

Demystifying Auroville

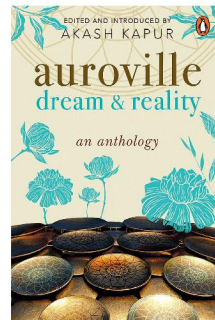
BY VIJAYA PUSHKARNA

They say minimalism is the magic mantra for a stress-free life. That is perhaps what makes Auroville, on the outskirts of Puducherry, attractive. For someone whose home is in Corbusier-designed Chandigarh, a place like Auroville, with creativity throbbing at every point, seems the perfect place to settle down.

That dream is shaken a bit as many who contributed to *Auroville: Dream*

& Reality, an anthology edited by Akash Kapur, described their first tryst with the town that celebrated its 50th year. Author Pankaj Mishra describes it as a brave attempt to break away from orthodox political and economic institutions to create a new community.

The place may be romanticised, but it is not an easy place to stay. When Alan Herbert returned from the west, he experienced the “drama of re-entry”—when a spacecraft plunges



Auroville: Dream & Reality

Edited by Akash Kapur

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back into the Earth’s atmosphere, neither linked to mission control, nor on Earth. He saw many tired faces, loose ends and strung-out enterprises.

The editor comments that moving to Auroville “implies a shifting of consciousness, stepping into a new reality”. That is possibly why most contributions are about “the intensity of the move to Auroville”. Kapur had grown up in Auroville, left for a decade and made a return.

The anthology is not all gloomy. It is about the victory of the spirit over everything else.

For those who harbour an Auroville dream, this anthology works as a demystifier. ♦

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