SRI AUROBINDO wrote various translations of and commentaries on the Upanishads, most notably the Isha and the Kena, stretching over a period of nearly twenty years. For the first time, all of these are now available in book form with the release of *The Upanishads–I: Isha Upanishad*, and *The Upanishads–II: Kena and Other Upanishads*. These two volumes include all that was published in the single volume titled *The Upanishads* (now discontinued), as well as much new material.

SABDA presents an overview of Sri Aurobindo’s writings on Vedantic texts, tracing the development of his interpretations from those of the Baroda and Calcutta periods to his final definitive works in Pondicherry…

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these works he acknowledged the importance of the Isha, one of the most important works of spiritual philosophy. In both of his later translations and commentaries he published translations of and commentaries on various Upanishads. Most important were three drafts of a commentary on the Isha that he called "The Life Divine". Published to their full extent for the first time in The Upanishads–I, they cover 228 pages. In the course of these commentaries, Sri Aurobindo not only fine-tuned his interpretation of the Isha, but also began to develop some of the characteristic themes of his own philosophy. In August 1914, in the first issue of the monthly journal Arya, he published the first instalment of his final translation and analysis of the Isha, and also the first chapter of The Life Divine, his most important work of spiritual philosophy. In both of these works he acknowledged the importance of the Isha as the bearer of "the secret of the divine life":

The second line of the Isha Upanishad, fixing as the rule of divine life universal renunciation of desire as the condition of universal enjoyment in the spirit, has been explained by the state of self-realisation, the realisation of the free and transcendent Self as one's own true being, of that Self as Sachchidananda and of the universe seen as the Becoming of Sachchidananda and possessed in the terms of the right knowledge and no longer in the terms of the Ignorance which is the cause of all attraction and repulsion, self-delusion and sorrow.

The Upanishads–I, p. 39

The Isha Upanishad insists on the unity and reality of all the manifestations of the Absolute; it refuses to confine truth to any one aspect. Brahman is the stable and the mobile, the internal and the external, all that is near and all that is far whether spiritually or in the extension of Time and Space; it is the Being and all becoming, the Pure and Silent who is without feature or action and the Seer and Thinker who organises the world and its objects; it is the One who becomes all that we are sensible of in the universe, the Immanent and that in which he takes up his dwelling.

The Life Divine, p. 636

After finishing his analysis of the Isha in the Arya, Sri Aurobindo turned to the Kena. Between 1915 and 1916, he published a translation of and commentary on this text. Unlike his final "Analysis" of the Isha, which follows the text more or less line by line, his commentary on the Kena is in the form of essays on philosophical problems that are raised by the seer of the Upanishad. Some of these essays stand among Sri Aurobindo's most important treatments of such topics as the relationship between mind and supermind. After completing his work on the Kena, Sri Aurobindo planned to take up the Taittiriya Upanishad, but he only found time for two short "Readings", one of which was published in the Arya in 1918. His Arya translations of and commentaries on the Isha, Kena and Taittiriya, together with revised translations of the Katha and Mundaka Upanishads, constitute the core of his mature work on the Upanishads. These pieces, all of which were published during his lifetime, appear in the first Parts of The Upanishads–I and The Upanishads–II. Readers wishing to know his final interpretation of the Upanishads should turn to these works first. His earlier translations and commentaries also contain much of interest, however, and some of them deal with texts that he did not have the time to take up during his life in Pondicherry. These works, none of which were published during his lifetime, are found in Part Two of The Upanishads–I and Parts Two and Three of The Upanishads–II.
**Integral Healing**
Compiled from the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother; Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department; 260 pp., Rs 105

Here is another compilation on health following the very useful one, *Health and Healing in Yoga*. This compilation also includes passages from Sri Aurobindo. A useful tool for people caught in the web of disease, doctors, investigations...

When medicines are not working, when you cannot trust your doctor, when suffering has overpowered you – this book comes as a breath of fresh air, showing you that there is still another possibility to be looked at:

*Pain brings us back to a deeper truth by forcing us to concentrate in order to be able to bear, to face this thing that crushes us*....

*The secret is to emerge from the ego, out of its prison, unite ourselves with the Divine, merge into Him, not to allow anything to separate us from Him. Then, once one has discovered this secret and realises it in one’s being, pain loses its justification and suffering disappears. It is an all-powerful remedy, not only in the deeper parts of the being, in the soul, in the spiritual consciousness, but also in life and in the body.*

*There is no illness, no disorder that can resist if this secret is discovered and put into practice not only in the higher parts of the being, but in the cells of the body.*

— The Mother

The book is divided into logical steps for a seeker. Part I deals with the *Psychological Causes of Illness*, Part II with *Cure by Inner Means*, Part III *Cure by Spiritual Force*, Part IV *Medicine and Healing* and the Conclusion with *Beyond Illness and Healing*. A comprehensive span indeed!

Each passage starts with the name of either the Mother or Sri Aurobindo, giving the reader a feeling that They are directly speaking to him or her. Each part opens with an appropriate short quotation, itself the essence of that section. For example, in the section ‘Cure by Inner Means’, the Mother says: “The difficulties that come to you are exactly in proportion to your strength – nothing can happen to you that does not belong to your consciousness, and all that belongs to your consciousness you are able to master.”

The book itself begins with a beautiful passage from the Mother explaining why illnesses are not receding in the modern world. Why, despite advances in science, technology and medicine, are we facing new, unexplained, incurable diseases?

Finally, there is a comprehensive index, a glossary and references. One wonders however why the compilers have used the term *Integral Healing*. Truly speaking, the book reflects ‘Healing in Integral Yoga’. Does that become synonymous with Integral Healing? Also sentences in the Preface such as “there are forms of Yoga that have concerned themselves with the body, such as Hathayoga, which is now synonymous with ‘yoga’ for most people. But these have tended to rely on techniques that are predominantly physical and inherently limited in their results, however powerful within those limits,” seem to belittle these ways. A book on ‘Integral Healing’ should ideally embrace all approaches.

Apart from these considerations, the book itself is an extensive gathering of passages drawn from over thirty volumes of Sri Aurobindo’s and seventeen volumes of the Mother’s collected works. It is certainly a gift for those who cannot read the entire works themselves.

— Dr Vandana Gupta

*Dr Vandana Gupta is working at the Sri Aurobindo International Institute for Integral Health and Research (SAIIHR), Sri Aurobindo Society, for the last fourteen years. She is also one of the editors of the journal NAMAH.*
few rational principles. Modern Enlightenment philosophy assumes this cosmic rationality to be identical with the human faculty of reason and seeks to find the one law systemically uniting all other laws through rational enquiry. But as Sri Aurobindo points out, human reason works by piecing together fragments and arrives thereby only at larger fragments masquerading as wholes. The intuition of a cosmic rationality, on the other hand, proceeds from an overmental or supramental source of unity and proportional harmony which is compact even in its infinite extension and seamlessly one. Its integrality is evidenced in the overmastering presence of the whole in itself and in every part. It is this of which the Upanishad says purnam adah purnam idam purnat purnam udachyate, purnasya adaya purnam evavashishyate. And it is this which impresses itself in its undeniable reality in the ideas and writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother – which, in their absolute consistency and miraculous integrality, make them different from other relative attempts at explanation.

As in all his other works, Jugal Kishore marshalls a most impressive set of quotes from the Master and the Mother to make his points. He clarifies the closely knit ideas relating to death as part of the perpetual process of life and to the evolution of consciousness through the progressive growth of the psychic being. Overall, I would recommend this book as an impressive work which sheds light on all the innumerable complexities of death, the purpose of life, the afterlife, karma and rebirth, as taught by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother in an integral view of human existence and its destiny.

— Debashish Banerji

Debashish Banerji is the president of the Sri Aurobindo Center of Los Angeles, USA.

* * *

If indeed rebirth were governed by a system of rewards and punishments, if life’s whole intention were to teach the embodied spirit to be good and moral... then there is evidently a great stupidity and injustice in denying to the mind in its new incarnation all memory of its past births and actions. For it deprives the reborn being of all chance to realise why he is rewarded or punished or to get any advantage from the lesson of the profitableness of virtue and the unprofitableness of sin vouchsafed to him or inflicted on him....

But if a constant development of being by a developing cosmic experience is the meaning and the building of a new personality in a new birth is the method, then any persistent or complete memory of the past life or lives might be a chain and a serious obstacle: it would be a force for prolonging the old temperament, character, preoccupations, and a tremendous burden hampering the free development of the new personality and its formulation of new experience. A clear and detailed memory of past lives, hatreds, rancours, attachments, connections would be equally a stupendous inconvenience; for it would bind the reborn being to a useless repetition or a compulsory continuation of his surface past and stand heavily in the way of his bringing out new possibilities from the depths of the spirit.

— Sri Aurobindo, The Life Divine
Eleven years back an eminent Sri Aurobindo scholar referred to K. D. Sethna as “a hidden treasure” (see Amal-Kiran: Poet and Critic, ed. Nirodbaran and R. Y. Deshpande, Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, 1994). At about the same time, Sethna’s collected poems entitled The Secret Splendour were released. Yet, awards didn’t come his way. But do awards really matter for Sethna? Did it matter for Sri Aurobindo? He was too big for the Nobel Prize. He remains a poet of tomorrow. Sethna too is a permanent glory in the bouquet of world literature. As he turned hundred on 25 November 2004, Sethna’s admirers and interpreters joined their hands to bring out his centenary tribute—thanks to Prof. Sachidananda Mohanty, who had invited all the relevant people to prepare their contributions for the anthology.

Amal Kiran was born K. D. Sethna, a Parsi. He was a brilliant student of philosophy and literature at St. Xavier’s College, Bombay. While studying for his M.A. in philosophy, he went to Sri Aurobindo Ashram for the first time and was instantly drawn to Sri Aurobindo. Thereafter he discontinued formal study and indulged in a non-professional literary life under Sri Aurobindo’s inspiration and guidance.

The editor quotes Sethna’s own words inscribed in one of his books dated 23 August 1972, which essentially sum up his approach to intellectual and artistic achievements:

“Who cares for what the world says when those great wide eyes, deeper than oceans, fell on these poems and accepted them as fit offerings to His divinity? The Lord’s look, the Lord’s smile—that is what I have lived for.” Sethna has done research in areas as diverse as Blake and Shakespeare studies, Aryan Invasion theory and ancient Indian history, overhead poetry, Christology, comparative mythology, the study of Hellenic literature and culture, Indian systems of yoga, international affairs, the questions of the English language and the Indian spirit, philosophy, literary criticism, mystical, spiritual and scientific thought, the structure of thought in modern physics and biology… the list is endless!

Divided in seven parts, the book is yet another reminder to the world of a hidden treasure, who still breathes and lives alone with the Eternal in his room in the Ashram hospital facing the vast blue sea. The few who know the “treasure” have written about him in this book. There are seventeen reminiscences by intimate friends and admirers like Aster Patel, Aditi Vasistha, P. Raja, Ananda Reddy, Shyam Sunder and others. There are insightful essays by Sethna specialists like Pradip Bhattacharya and Goutam Ghosal on his historical perception and creative sense. Also there are marvellous essays on his works by R. Y. Deshpande, Prema Nandakumar, Richard Hartz, Rita Nath Keshari, Akash Deshpande, S. Viswanathan, Sonia Dyne, Aniruddha Sircar and others.

Many unknown facts about the life and times of Amal Kiran (the name given to Sethna by Sri Aurobindo himself) are revealed in the articles by Huta, Nilima Das, Sonia Dyne, Pradip Bhattacharya and others. There are plenty of photographs, taking us back to the earlier days of the Ashram. Letters and facsimiles are also there in abundance, showing us the various ways crossed by the pilgrim of truth. Other attractions of the book are the essays on Sri Aurobindo’s vision by Kireet Joshi, Manoj Das, Ranjit Sarkar, Hemant Kapoor and some other noted Aurobindonian scholars.

Aditi Vasistha remembers Sethna’s words spoken to her in an inspired moment: “Words, while they have a beauty of their own, are sometimes transparent and reveal hidden depths of great poetic value. They give the feel of that which is beyond linguistic expression” (p. 15). Huta Hindocha goes back to the year 1962, when the Mother arranged her reading with Amal Kiran. “Amal made me understand Savitri intellectually and aesthetically. It was 7th August 1965 when I finished reading the whole of Savitri with him. I could not check my tears of joy. Amal too was moved. We shook hands over the long harmonious collaboration and absorbing discussions” (p. 57). S. Viswanathan’s essay focuses on Sethna’s great achievement as a Shakespeare critic. He is quite right when he says, “Sethna provides not only an elucidation of Sri Aurobindo’s ideas about poetry and Shakespeare but abundant examples of his own application and development of these” (p. 108). Sonia Dyne’s “A Man
Mother is with us, is very close to us, and her work is galloping toward the Divine culmination for which she surrendered her body to the Divine Will.

I think those who read this book will be doubly assured of the inevitability of the supramental transformation, however far it may be. For the incurable sceptics it may be a vain chimera but for the aspiring souls open to the Light and Love let loose by the Mother and Sri Aurobindo it is an irrevocable certainty.

— K. Balasubramaniam


Light and Laughter
Some Talks at Pondicherry
Amal Kiran & Nirodharan;
Published by Clear Ray Trust, Pondicherry; 142 pp., Rs 90
(reprinted after several years)

Light and Laughter: Some Talks at Pondicherry is an enjoyable book which at once enlightens and entertains the reader. Though there are abundant splashes of wit and humour ‘of the highest order’ it is not a ‘light’ book and is lit up everywhere with a deep understanding of the spiritual journey of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. The book is a collection of talks by Shri K. D. Sethna and Shri Nirodharan, the former’s talks constituting the bulk of the book.

The first talk, after the introduction by Nirodharan, reveals a lot of autobiographical glimpses of Sethna’s life in Bombay before he came to the Ashram and the reader gets to know more and more about the scholar Sethna’s transformation into sadhak ‘Amal’. This blossoming is not without its ‘teething troubles’ and Sethna, in all his talks, misses no opportunity to make fun of himself with candidness, sincerity and childlike simplicity. That he had an excellent rapport with the audience, mostly students, is borne out by the laughter he evoked and we see ‘laughter’ in parentheses making its appearance with telling regularity page after page. One can almost relive the scene, the audience rapt with attention listening to Sethna rambling away in his inimitable style about the incredible events in the spiritual calendar of the Ashram in its early days, when the bottled-up imp of fun and frolic of the limping lecturer pops out and regales the audience with exquisite witticisms. It leaves one with a sigh of envy at the good fortune of the audience which lapped it up all with exuberant mirth.

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When you are psychic you neither sigh nor kick. — K. D. Sethna

In these talks we come across many vignettes of the then Ashramites with whom Sethna was on friendly terms. In Talk Two Sethna speaks about his own psychic opening which happened by the grace of the Mother. About the psychic realization he says ‘... something like the breaking down of a wall took place and I felt that I was very free, I mean not shut up and cramped in a narrow ego or individuality.’ He continues, ‘To be there, keep within, to feel oneself there is to be perennially, and I might even say unbearably, happy. The light also is present, because some kind of natural truth-feeling is experienced, which guides you all the time.’ Wonderful words indeed to be cherished. He sums up his experience jocularly, ‘when you are psychic you neither sigh nor kick.’ One can go on citing many such examples of Sethna’s humour par excellence.

One of the most interesting things we come to know and value is Sethna’s portrayal of the Mother as the Mother of Love, how She carried all around Her in Her consciousness, nurturing them, protecting them from the constant attacks of hostile forces, for the intensity of Yoga inevitably raises the intensity of the attacks of these hostile forces whose object is to prevent sadhaks from progressing in the path of Yoga. Sethna relates in Talk Six how the Mother answered the eternal question people ask about the presence and power of these forces. Her illuminating answer to this vexed question is one of the gems I find in this book. I venture to give some more of them to the readers.

After the Supramental Manifestation of February 29, 1956, the Mother most emphatically declared:

Lord, Thou hast willed and I execute,
A new light breaks upon the earth,
A new world is born.
The things that were promised are fulfilled.
(1914–1973), the statements are compiled from her notes, messages and correspondences. The volume also includes several conversations.

**Words of the Mother — 2**  
Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department, Pondicherry; 367 pp., ISBN 81-7058-753-0, Rs 190  
This book consists mainly of brief written statements by the Mother on various aspects of spiritual life. The subjects include: the Divine, the Gods and Nature; religion, occultism, wealth and government; progress, perfection and transformation; illness and health; prayers and messages. The statements are compiled from the Mother's notes, messages and correspondences.

**Words of the Mother — 3**  
Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department, Pondicherry; 409 pp., ISBN 81-7058-754-9, Rs 210  
This book consists mainly of short written statements by the Mother on various aspects of spiritual life. The subjects include: the Divine, the Gods and Nature; religion, occultism, wealth and government; progress, perfection and transformation; illness and health; prayers and messages. The statements are compiled from the Mother's notes, messages and correspondences. The volume also includes about thirty brief conversations.

**Compiled from the Works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother**

**Integral Healing**  
Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department, Pondicherry; 260 pp., ISBN 81-7058-774-3, Rs 105  
This book of selections from the writings and talks of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother presents their insights into the causes and cure of illness. It examines the mechanism of illness primarily from a psychological point of view, taking into account the whole of our being including much that is beyond the range of our normal awareness. It explores how the hidden causes of physical disorders can be uprooted by discovering and utilising one’s inner power and participating consciously in the accelerated evolutionary process known as Integral Yoga.

The book is divided into 4 parts, “Psychological Causes of Illness”, “Cure by Inner Means”, “Cure by Spiritual Force” and “Medicine and Healing”.  
*see review on page 5*

**Towards Holistic Management**  
**Words of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother**  
Sri Aurobindo Institute of Research in Social Sciences, Pondicherry; 117 pp., ISBN 81-7060-206-8, Rs 80  
Many in management circles today are looking towards a deeper and higher vision of business, some openly talking about spirituality in business. These quotes from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother’s numerous works deal with the “hard” bottomline factors like materials and money, as well as “soft” factors like people, vision and values.

**Sri Aurobindo Mandir (Annual) 2004**  
— Compiled from the Writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, and other sources  
Sri Aurobindo Pathamandir, Kolkata; 134 pp., Rs 50

**Gavesana 2005**  
*Research in Sri Aurobindo’s Philosophy and Yoga*  
— Edited by Arabinda Basu  
Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, Pondicherry; 37 pp., Rs 30

**Reprints from All India Magazine**  
Published by Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry

**Sri Aurobindo: Life and Teachings In His Own Words**  
48 pp., ISBN 81-7060-225-4, Rs 15

**Suffering: Its Cause and Cure**  
56 pp., ISBN 81-7060-229-7, Rs 15

**Fate and Free-Will**  
56 pp., ISBN 81-7060-224-6, Rs 15

**Other Authors**

**The Golden Path**  
*Interviews with Disciples of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother from the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Auroville*  
— Anie Nunnally  
The Sri Aurobindo Center of Los Angeles, USA; 264 pp., ISBN 0-930736-05-2, Rs 200  
During the lifetimes of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, a number of people gathered around them to receive guidance in their yoga. Today the Masters are no longer in the physical but these recipients of their Grace are “anchors of the Light and an inspiration to countless many who have never been in their physical presence”.  
“The author has selected twelve such disciples and, in these interviews, has drawn out the thread of the spiritual life that has grown in them through their contact with the Masters.”  
*see review on page 8*

**K. D. Sethna (Amal Kiran): A Centenary Tribute**  
— Edited by Dr Sachidananda Mohanty  
The Integral Life Foundation, USA; 492 pp., Rs 200  
Born in 1904, K. D. Sethna (Amal Kiran) first came to
Recent Publications

significance of the English language and the essential truths behind Hinduism.” We are still confused about secularism and the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi for nation building. These articles deal with the bearing of Sri Aurobindo’s vision on such issues of burning relevance to India and the world.

This companion volume to *India and the World Scene* has been reprinted after over half a century.

**Light and Laughter**

*Some Talks at Pondicherry*
— Amal Kiran and Nirodbaran
Clear Ray Trust, Pondicherry;
142 pp., ISBN 81-87916-04-4, Rs 90

These talks are replete with reminiscences told with abundant splashes of wit and humour of the highest order. From the introduction, “some most abstruse aspects of the Integral Yoga have been explained in an astonishingly simple manner” and “the essence of the teachings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother has been brought out in a homely and charming way.”

(This book was out of print for several years.)

*see review on page 11*

**Sri Aurobindo: Critical Considerations**
— O. P. Mathur
Prakash Book Depot, Bareilly;
272 pp., ISBN 81-7977-022-2, Rs 300

This anthology of essays by eminent scholars attempts to fill a need “for a book which could project as many as possible of the major aspects of Sri Aurobindo’s multifaceted achievement”. The various contributions cover both Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy as well as his poetry and plays.

(Now available with SABDA)

**OTHER LANGUAGES**

**FRENCH**

*Roses Blanches*
Extraits de lettres de la Mère à Huta.
Traduit de l’anglais par Jocelyne B. Rs 100

**ITALIAN**

Le Donne — Compilation Rs 140
Lui e Lei la loro guerra di luce — Maggi Lichiti-Grassi, ISBN 88-88508-02-3 Rs 920
Yoga Integrale e Psicoanalisi — Miranda Vannucci Rs 400

**RUSSIAN**

Letters on Yoga (Part I-I) — Sri Aurobindo ISBN 5-94355-090-9 Rs 120
Letters on Yoga (Part I-II) — Sri Aurobindo ISBN 5-94355-119-0 Rs 180
Letters on Yoga (Part I-III) — Sri Aurobindo ISBN 5-94355-179-4 Rs 140

The Secret of the Veda (Volume 2) — Sri Aurobindo, ISBN 5-7938-0034-4 bc Rs 360

**BENGALI**

*Karma* — Debabrata Majumdar Rs 23
O Pathik Tomar Jholay Ki — Debabrata Majumdar, ISBN 81-7060-226-2 Rs 20
Upashad Prasange Sri Aurobindo — Dilip Kumar Roy Rs 30

**HINDI**

Miryilla ke liye kuchh Geet — Sri Aurobindo Rs 20
Rishi — Sri Aurobindo Rs 30
Baton hi Baton mein — Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya Rs 95
Bhagavan ki Aur (Part 1) — Shyam Kumari Rs 150
Bhakti Suman — Usha Maurya Rs 16
Hamari Ankhon — ISBN 81-7058-759-X Rs 15

**KANNADA**

Sri Aravinda Shabdavali — Ed. K. Chennabasappa Rs 50

**ORIYA**

Pathikanka Patheya — Edited by Khagendara Das Rs 25
Bharatiya Shikshara Bibartanadharita — Panchanan Mohanty Rs 42

**TELEGU**

Sri Aurobindo “The Mother” pai Srimata Bhashyam — The Mother Rs 15