatra Srinivasan from the short story collection Yatra Sirukadhaigal, Kapilan Publishing House, 2017

On The Pleas of Thank You

The British - and many of us from far-off brother and sister nations - like to think that we are terribly polite. And as terribly polite people, we must show others as soon as we meet them that we are, indeed, polite. What is the first phrase that comes from the lips of a British person as he stumbles down the airplane steps into pastures new? Please, of course, invariably followed its hapless twin, thank you.

We love to please and we love to thank. We are pleasers and thankers. Pleasing and Thanking (hereafter ‘P&T’) is a not so much a passion, but an obsession. According to the “Rulebook of Being a Good Britisher Abroad - ie Not One Of Those Who Overstays Their Welcome By 300 Years (3rd. edition),” everyone must P&T, everywhere, for everything. You ask for tea. You P. Tea is given. You T. You ask a

We kid ourselves that we are showing respect to the person being P-ed - the pleasee - and appreciation to the person being T-ed - the thankee. This is only partly true. Rather, we P because the whole business of talking to other people makes us uncomfortable and a quick T means we can ignore them after that: job done. We have “been polite.” There is no need to pay any more attention - either to the person being T-ed, or to the thing being T-ed for. A quick thank you, and we can get back to something more important.

And so the unsuspecting Brit comes to Auroville, Tamil-phrase book under their arm, and is happy to learn that thank you in Tamil is nandri. If they are very polite and keen, they will even try to add the respectful -nga ending: nan-dri-nga.

At first, we are so happy in our blissful state of thanking, we are oblivious to the blank reaction. The thankee might laugh and say nothing, simply repeat nandri, or else shuffle awkwardly and looked confused.

Laughter? Confusion? Awkwardness? These are the last things an obsessive thanker expects. The only option is to thank again, this time louder. NANDRI! A blank stare, and nothing more.

And as for please, the guidebook says dayavu seydu, or in its local variety dayavu senji. The dictionary translations of dayavu on its own - compassion, favour, grace, mercy, love, passion, piety - hint at the fact that saying dayavu seydu can mean a lot more that a casual please.

R. Meenakshi: "Konjam (a little, some) is the word closest to the meaning of please in daily use. It makes any request softer, and more friendly, as in kon-jam va-nga Can you please come with me? kon-jam ta-ni ku-de-nga Please can I have some water?"

Vikram: “I also use konjam a lot as a softener. I might also use the English word please at the end of a question. This is only one layer of many, of course. There are many. Most important, though, is your intention. If you really offer gratitude, that will be understood and appreciated no matter what you say.”

R. Meenakshi: “What is more important is to smile and gently nod your head left and right. Ponsirrippu. Smile a lot, and you can't go wrong.”
We continue our series talking to the Tamil statesmen and women of Auroville with an interview with Varadharajan, entrusted by Mother with the critical work of village liaison and outreach.

9th December 2017, Pitanga, Auroville

My introduction to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, I should say was a sort of an accident. One day I saw in a newspaper an announcement about talk on *The Life Divine*. Sometime earlier I had for the good fortune to meet Swami Sivananda in his ashram in Rishikesh. I thought that the talk was connected to his divine life society. I was surprised to find a small group of about 12 people from the Sri Aurobindo Society, Chennai branch. An erudite person spoke about *The Life Divine* of Sri Aurobindo. I felt it was a subject that required deep study. However, I was attracted more and more and when an opportunity came to me to go to Puducherry on 15th August 1964, I availed it along with the other members of the society.

I had the Mother’s balcony darshan in the evening. The speciality of the darshan was that you will realise that at a particular point of time, the Mother was looking only at you, her eyes piercing into your eyes among thousands of people. I had a spiritual experience and I returned to Chennai. Incidentally it was on the same day morning that Auroville was announced to the outside world in the Sri Aurobindo Society World Conference.

I had my schooling in Aruppukottai, Ramanathapuram district. My collegiate education was in Madurai. After passing a competitive examination, I joined central secretariat service in Delhi. I got a transfer to Chennai after sometime. When I look back it was all the Mother preparing me to settle in Auroville.

In 1965 on my birthday the Mother signed a book *Prayers and Meditation* for me with her blessings. It was mentioned there in “This book is meant for those who aspire for an utter consecration to the Divine.” Internally that settled my life’s course. From January 1966 onwards I was very much involved in Auroville. The involvement grew more and more and with the Mother’s permission and blessings, I started staying in what is now called Douceur area. From there I could see the Bay of Bengal with no buildings in between: only a vast field of rain fed crop. I started in a hut.

You can imagine the conditions at that time.

The work in Auroville was growing very fast. My work was mainly in Kuilapalayam area with a number of activities connected with the village population.

1969-73 was a golden period. I had also the opportunity to be part of the Aspiration group from time to time which met The Mother in her room to get guidance. The Mother’s voice was liquid. I really love it. It was so musical. When I recollect it. It is more fluid than words can describe. Once when she was talking, I saw a streak of a golden thread, only once. I did see that. Her voice is golden and it is not a myth. Only when we are open we can see it. My last personal darshan in her room was in March 1973.

There were three or four with me on the terrace. Champaklalji came to us and said, “Mother may not see you today.” And he walked back to Her room. What made him come back, I don’t know but within a minute or so he came back and said again, “she may see you or she may not, so if you have some work better you go and attend to that.”

I am someone who, when I go to the Mother, I wait until she gives me some indication that the interview is over. She will make a sweet gesture with her head or you can see an abrupt difference in the atmosphere. You will know that she is somewhere else and it is time to come out. Champaklalji is always there also, if someone lingers too long (laughs). She used to say, “when I am transmitting something to someone, some people are in such a hurry to go out that they don’t receive it fully.”

At least I will wait, I said to myself. To wait for her is a pleasure. And so when I went into her room,
there she was on the couch in a trance. I stood very near her, with Champaklalji just behind. For two or three minutes something was happening within me that I can't explain. Champaklalji opened the door to let me out. He said, "Today is a day of great grace for you". I went out silently. As he was saying that, I felt that she was with me in the physical body in silent communication. I knew she was doing something.

So these three are definitive landmarks in my life. From May 73, she had completely stopped giving interviews to anybody in her room.

Now I come to Auroville matters. At that time there was no difference between the Ashram, SriAurobindoSociety and Auroville. The Mother was there in her physical body. We were all working for the Mother. Also it was so easy to join. You have send your photograph through one of the secretaries and she will look in to it and in one second she would say yes or no or he should wait.

Some incidents. When many people wanted to take part in Aspiration talks she said, I am going to ask an indiscrete question. How many people in the group are sincere? After a pause, she herself answered “it is alright if somebody works for the collective”. She knew the answer, of course. And also we knew that she knew.

In a talk she asked about the first condition to become a true Aurovilian. After each one answered she spent about 5 minutes in silence. And with the help of a magnifying glass she started to write on a paper. She said it is not coming in the form in which it can be put on the paper. So, one could imagine what is the Mantric importance of the conditions.

Outreach work is what fell to my lot. On one occasion, on 15th September 1970, we wanted to clarify to local people what Auroville stands for and get their participation. There was a lot of misunderstanding due to the proposal for land acquisition. The first thing in most new projects is that locals are sent out, the pattern of living is disturbed, people are thrown out of their homes. So they wanted to know. I prepared a note on what I understood in consultation with the Executives and sent it to Mother through her son Andre, who was one of the Executives. She was already not seeing anyone. She gave our note and our work a big blessing, special Blessings. The locals’ reaction was good. Our relationship improved.

Even today, at one of the schools in Morattandi, when they come to Auroville they say, “We are going to the Ashram.” They see Auroville as a higher spiritual organization. That was the basic admiration, their outlook. This goodwill was on the part of both - from all, towards all.

If you address the deepest part of a person, then there will be harmony and goodwill. If people know we want to be their spiritual brothers, then there will be goodwill. First there should be tremendous goodwill from us to them, and then it will be reciprocated. They see how Aurovilians live, what are their values, how they go within themselves, what is their relationship with the outside world… all this they see at a very material level, you cannot fool them. It is difficult to convince them that we are leading a spiritual life because they see us in the physical field, where the expression of spiritual life is distracted. If you don't understand their customs and language, then it is hard. It depends upon us by example to convince them of what Auroville stands for.

The whole world is one, all the world is my kith and kin - yaadumure, yaavarumkeelir - that is right there in Tamil culture. If in your heart, you have goodwill for them, they will understand you very easily and they will give their life for you. Even if you don't know the language, even just by your gestures. Not that they are saints or we are saints, when there is heart to heart communication, they will see. All our difficulties will turn to our advantage.

Many industrial activities have started here: there is an unspoken technological transfer from Auroville to the villages which happens automatically. Their houses are becoming more beautiful: local labour - masons and other workers - they learn by hand, which is transferred into beauty in their own circumstances. A hundred years back every house had a tinnai, where any wayfarer can relax. Now the culture is becoming different.

The Auroville villages are prospering. We can learn from them and they from us. It is a mutual learning process. We proclaim at least we have come here for a particular purpose. To the extent we are sincere to that purpose, you will see the effect.

The great cities of Tamil Nadu were built around temples, like Tanjavur, Chidambaram, Madurai etc. Likewise, it is in the fitness of things that Auroville is built around a spiritual centre, Matrimandir.
Flowing like a river
The water spreads over the crystal ball like snow
The slow movement of the water
Made me feel
If it was really moving or not
The lotus pond was like
A large planet and
In between was the beautiful crystal ball
The feeling that slowly escaped
Into the pond of water
Made me drown into a dream of
Holding the crystal ball
I feel asleep
The moment I got nearer and
Saw the crystal ball
The wind blow harder
As it got darker.

Shruti Sundaram
Age -12
Transition School
Student - 2010

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குருவி குளம்
அமை 12
புராணக் களப்பிள்ளை மாணவர்
நடைப்படுத்து அகத்தம் 2010
குறிப்பிட்டு - குரு, குளம்
The concept of Omkaram (OM)

Om (ॐ) is an important spiritual symbol for both Hindus and followers of some other religions, and its printed form in Tamil is known as Omkaram.

It refers to Lord Ganapathy, the elephant-faced God who is considered as a remover of obstacles, with “ॐ” (A), “ॐ” (U) in the middle and at end of the curve is “ॐ” (M), symbolizing the seed of all creation. The concept of Om (ॐ) has been explained by 96 theories. One very brief, subtle meaning is “relationship to life and God.”

**LIJ LDIR ℋ LDIR** / Paramatma
is the Creator / Brahma / past or beginning

“ॐ” (A) symbolises the first Supreme, Lord Siva

**bió** / Relationship
is the Preserver / Vishnu / present or middle

“ॐ” (U) symbolises the Supreme power, Shakti or Parvathi

**Séré LDIR ℋ LDIR** / Jivathama
is the Destroyer / Shiva / future or end

“ॐ” (M) symbolises the awareness and bliss of oneness with the Universe

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