11 August 1954

This talk is based upon Chapter 6 of *The Mother* by Sri Aurobindo.

*At the very beginning is written: “The four Powers of the Mother.” Which are these four powers, Sweet Mother?*

These!

_The aspects, aren’t they, Mother?_

(Long silence)

Yes.

_What does this mean: “The Supreme is... manifested through her in the worlds as the one and dual consciousness of Ishwara-Shakti and the dual principle of Purusha-Prakriti...”?_

What does this mean? It means what it says. (*Laughter*) It means that in the world the single force of the creating energy is divided in all the manifestations, even the most contrary manifestations, you see. It is this single force which, in the creation, is divided into Purusha and Prakriti and, also, energy and resistance. That’s what it means; at the origin the force is single and in the manifestation it is divided, and it is divided in all the contraries, which are at the same time complementaries. Because, for creation, this division was necessary, otherwise there would have been only one single thing all the time.

_What does “Vibhuti” mean?_

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It means the incarnation of an emanation. An emanation of the Mother incarnates in a being and this being becomes a Vibhuti.

_Sweet Mother, here I do not understand this: “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.”_

This means, you see, that precisely there are different qualities, different ways of being which manifest in different forms and that each of these forms is one of the godheads whom men have worshipped and whom they understand because of the limitations. When something is limited it is more easily understandable for man than when it is unlimited, for man has a limited nature and he naturally understands what is limited. And so, to be comprehensible, things must be divided and limited. Otherwise the Power in its essence, which is indivisible and unlimited, is absolutely above human comprehension — for man as he now is, in his present state.

_What is “the triple world of the Ignorance”?_

“The triple world...”?

“...of the Ignorance”.

The Ignorance?
  Matter, life and mind; that is, the physical, the vital and the mental, the triple world of the Ignorance.

_What do Mahasaraswati and Mahalakshmi look like?_

What?

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What do they look like?

My child, you must see them.¹ When you see them you will know.... The aspect is different in each case, according to the people to whom she shows herself, according to the work she does... not the one seen in this body.

Are the images we see of Mahasaraswati true?

Oh, Lord! (Laughter) When a very small child tries to make someone’s portrait, does it resemble that person? It is very much like this, sometimes worse! Because the child is frank and sincere, whereas the one who makes the images of the gods is full of fixed notions and preconceived ideas, or else of all that others have said about the subject and of what has been written in the scriptures and what has been seen by people. And so he is bound by all that. At times, from time to time, there are artists who have an inner vision, a great aspiration, a great purity of soul and of vision, who have made things which are reasonably good. But this is extremely rare. And generally, I believe it is almost the opposite.

I have seen some of these forms in the vital and mental worlds, which were truly human creations. There is a force from beyond which manifests. But in these triple worlds of falsehood, truly man has created God in his own image — more or less — and there are beings which manifest in forms which are the result of the formative thought of man. And here, you see, it is truly frightful! I have seen some of these formations... (silence) and all this is so obscure, so incomprehensible, inexpressive....

Some of the gods are more ill-treated than others. For example, that poor Mahakali, you know, what things are done to her!... It is so frightful, it is unimaginable! But this form lives

¹ Mother having spoken very softly here, some words of this passage have not been clearly recorded. We have left the sentences unfinished, as they were transcribed.
only in a very low world... yes, in the lowest vital; and what it possesses of the original being is something... a reflection so remote from the origin that it is unrecognisable. However, usually, it is this that is attracted by human consciousness. And when an idol is made, you see, and the priest brings down a form—when the ceremony takes place in a regular manner, he puts himself in an inner state of invocation and tries to bring down a form or an emanation of the godhead into the idol in order to give it a power—if the priest is truly a man with a power of invocation, he can succeed. But usually—there are exceptions to everything—but usually these people have been educated in the common ideas according to tradition. And so, when they think of the godhead whom they are invoking, they think of all the attributes and appearances that have been given to it, and the invocation is usually addressed to entities of the vital world or at best to those of the mental world, but not to the Being itself. And it is these small entities which manifest in one idol or another. All these idols in small temples or even in families—some people have their little shrines, you know, in their homes and keep an image of the godhead they worship—these entities manifest in them; sometimes the consequences are rather unfortunate, for these forms are precisely so remote from the original godhead that... they are awkward formations. Some of those Kalis they worship in certain families are veritable monsters!

I can tell you, believe me, that I have advised some people to take the statue and throw it in the Ganges in order to get rid of a thoroughly disastrous influence. In fact, this has succeeded very well.... Some of these are... unlucky presences. But this is man’s own fault. It is not the fault of the godheads. It would be wrong to put the blame on the godheads. It is man’s fault. He wants to fashion the gods in his own image. Some who are wicked make them still more autocratic; and those who are nice make them still more nice; that is, men have magnified their own defects a little more.
How can human thought create forms?

In the mental world human thought is constantly creating forms. Human thought is very creative in the mental world. All the time when you are thinking, you are creating forms and you send them out in the atmosphere and they go and do their work. Constantly you are surrounded by a heap of small formations.

Naturally, there are people who can’t even think clearly. So they form nothing at all except faint eddies. But people who think clearly are surrounded by a heap of little forms which, sometimes, go out to do some work in others; and when one thinks of them again, they return.

And we have instances of people who are troubled by their own formations, which return constantly as though to take possession of them, and which they can’t get rid of because they don’t know how to undo the formations they have made. There are more cases of this kind than one would think. When they have made a particularly strong formation — for themselves, you see, relatively — this formation is always tied up with the one who makes it and returns to knock at the brain to receive forces and ends up by truly acting as a necessity. It is a whole world to know; one truly lives in ignorance, one has powers one doesn’t know about, so naturally one uses them very badly. One uses them somewhat unconsciously and very badly.

I don’t know if you have ever heard of Madame David-Neel who went to Tibet and has written books on Tibet, and who was a Buddhist; and Buddhists — Buddhists of the strictest tradition — do not believe in the Divine, do not believe in his Eternity and do not believe in gods who are truly divine, but they know admirably how to use the mental domain; and Buddhist discipline makes you a good master of the mental instrument and mental domain.

We used to discuss many things and once she told me: “Listen, I made an experiment.” (She had studied a bit of theosophy also.) She said: “I formed a mahatma; with my thought I formed
a mahatma.” And she knew (this has been proved) that at a given moment mental formations acquire a personal life independent of the fashioner—though they are linked with him—but independent, in the sense that they can have their own will. And so she told me: “Just imagine, I had made my mahatma so well that he became a personality independent of me and constantly came to trouble me! He used to come, scold me for one thing, give me advice for another, and he wanted to direct my life; and I could not succeed in getting rid of him. It was extremely difficult, and I didn’t know what to do!”

So I asked her how she had tried. She told me how. She said, “He troubles me a lot, my mahatma is very troublesome. He does not leave me in peace. He disturbs my meditations, he hinders me from working; and yet I know quite well that it is I who created him, and I can’t get rid of him!” Then I said, “That’s because you don’t have the ‘trick’....” (Mother laughs) And I explained to her what she should do. And the next day—I used to see her almost every day in those days, you see—the next day she came and told me, “Ah, I am freed from my mahatma!” (Laughter) She had not cut the connection because that’s of no use. One must know how to reabsorb one’s creation, that is the only way. To swallow up again one’s formations.

But, you see, in a smaller measure and less perfectly one is making formations all the time. When, for instance, one thinks of somebody quite powerfully, there is a small emanation of mental substance which, instantaneously, goes to this person, you understand, a vibration of your thought which goes and touches his; and if he is receptive, he sees you. He sees you and tells you, “You came last night to see me!” That’s because you made a small formation and this formation went and did its work, which was to put you into contact with this person or else to carry a message if you had something special to tell him; and that was done. This happens constantly, but as it is quite a constant and spontaneous phenomenon and done in ignorance, one is not even aware that one does this, one does it automatically.
People who have desires add to the mental formation a kind of small envelope, a vital shell which gives it a still greater reality. These people are usually surrounded by a number of tiny entities which are their own formations, their own mental formations clothed with vital force, which come all the time to strike them to try to make them realise materially the formations they have made.

You have perhaps read the books of Maurice Magre; there are some in the library. He describes this; he had come here, Maurice Magre, and we spoke and he told me that he had always noticed — he was highly sensitive — he had always noticed that people who have sexual desires are surrounded by a kind of small swarm of entities who are somewhat viscous and rather ugly and which torment them constantly, awakening desire in them. He said he had seen this around certain people. It was like being surrounded by a swarm of mosquitoes, yes! But it is more gross, and much uglier still, and it is viscous, it is horrible, and it turns round and round the person and gives him no peace, and it awakens in him the desire that has formed these entities and they batten on it. It is their food. This is absolutely true. His observation was quite correct. His vision was very true. It is like that.

But everyone carries around himself the atmosphere of his own desires. So you don't at all require that people should tell you anything; you have only to look and you see around them exactly the state they are in. They may want to give themselves the airs of angels or saints but they can't deceive you, because that thing is there, turning around them. So, just imagine! (Mother points to all those seated in front of her.) You see what you are like, how many of you there, all of you here, and each one has his own little world in this way, of mental formations of which some are clothed in vital substance, and all these crawl together, mix with each other, knock against each other. There is a struggle to see which is the strongest, which tries to realise itself, and all this creates an atmosphere indeed!...
Questions and Answers

*When we come before you what do these things do?*

When you come to me, it is all this I see. It is exactly this I see, and that is why your coming is useful. Because, to give you a flower is of course very nice, but that’s not anything much... there are things more important than that. But every time I see you, in a second — a flash is enough, a second — each one who comes appears with all his formations, and then I do just... I do just this... (*gesture*). The flower is an excuse, through the flower I give something.

And then, when sometimes, you know, I seem to go deep within, my eyes close, and then very slowly either I give something or I don’t move for a moment — that’s when the work to be done is urgent. Sometimes it is necessary to intervene for one reason or another, to help or to demolish something, or to push you towards some progress which is beginning, or other things like that.... So I just catch hold of your hand sometimes, you see: “Don’t move!” So the person thinks: “Mother has gone into a trance.” I feel quite amused.... (*Laughter*) I am busy working, putting things in order; sometimes I am obliged to perform a surgical operation, I take away certain things which are there and should not be there. A second is enough, you see, I don’t need any time for this; sometimes the work takes a little longer, a few more seconds, a minute.... Otherwise, usually — in a general way — when things are as we would say “normal”, it is enough just to see, you understand, and... the response? I give the flower... even without the flower, like this... simply I put just the little flash or sometimes the little red-hot iron, or a light, anything, and just at the right moment and the right place where it is needed... and “*Au revoir*”!

*Mother, aren’t these entities afraid of you?*

Ah, my child, terribly afraid! (*Laughter*) All those which are ill-willed try to hide, and usually do you know what they do? They
gather together behind the head of the one who comes (laughter) in order not to be seen. But this is useless, because, just think, I have the capacity to see through. (Laughter) Otherwise — they always do this, instinctively. When they can manage to get in, they try to get in. But then... I intervene with greater force, because that is nasty. These are people who have the instinct to hide, you see. So I pursue them, there inside. With others very little is needed, very little; but there are some — there are such people, you know, they themselves have told me — when they are about to come to me, it is as though there were something which pulled them back, which told them: “No, no, no, it’s not worthwhile, why go there? There are so many people for Mother to see, why add one more?” And they draw back, like that, so that they don’t come. So I always tell them what it is: “It would be better not to listen to that, for it’s not something with a very good conscience.” Some people cannot bear it. There have been instances like this, of people who were obliged to run away, because they themselves were too attached to their own formations and did not want to get rid of them. Naturally there is only one way, to run away!

There we are!

We shall stop now for today.