

# MA ANANDAMAYEE AMRIT VARTA

A quarterly journal dealing mainly  
with the divine life and sayings of  
Sri Anandamayi Ma

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Phone : 310054

# Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha

BHADAINI, VARANASI - 221 001

Dated July 15, 1999

Dear devotees,

On behalf of Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha, the all-India institution founded in the divine name of Shree Anandamayee Ma, I feel it my duty to bring to your kind notice that at the earnest request of Ma's devotees hailing from different parts of India we have started publishing from Varanasi the quarterly journal "Amrit Varta" in four separate languages Hindi, Gujarati, Bengali and English from Shree Ma's birth centenary year 1995-96.

The said journal deals mainly with the divine life and teachings of Ma and is also supposed to be the principal organ of our whole organisation.

It was our keen expectation that the journal in Shree Ma's holy name would be very much welcomed by all Ma's devotees and admirers. But it is really surprising that the number of subscribers of different editions of the journal have so far been very much below our expectation and consequently the journal is being printed at a substantial loss due to regular increase in the cost of printing and paper etc.

It is, therefore, our earnest request to you that you will be good enough to come to our immediate assistance not only by regularly subscribing to the journal yourself ( any edition of your choice ) but also by arranging for a good number of advertisements in the journal as well as through enrolment of additional subscribers from among your friends and relations.

For the convenience of all we have kept the annual subscription of the journal only Rs. 60/- per year ( postage free within India ) and rates of advertisements are also quite reasonable.

We sincerely hope that this will receive your kind attention without fail.

Thanking you in anticipation,

Yours in the service of Ma

**Panu Brahmachari**

Managing Editor  
"Amrit Varta"



## MATRI-VANI

There is a time for everything. No one can come to me until the time is ripe.

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Question— How can I know which is the true path ?

Answer— If you sit with all doors and windows closed, how can you see the path ? Open the door and step out; the path will become visible.

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Visitor—I have no spiritual aspirations. I am happy as I am.

Answer—That is good; we also are talking of happiness. If you have found the secret of happiness why do you make this statement instead of being in this state for all to see ? (She smiles, the visitor laughs and acknowledges that it is so). To be with God is true happiness.

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The multifarious kinds of beasts, birds, men—what are they all ? What are these varieties of shapes and modes of being ? What is the essence within them ? What really are these ever-changing forms ? Gradually, slowly, because you are rapt in the contemplation of your Beloved, He becomes revealed to you in every one of them; not even a grain of sand is excluded. You realize that water, earth, plants, animals, birds, human beings are nothing but forms of your Beloved. Some experience it in this manner; realization does not come to everyone in the same way. There are infinite possibilities and consequently which, for any particular person is the specific path along which the Universal Love will reveal itself in its boundlessness, remains concealed from most individuals.

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Question—Is it possible to bribe God ?

Answer—By cheating, you yourself alone will be cheated.

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To be a human being means to place first and foremost the desire to know one's self.

God is everywhere. He pervades everything. He whom you think you have sought in vain for so many years, is not apart from you. Just as a man cannot be without bones, blood, flesh & skin, so the One is present everywhere, at all time, interwoven with everything that exists.

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God is one's very own self, the breath of one's breath, the life of one's life, the *Atma*. Not until his true Self has been revealed to him may a seeker ever relax his search. By seeking one will find; the Self is within one's own grasp. To feel fatigued, exhausted, because one has not found Him is a very good sign indeed. It indicates that one is nearing the purification of one's heart and mind.

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In dreams all kinds of things can be seen; things which the mind has been busy with, and also things which have not been thought about, but which have occurred in the past or will come about in the future. In any case everything that happens belongs to the realm of dreams.

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When one has become still, that is to say, when one has become established in a state of tranquility, then the activity of nature which continues at every moment in sleep and in walking and is part of the movement of the pilgrimage from birth to death, this and the thinking mind become caught in that stream and eternally remain floating in it. Ever to keep the mind poised in the Self, wide-awake in the current of Reality, where the unfathomable, the One-without-end is ever revealed in His infinity—this must, with the intensity of a possession be your one and constant endeavour.



## IMPRESSIONS OF ANANDAMAYI MA

[Four]

—Richard Lannoy

The eyes of a Sage are, of course, the focus of intense interest. Ma Anandamai's eyes were, as might be expected, most unusual and strange. It was actually quite difficult to settle your gaze on them, regardless of whether or not she happened to be looking at you. At time they were serene and still, but more often they flickered and fluttered like hovering moths, with neither self-consciousness nor agitation—certainly not in any way flirtatious or hypnotic. No, their flickering seemed to indicate intense receptivity, mental agility, as if she was listening to a myriad inaudible and different signals on a radio receiver. I have never watched such an eventful face. It was not exactly focussed on any one spot however, but this acute attention seemed diffused in order to encompass both the very near and the very far. Then, like a light being switched off without the least drama—all animation, all expression, all the fine sensitivity that held you in thrall, would abruptly vanish. Just for a little while, the face would become, like that in the last of the Ten Ox-Herding Pictures, nothing special.

Once or twice on these occasions our eyes would meet. But even then it was hard to say whether they did or didn't meet, for the radar power of her eyes seemed to cover a wide range. It is difficult to tell what their colour was either, but I guess it was a mixture of black, brown & russet. The irises were irregularly flaked, crumbly with golden glints. I could focus on one eye quite easily, being as near as I was; I could settle on it comfortably even when she seemed to be looking straight at me. But if I made a concentrated effort to look into the other eye, it was not only extremely difficult to hold my gaze but the eye became strangely perturbed and to blink within an otherwise impassive face. My description of this security no doubt reads as detached, clinical, controlled. In fact, it was much more feeling-saturated and communicative than I can put into words. It was truly extraordinary experience, inspirational, uplifting, consolidating. Yet, it is natural that I should describe this particular face in such impersonal terms, considering who she was. In her silence she was, it seemed, aside, detached, apart. She didn't give an impression of coldness in the very least, but her sheer presence was paradoxical. One had to take a long searching look before one found this ultimate redoubt of selfhood.

No sooner has one made any kind of assertion as to her true nature than one has to qualify it ! I could say she had the simplicity of a rose, but I could equally say

she had all the complexity of a rose. Her *nothing special* quality did not, however, conceal her distinction of manner and movement, especially in a crowd. Her walk was unusual and that alone marked her out even when viewed from a long distance away. It had a sort of comfortably springy elasticity; she seemed to relish the sensation of walking. The English poet Lewis Thompson who, from long experience, had developed a discerning eye for people of very high spiritual quality, met and had long private talks with her in 1945, and said he could tell at once she was a realized being from the way she walked—completely without ego.

She had a marvellous way with words and a marvellously musical voice, as anyone who has heard her in person or has listened to tapes of her singing, will testify. Bengali is sweet-sounding and siplant tongue. To my ear, her mode of speaking seemed to be quintessentially feminine, but more than merely in its vocal pitch and its emotional colouring, for she used words in special & remarkable ways. She was a virtuoso in the use of dazzling verbal cadenzas that bounded away from every scriptural score—pure spontaneous extemporizations, not only with her sounds and the puns inherent in word-play (or word-*Lila*), but, more importantly, in the import of the thought behind the words. Here was the other half of spirituality—the often unheard feminine half—reunited and completed in non-dual gender.

There was an essentially poetic organization in everything she said, but then all sacred utterance, all sacred text is traditionally poetic in the Eastern cultures. Her words bounded out of her without the least heritage of quotation and conceptual paradoxes which comprise the corpus of India's spiritual traditions. She had a curiously telegrammatic way of constructing her sentences, leaving out any word which her care over clarity of meaning could dispense with, as if there was no time for lingering; so swift was her mind, so direct its route. A Bengali poet told me: 'She talks the way modern Bengali poets write'. And she never wrote anything down, never prepared her discourse, never revised what she had said; some how, it came out perfectly shaped. In her irresistible way, her woman's way, she could ignore the rules of the game in order to play it all the more exultantly, copiously, freshly.

Sadly, the problems involved in noting down exactly what Anandamayi Ma said in her discourses have been so great that very little has been safely and accurately preserved. What we have, even so, is impressive, although the musicality and alliterative word-play some how die on the printed page. Only one man, I gather Brahmachari Kamal Bhattacharjee, now Sri Virajananda Maharaj, had the ability to transcribe her discourse with scrupulous fidelity. Only a few of these transcriptions



have been translated into English. Through her patient labours and insight into Mataji's teaching Atmananda managed to convey the transparency of the words, although their musical enchantment could not survive. Here are two examples of the highest subtlety-though, alas, there must be recourse to explanation;

*"You should understand that one who loves God is but out to destroy identification with the body. When this has come about, there is destruction (nāsa) of delusion, of bondage, in other words, of desire (vāsanā) , of 'not-self' (Na Sva). Your dwelling place (vāsa) at present is where the self manifests as 'Not-self' (Na Sva); when that is destroyed, it is only destruction that is destroyed."*

Sva, and Sa pronounced alike in Bengali; thus nāsa (destruction) sounds like Na sva (Not-self). Vāsanā (desire) is where the Self dwells as 'Not-self' : vāsa (to dwell). na (No Not). In translation, a beautiful thought which had come tripping from Mataji's tongue, and which could be easily understood by an attentive ear, becomes laboured.

*"What goes and what comes ? Behold, it is movement as that of the ocean (samudra) He expressing Himself (Sva Mudrā). The waves are but the rising and the falling, the undulation of the water, and it is water that forms into waves (taranga), limbs of His own body [Tār Anga]—Water in essence. What is it that makes the same substance appear in different forms, as water, ice waves ? What actually have you realized ? Find out !"*

With marvellous plasticity, with 'concrete' poetry she makes a *murti* (image of a deity) out of words—*Samudra* means sea; *Sva Mudrā*, 'His own expression'; *taranga*, a wave; *tār*, His; *anga*, limb, intrinsic part.

(To be continued)

## CONVERSATION WITH WESTERN DEVOTEES

[Four]

—Vijayananda

Q. Is it true, that Ma had to surround herself by pure people, purity providing her nourishment ?

V. This is like saying that the doctor must be surrounded by healthy people, because that is the way he earns his living. Ma had taken a physical form, mainly to help people in their search for the Supreme Being. This search can only be undertaken through mental purification. Ma was surrounded by people who needed to be purified. She did not have anything special to do with perfectly pure people. Of course, the people surrounding Her were not (except in rare cases) vicious individuals, because these kind of people do not wish to entrust themselves to a sage.

It is true, nevertheless, that those who served Ma had to be capable of observing certain rules of physical purity : chastity, pure food, personal hygiene etc....., but if Ma kept them by Her side, it was because they needed Her help for the purification of their minds. Ma used to say that it was our good conduct that would keep her in good health, but alas ! she fell ill quite often.

It is also true that Her body was an extremely sensitive instrument. If she assumed a physical form, it was not to protect her body, but to absorb the bad 'Karma' of her devotees. And it is astonishing how much that body could absorb, and yet maintain a relative equilibrium.

Q. Bhajji says that the Name of Ma is a unique Mantra, but he also says that the Mantra should be learnt from a teacher, and should be pronounced correctly in order to bear fruit. It seems that the result can be obtained by faith (the Name of Ma) or knowledge (the correct recitation of the Mantras). Which of the two is it ?

V. There are two elements in the Mantra. One is its intrinsic value as a word of power, the other is the faith that the disciple has in the force of his Mantra. These two elements strengthen each other mutually. That is, the more the disciple has faith in the Mantra, the more he is infused with power, and vice versa. If a Mantra is known as being a source of power, the faith of the disciple will come naturally. More so, if the Mantra has been passed on by a guru one loves and venerates. When a Sadguru\* gives a Mantra to his disciples, he passes on spiritual power to

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\*. The Supreme Guru, He who is our real self.

them at the same time. Thus the repetition of the Mantra and the awakening of the power will be indissolubly linked. But the essential part is always the faith and the spiritual intensity of the disciple. Any formula can lead to Realization, if the sadhaka firmly believes that it is a powerful Mantra. For those (as in the case of Bhaiji), who are intensely devoted to Ma, just saying her name is enough to evoke her presence, and it will lead them towards an union with the Sadguru, personified by the physical form of Ma. However, for the ordinary sadhaka, it is preferable, that he repeat the Mantra given to him by the guru, in the course of his initiation. By repeating his Mantra assiduously, true faith will come to him and his spiritual intensity will progressively increase.

Q. Some people say that the saint sees good because there is no evil in him. It seems to me that he sees good and evil in the same light, being beyond both. But all the same, should there not be some discrimination, or else he might find himself in unfortunate situations.....

V. One must distinguish between a saint, that is, a very evolved being, whose mind has been identified with pure 'Satwa'<sup>1</sup> and a perfect sage who is beyond all 'gunas'. The saint sees evil, but his love for all allows him to concentrate on the positive aspect, because evil is never totally bad, and even in the most vicious acts one can find an element of light. As for the perfect sage who has gone beyond the 'gunas', the distinction between good and evil has no significance for him. He sees the play of the Divine everywhere, in the sage and in the fool, in the saint and in the sinner. When one watches an actor that one loves and admires, what one admires, is his talent, no matter what role he plays, and one always gets involved in the role. If he plays the role of a sage, one listens to him attentively, if he plays the foul, one laughs at him, if his role is that of a thief, one either has him sent to prison, or one has him forgiven, etc..... without ever forgetting that it is Him, always Him, behind all these multiple disguises.

Q. Is it possible that saints include us and our families in their meditation, even as we beg to be included from a distance ?

V. When we meditate, we enter or try to enter into contact with Universal Consciousness. Those who are at that moment in our field of consciousness, will automatically benefit from it, whether they have entered through an act of one, or on their own, even if not aware of their presence in the field of consciousness.

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1. Sattwa is the most subtle attribute (guna), which symbolises harmony, light and purity. It is one of the three forces of the universe. The other two are 'Tamas' and 'Rajas'.

When you sit in a bus, the driver takes you to your destination, whether you are his friend or his enemy, and whether he is aware of your presence in the bus or not. The simple fact of having climbed aboard the bus is enough. But in the case of the meditator, whose contact with Universal Consciousness is intermittent, it is not easy to realize the coincidence. It is much simpler establishing contact with the perfect sage, who is constantly united with Universal Consciousness. Even in the absence of a physical presence, a photograph or a reading of his teaching is enough.

Q. The internal guru is present in everyone, isn't he ?

V. Yes, he is present in everyone, but he is veiled, that is, in a state of torpor, and it is the main duty of the physical guru to awaken him. The internal guru is the Sadguru (Or God), and it is just a question, not of evolution, but of progressively removing the impurities which veils him. The internal guru guides one in the spiritual life as well as in the material one. In fact, from the point of view of 'sadhana', there is no difference between the two. Daily life is as important (because of the lessons that can be learnt from it) as the hours spent in meditation.

Q. Is the 'I am' a finality ? Can one function in the world after the dissolution of one's individuality ?

V. The 'I am' is present in everyone, even in the ordinary person. But for the ordinary person, the 'I am' is his body and the personality which springs from it. Following the path of knowledge (the Jñana marg) the 'sadhaka' starts from this idea of 'I am' and seeks to dissociate himself from his physical being. On this path he goes through more subtle stages of identification with his astral body, with the light etc..... but it is always a very circumscribed 'self'. But when he can sustain himself on the pure 'I am', that is, on Pure Consciousness, that is limitless, then his individuality dissolves itself in the 'Universal Self', the 'Chidananda'.

In the path of devotion, the Universal Self becomes the Power of the other : God, the Eternal Beloved, about whom this self meditates with love until the individual self dissolves itself in the Ocean of the Beloved. The final result, in following either of the two paths, is the same.

The great sages like Ma Anandamayi and Ramana Maharshi, for example, are channels through which the Divine Power works for the welfare of the world. Whatever they do is done spontaneously, without any volition on their part.

As for reformers and founders of religions, they are at a more inferior level, because they have to maintain a certain 'satvik' individuality. They are inspired by

the Divine, but these inspirations are interpreted by a refined mind. Divisions between sects and religions are necessary for the world, but they do not have any significance for a perfect being.

In any case, just through his presence, a sage works for the good of the world. Even if he lives in solitary retirement, the beneficial rays of his presence will be felt.

[To be continued]

## PETALS OF A FLOWER

Fragrance and fragrance flows all around; Hither and thither dances the glance of the eyes

Searching the Bloom that lurks midst the veils of the Earth, mist of the Sky  
Not along can YOU hide. Peeks the beauty from the rays of the Sun the beams of the Moon

Air around calms the turmoils of the mind; flowing waters sooth the torments of the heart

YOU are in the sky.....YOU are in the earth.....Reigning in the mountains  
flowing in the river Petals of your flower have flown far and wide.

East and West hails the bond of Your Love; Each petal adorns the colour of Your choice

Some in saffron some in white; spreading the fragrance of Your flower far and wide

Heralding the message of Mother Divine, showing the light of a guiding star

When in the storms the paths are lost; petals of Your flower gently hold the hand

One Petal is here; One Petal is there : One by the Ocean; One by the River

One by the Valley.....Petals of Your flower are all around.....

# THE FUNDAMENTALS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

[ ONE ]

—P.C. Mehta

In 1954 I met Mata Anandamayee in Bombay for the first time. I went to see Her out of curiosity and at the very first darshan, I found in Ma the very incarnation of Maha Shakti. I stayed to pray. My association with Ma continued till her Maha Samadhi in 1982. Not only did I learn much from Ma but She completely changed my life. I spent many hours with Ma asking all sorts of questions, till one day She asked me if I had any further question. With folded hands I said I had none.

This association inspired me to study Indian Philosophy and from the notes taken by me for these studies I have compiled a book entitled, "The Fundamentals of Indian Philosophy". It attempts to cover historically and in short the entire panorama from the Vedic times to Modern times.

Scholars may present transcendental wisdom in diverse ways; but for that matter all theoretical knowledge is but mediate knowledge. Mediate knowledge of unity does not remove immediate conviction of diversity. We need an equally immediate conviction of unity to overcome our ignorance. That is best achieved by Guru Kripa and following Guru's instructions. Thus following Ma's simple instructions is more potent and leads to enlightenment and is thus the highest philosophy.

## **1: Philosophical foundations of Hinduism and their relevance to modern life.**

Western thought patterns have dominated the world. It is therefore both necessary and easier to examine and understand the philosophical foundations of Hinduism via Western philosophy.

The great Greek philosopher Plato defined philosophy as the love of wisdom. Wisdom came to mean understanding, 'Reality'. Reality then came to mean the objective universe and the states of consciousness which one regards objectively. The Greek spirit as well as Descartes, the father of modern philosophy, revolted against beliefs and superstitions and in search of knowledge which was certain, introduced the scientific method of observation of phenomena, collection of data, analysis of data and finding principles, through the process of reasoning. The laws of reasoning are the rules of logic discovered by Aristotle. Thus was born science

and the scientific method and understanding came to mean conceptual comprehension.

Whenever a principle is discovered it is taken over by science for further development and philosophy is pushed to areas not taken over by science. Thus conceptual comprehension through the process of reasoning became the foundation of Western philosophy and institutions. This entire marvellous technological civilization we see around us is its result.

Thus for the Western philosophy, '*pramana*' meaning the proximate means of valid knowledge are perception and inference. Therefore, philosophy means discovering 'Reality' through reason. Since perceptions are the parameters for reasoning to function, reasoning cannot reveal truths which are not contained within perception.

Therefore, conceptual comprehension cannot encompass entire Reality. The famous Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung said, 'We should not pretend to understand the world only by the intellect. The judgment of the intellect is only part of the truth'.

Perception stems from cognition of the impressions of the senses by the perceiving subject and inference depends upon the capacity of the mind for logical reasoning. Both are the attributes of the subject or the 'self', also called the 'ego'.

Now let us look at the approach of the Vedic Rsis in discovering 'Reality'. They found that all phenomenal things were in a state of flux, but were held together by a permanent and imperishable principle, which they called 'Isha' or 'Brahman'. Thus the 'Isha-Upanisad' begins with the words, '*Isavasyam idam sarvam yet kincit jagtyam jagat*'. For them to understand this 'Brahman' was wisdom. Like wise, they found that body, emotions and the mind were in a state of flux, but the one who notices their fleeting character is the permanent Self within. To find that permanent Self, which they called 'Atman', was wisdom.

From this they reasoned that the permanent Self was hidden under the three fleeting principles of body, emotions and mind. Therefore, body, emotions and mind were the principles which hide Reality, not reveal it. In other words, eternity is concealed under time. Hence all attempts to find Reality through the principles which are themselves in a flux were in vain. Therefore the Taittiriya Upanisad says, '*Yato vacho nivartante aprapya manasa saha*', i.e. Reality is that from which speech along with the mind falls back unable to comprehend'.

They then enquired as to how it was that one was unaware of one's own permanent Self within. The seriousness of this enquiry led to the discovery that by identifying itself with the three ephemeral principles of body, emotions and mind,

the permanent Self within had formulated ideas, ideals, values, process of becoming etc. All these notions though relatively true became fixations by being regarded as having permanent value, and thereby fashioning, what is called '*hradaya-granthi*', or the knots in the heart. To these were added, the desires of the senses, emotions and the subserving mind. This in its totality, is the psychological center within the mind. It is identification with this center which obliterates one from knowing one's real Self. This center therefore consists of '*hradaya-granthi*' or the knots in the heart, held together by '*trishna*' desire. This center, cumulatively is man's lower self. This is his so called Ego. Man as he functions is no more than this ego.

This ego exists within the mind. Where is the objective reality? One is aware of it only through sensations in one's mind. Man interprets these sensations as coming from the outside objective world. Whether in fact there is an objective world which creates sensations within one's mind or whether the sensations within the mind are interpreted as the objective world are questions which are subjects of debate between philosophers. Without going into these questions, we can easily see that it is only in our mind that we are aware of these sensations about the objective reality. Therefore, both subject and object are within one's mind. Thus man's life is no more than an interaction between the two, within his own mind.

Since perception and inference are both the attributes of the subject, and since the subject or self is necessary in all scientific enquiry; all scientific enquiry can take place only within the duality created by the subject-object split, and pertains to the phenomenal world which is for ever in a flux. Since scientific enquiry cannot transcend the subject-object split, it cannot reveal Reality. Therefore man lives within the prison of duality.

This also leads to the further corollary that the objective universe is directly related to the subject. As such, the objective universe changes along with the change in the subject or the ego. This is very pertinently found in the lives of the Saints.

To be free from this prison of duality and come to Self-Knowledge, one has to eradicate this psychological center. That is the basic purpose of Yoga which includes meditation. Religion is that which guides persons to this end. '*Jnana marg*' or the way of insight, burns up the ego; bhakti or devotion leading to '*prapatti*' or surrender dissolves the ego. In this sense, the Cross must symbolize the ending of 'I'.

When the saints and sages achieved this end they found that '*Atman*', their real Self was the same as '*Brahman*', the imperishable substratum of creation. Thus the



essential teaching of the Upanisads (which are the end portions of Vedas) is the identification of 'Atman' with 'Brahman'. This is epitomized by the well-known saying '*Aham Brahmasmi*', i.e. 'I am Brahman', '*Tat tvam asi*' i.e. 'That thou art'. They mean that the principle underlying the world as a whole and that which forms the essence of man, are ultimately the same. Here ended the long Vedic quest for the all-pervasive cause of things. As the Chhandogya Upanisad expresses it, 'The search for That, knowing which we know everything'.

The identification of 'Atman' with 'Brahman' delineates the spiritual character of the Ultimate Reality, as well as the infiniteness of 'Atman' covering not only all the selves but 'Brahman', which is referred to as 'Satyam, Jnanam, Anantam Brahma'. 'Satyam' refers to the certainty of existence, 'Jnanam' refers to its spiritual character and 'Anantam' to its all-inclusive infiniteness. Though this state is without attributes, for understanding at our intellectual level, it is described as 'Sat', that is truly existing, 'Cit' or having consciousness and 'Ananda' blissful. This discovery along with the insistence on the need to come to it, is the great contribution of the Upanisads, which is Vedic philosophy and the high rational and purpose of Hinduism.

In Brihadaranyaka Upanisad, in a famous dialogue between Yajnyavalka and his wife Maitreyi, it is remarked that 'From Ananda or joy springs this universe; in joy it has its being and unto joy it returns'. Therefore, all manifestation is but an upwelling joy of 'Brahman'.

About the wisdom that the Vedas contain, it is said in the Chhandogya Upanisad in the dialogue between Uddalaka and his son Svetaketu, 'It is that knowledge, knowing which we know everything'. Thousands of years ago, Saunaka asked Angirasa, 'On what being by experience known, O master, is all this (i.e. the existence) experienced and known?' The answer is that by knowing 'Atman', in which there is no objectivity, is everything known.

For transcendental matters, Hindus rely on what is known as '*Sabda-pramana*', or the wisdom of the sages and not perception and inference. Vedas are a repository of the records of these Rsis and the religious authority for the Hindus. Indian Philosophers without exception have declared that reason unaided by transcendental experience is blind. Therefore, for the Hindus, philosophy is an attempt to present ultimate truths already realized through direct awareness in rational terms. The various schools of Hindu philosophy are therefore called 'Darshana', which means direct perception and not concepts. They clearly state that the immediate awareness of diversity cannot be overcome by mediate (i.e. intellectual) knowledge of unity. The awareness of unity has to be equally immediate. Religion is therefore not

separated from philosophy. Professor Max Muller, therefore, says that 'Philosophy was recommended in India, not for the sake of knowledge, but for the highest purpose that man can strive after in this life'.

Jaimini points out that the Vedas is the source of our knowledge, just where perception and inference fail. '*Aprapte sastram arthavat*'-Mimamsa Sutra' (I,i,5) 'When you cannot obtain (through perception and inference), 'sastra' is valuable'. In the introduction to his commentary on Rig Veda, Sayanacarya (1400 A.D.) says that the chief function of verbal testimony (i.e. the Vedas) is to obtain knowledge of the two higher ideals of 'Dharma' and 'Moksa', and of the proper means to their realization. This raises the related question of the propriety of looking for scientific knowledge in the Vedas. Holistic documents like the Vedas may be subjected to several interpretations, but the result of interpreting them in matters for which they are not meant, is of questionable value and lowers the dignity of the Vedas.

In our search for peace in the world and enlightened life-style, we have come to a point where for a sane society, there has got to be an amalgam of Western science and Hindu wisdom.

[ To be continued ]



## THOSE DAYS IN HAWAII

—'Shobha'

Hawaii the land of paradise, where beauty resides in abundance. A confluence of colors of the earth, movement of the breeze, placidity and rage of the ocean. Hawaii where trees grow on the rock, flowers bloom in the desert. The mood of the Nature is elegantly defined by the waves of the ocean, blossoming of its vegetation. The colors and the fine line of the sky draw a longing distance between the Beloved and the loved one. between the swan and the Moon, the sun-flower and the Sun. In this paradise love elevates to sublime spiritual heights; hearts, long lost yearnings come to play. A play of MA's beauty, HER silence, HER meditation and HER *Kheyal*. Lord Shiva's flowers of devotion pave the path to lead to HIS abode. Every pilgrim who comes to see the vision of the Infinite Creation of God's Love and Prakriti's worship sure is spellbound by the ocean of MA's grace, HER gait, the innocence of HER *Kheyal* and the anger of Her moods in absolute perfection. Here one loses one's self to the infinite vastness of creation. The longing of merging into the silence of the beauty in the desolation of the black sand vibrates the whole being. The flames of the volcanoes, the forming of the lava creates a fear of the reproduction of Mother Nature's infinite power. Yet a longing to go deep to know this Infinite power of Kali, Durgā, Saraswati. Their attributes manifest in the flames of these volcanoes, in the raging waves of the sea, placid waters of the ocean, the mist of smoke rises high to the sky forming clouds like a thin veil momentarily separating the waves from the Moon. The far away stretched colors of the horizon beckons to come and reach out to the vastness of its bosom. MA's moods, Her attributes are spread in vast forms the shapes of the flowers, leaves of the trees, fruits of the season. The sound of the breeze, the hum of the bees, fluttering of the birds, the deep silence of the space compose the music of the lyric that is beheld by the eyes touched by the heart. No words could have strung a melody so enchanting. The sound of the long grass reed rubbing against each other whistled the notes of Krsna's flute. In this harmony will Radha's anklets not dance?

Here in this reign of Supremacy of God's love we lost ourselves to the Love of the Known, who leads us to the Absolute Love of the Unknown, yet always known! All feeling of I-ness and mine-ness was dissolved in the Cosmic Love of MA. The touch of MA was felt all around. The darkness of the night was charmed

by the twinkling of the stars. The dawn was brightened by the sight of the Guru's sublime beauty and power of wisdom. The dew laden flowers waited to be picked for the worship of Mother. Some were wreathed some were offered. This haven of paradise brought the colors that had faded in the scorching heat and raging storms of life..Yet amidst these colors the spray of desolation and despair was playing the game of longing and losing. But the intensity of being engulfed by MA's Love was more powerful than all the desires of the self. No yearning can fade the color of HER Love. The free spirit flew in liberation not binded by one but loved by all. Love yet be distant from love. Only to be merged in the Love Of MA, Shree Shree Anandamayi MA. !!!!!!!

*Matri sharanam*

**"Turn towards Him, turn away from worldly longings back to your own home."**

**—Ma Anandamayee**

## MA'S DAYS IN AJNĀTAVĀSA

[ *Translated from the diary of Didi Gurupriya* ]

At Tarapith I heard from Birajmohini didi about how Ma suddenly left for *Ajnata Vasa* in August, 1936.

Ma reached Srirampur in the afternoon. She went to the Gauranga temple and all the devotees soon gathered there. Ma told the devotees to return with Bholanath to Calcutta the same evening. In the evening Ma went for a walk by the side of the Ganga. Later she revealed that She had a vision of Sri Jagannath there and immediately decided to go to Puri. Till then no one knew anything of this. She had started from Calcutta with only one cloth. When Triguna Babu presented her a new sari She wore it and gave him the one She had been wearing. Ma left Srirampur by the night train with a ticket upto Kharagpur. Triguna Babu secretly handed over a sari and a blanket for Ma to Birajmohini Didi. At the Srirampur station someone offered Ma a nice sari, sandesh and sindur. Sandesh (sweet) was distributed immediately and Biraj didi kept the sari with her.

On reaching Kharagpur they could not catch the train to Puri so they rented a room for a day. The next day they reached Puri and went to the Goenka Dharmasala, but since no room was vacant Ma stayed in the verandah.

In a room adjoining this verandah some traveller from Orissa was staying with his family. Biraj didi kept the blanket and the clothes in their room and set out for darshan. As soon as they reached the dharmasala Ma had told Kamal that she would give the new sari to the travellers and take a cloth from them. No body except Kamal dada knew that Ma had said this. When they returned after darshan Biraj didi went to the traveller's room to get her things and the traveller of his own accord asked Biraj didi whether she would sell the sari and how much it costed. Biraj didi said that she did not know its price and that a devotee had offered it to Ma. She declared she would not sell it. The traveller pointed out, "But Ma wears only a narrow bordered sari, she will not wear this sari". Biraj didi narrated this to Ma who laughed and asked her to call the traveller. Ma requested him to accept the sari, but he flatly refused to take it without paying for it and Mataji conversed with him for a long time on this issue. Mataji addressed him as 'Baba' (father), talked to him sweetly and finally won him over into accepting the sari. He went away with it but came back soon after, insisting that he would purchase a narrow bordered dhoti for Mataji. Mataji refused repeatedly, but on his insistent pleading she agreed and he

brought a narrow bordered dhoti for Ma. So, the statement which Mataji had made only to Kamal dada as soon as she entered the dharmasala came true.

In the evening Mataji went for a walk on the sea shore. Suddenly a vaishnava boy came to Mataji and said, "I have seen you at Shahbag. Are you not the Ma of Shahbagh?" Saying this he went to Sri Bijoy Krishna Goswami's Ashram in Puri and informed them about Mataji's arrival. One gentleman soon went to the dharmasala but returned without finding Mataji there, because she was even then at the sea shore. When Mataji returned to the dharmasala from the sea shore, she began walking up and down on the verandah. All of a sudden she declared, "I can see a person coming with a lantern". A little while after the person, Makhan Babu, did indeed turn up, lantern in hand. He was extremely delighted to obtain Mataji's darshan so unexpectedly and talked to Mataji for some time and then went back.

The next day as Mataji strolled along the sea shore she again encountered a boy from Navadweep. He had seen Mataji at Navadweep and had travelled with her to many places. In the evening Makhan Babu took Mataji to Sri Shyamdas Babaji and then to Ananda Bazar and many other places. He purchased a variety of *Prasada*, which he brought to the dharmasala and fed Mataji with his own hands. Mataji also fed every body.

Mataji left the same evening for Bhuvaneshwar by train. There also she stayed in a dharmasala. The next morning she visited several places and returned to the dharmasala in the afternoon. On receiving information of Mataji's arrival, Sri Dinesh Bhattacharya came to see Mataji and talked to her for two hours and also sang to her. That evening she left Bhuvaneshwar and travelled through Gomoh, Adra and other places and went to Mathura by car. At Mathura also she stayed in a *dharmasala* for three days, but no devotee came to know about her stay. Since no one is permitted to stay in any dharmasala beyond three days, Ma left and ordered Kamal dada to return to Calcutta. He tried very hard to stay on but Mataji persuaded him to leave and went with him to the station. From the station she went to Vishram ghat and sat down there. That day Mataji was to take fruits only. She had practically no possessions with her. Biraj didi had purchased a few ordinary vessels at Puri but Mataji had given them all to Kamal. She had cut a piece of the blanket and kept it and given the rest to Kamal. Other than a water pot, this piece of blanket and one dhoti Mataji had nothing else with her. Biraj didi had a blanket and two dhotis and some money. She bought some fruit and began feeding Mataji sitting on the ghat. People gathered and stood around to watch this. Looking at Mataji's dishevelled hair and seeing her being fed by someone else, they thought she was mad and began laughing. Mataji also joined in their laughter.

As evening drew on, their destination was still unknown. Mataji pointed out to every place by the road side and Biraj didi asked, "Can we stay here?" Just then they happened to meet a Kashmiri lady who was Mataji's devotee. She delightedly bowed down at Mataji's feet and began praising her good fortune which had enabled her to have Mataji's darshan. She wanted to take Mataji to her house, but Mataji would not go to anyone's house. So she said, "We have a temple right here on the Vishram ghat. Let us go there." She took Mataji to the temple and made all arrangements for Mataji's stay, She brought fruits and milk for Mataji's *bhoga*. The next day she made *roti* and fed Mataji with her own hands. One Narayan Pandit came and had Ma's darshan and was extremely happy. He told her, "I saw you once before and then looked for you in many dharmasalas, but could not find you. Now please come to another temple where you can stay without any inconvenience." Ma replied, "Not this time, let us see later. Now I shall go to Vrindavan". He said, "I shall also go with you".

Ma left for Vrindavan with the Pandit. Ma reached the dharmasala belonging to Burdwan Maharaja. The Manager, Sri Jogendra Bhattacharya knew Ma and he took Ma inside the dharmasala. A little later Ma told the Panditji to return to Mathura.

The next day Mataji left Vrindavan and went to Mathura station where Jogendra Babu asked her, "Ma, where will you go now? Which place do you want a ticket for?" Mataji replied, "Nothing is certain with us. I shall go wherever anyone takes me on the way. Now you can get us tickets for Agra." The Manager got tickets for Agra.

When Ma was coming to Vrindavan from Mathura she gave the Kashmiri lady a dhoti saying, "Have it washed and keep it." The lady thought that it meant Mataji would perhaps return to Mathura, but Mataji had given blankets, dhotis, rugs and blouses to so many people, asking them to keep them, but had not returned thereafter. This was not known to the Kashmiri lady. At Agra Fort Mataji got down and told Biraj didi to purchase a ticket for Etawah. As Mataji was sitting at the Agra station two boys began conversing with her with great reverence and requested her to go with them to their place in Agra and said they would arrange for her stay by the Yamuna river. They also gave her their address.

Mataji changed the train at Tundla to go to Etawah. At Tundla station a boy saw Mataji and came to her and said, "Mataji, I have seen you in Sultanpur. Will you go to Sultanpur? I am also going there." Mataji replied, "We have tickets for Etawah". The boy got the tickets changed for Sultanpur. So Mataji did not go to Etawah and went to Sultanpur instead. When changing train at Allahabad they did not see the boy again. On way to Sultanpur Mataji and Biraj didi were seated in the

ladies' compartment. At Pratapgarh station a Muslim lady got into the same compartment. She asked Mataji, "How many children do you have ?" Mataji replied, "I am myself your child, will I then have children?" This remark made a profound impression on that lady. She then conversed with Mataji for some time and became much attached to Ma. Biraj didi had bought a little toy for Mataji and Mataji fiddled with it for some time and then told the Muslim lady, "Children keep their toys with their mother. Please keep this toy with you." The lady gave Mataji her address and requested her to meet again. While leaving she began weeping. At Sultanpur Ma with Biraj didi went to meet Rama Sharma (Sharda's sister), who is a doctor in Sultanpur. Rama came and made all arrangements for Ma's stay. She stayed there for a day and then went to the Gomati river the next morning. On the way she saw a car and asked, "Where is this car going?" Someone replied, "It is going to Faizabad". There and then Mataji told Biraj didi, "Let us go to Faizabad." They reached Faizabad in the evening. From the station they took a horse cart and set out for Ayodhya.

(To be continued)



# VEDANTA AND TANTRA

[TWO]

—Prof. Bireswar Ganguly

## The central Philosophy of the Ishopanishad

The Ishopanishad, the shortest, containing only eighteen verses of Yajur Veda, may be taken as the summary of the other bigger ones of Yajur Veda, viz. Katha, Taittiriya, Brihadaranyaka and Svetashvatara, and verses first, second, eighth and eleventh of Ishopanishad contain the spirit of this important Upanishad, which gives the integral monism of Vedanta. Bhagavad Gita appears as not only the essence of all the 108 major Upanishads, but also as the best commentary of the Ishopanishad. <sup>1</sup>

The second verse or mantra of the Ishopanishad prescribes the practical philosophy of divine life on the earth. <sup>2</sup>

कुर्वन्नेवेद कर्माणि जिजीविषेत् शतं समाः ।  
एवं त्वयि नान्ययेतोऽस्ति न कर्म लिप्यते नरे ॥ २

"Doing verily work in this world one should wish to live a hundred years. Thus it is in this and not otherwise than this action cleaves not to a man".

—Sri Aurobindo.

"One may aspire to live for hundreds of years, if he continuously goes on working in that way, for that sort of work will not bind him to the law of karma. There is no alternative to this way for man". —A. C. Bhakti Vedanta Swami Prabhupada.

"In this world, one should desire to live a hundred years, but only by performing actions. Thus, and in no other way, can man be free from the taint of actions".—Swami Ranganathananda.

The whole thesis of *Nishkama Karmayoga* (action without attachment) of Bhagavad Gita is based on the first two verses of Ishopanishad.

The positive as well as negative signs or qualities by which *Paramātmā* or God can be described in language are mentioned in the eighth verse of this Upanishad:

1. *Isha Upanishad*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1986, p.

2. *Sri Isopanishad*, The Bhakti Vedanta Book Trust, Bombay, 1974, pp. 4-5

"It is He that has gone abroad That which is bright, bodiless, without scar or imperfection, without sinews, pure, unpierced by evil. The seer, the thinker, the one who becomes everywhere, the self-existent has ordered objects perfectly according to their nature from years sempiternal". —Sri Aurobindo.

"He, the self-existent One, is everywhere—the pure one, without a (subtle) body, without blemish, without muscles (a gross body), holy and without the taint of sin, the all-seeing, the all-knowing, the all-encompassing one is He. He has duly assigned their respective duties to the eternal *Prajapatis* (Cosmic powers)". —Swami Ranganathananda.

The eleventh verse of Ishopanishad gives the integral vision of the *Vedas*, in which the contradictions between *Vidyā* (spiritual knowledge) and *avidyā* (secular or mundane knowledge) are emphatically reconciled and the reconciliation between *Jnana Yoga* (the path of knowledge) and *Karma-Yoga* (the path of action) is established in the practical *Vedanta* of *Bhagavad Gita*.

विद्यां चाविद्यां च यस्तद् वेदोभयं सह ।  
अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययामृतमश्नुते ॥ ११ ॥

"Only one who can learn the process of nescience and that of transcendental knowledge side by side can transcend the influence of repeated birth and enjoy the full blessings of immortality" — A.C. Bhakti Vedanta Swami Prabhupada.

"He who knows that as both in one, the knowledge and the ignorance, by the ignorance crosses beyond death and by the knowledge enjoys immortality". — Sri Aurobindo.

"He who knows both *vidyā* and *avidyā* together, overcomes death through *avidyā* and experiences immortality by means of *vidyā*".—Swami Ranganathananda.

Swami Ranganathananda summarises beautifully the two Upanishadic concepts of *Vidyā* and *Aidyā* in the following paragraph:

"The universe of our experience, according to Vedanta, consists of two categories of the not-self and the self. "*Tusmadasmāt Pratyayagocara*" in the words of Sri Śankara (Introduction to *Brahmasutra* commentary). *Vidyā* or knowledge refers to the knowledge of the self, the changeless reality, the *amrtam*, while *avidyā* or ignorance refers to the knowledge of the not-self, the changeful universe, the *martyam*. The Self and the not-Self are not two, but one. "*Atmaivedam Sarvam*" - "The self alone is all this', says the *Chāndogya Upanishad* (VII, XXV, 2)"<sup>1</sup>

1. Swami Ranganathananda, *The Message of the Upanishads*, pp. 135-136.

## Vidya and Avidya

*Vidyā* and *avidyā*, the Self and not-Self, as well as *sambhuti* and *asambhuti*, *Brahman* and the world of *Ishopanishad*, or *Kshetrajna* and *Kshetra*, soul and body, *Akshara Purusha* and *Kshara Purusha*, eternal consciousness and ephemeral universe, *parā prakriti* and *aparā prakriti*, the transcendental power of god and the changeful manifestation of the world of *Gita*, though two apparently contradictory concepts, are basically one, not two, for both are relative aspects of the one fundamental reality, which is *Brahman* of the *Upanishads* and *Purushottam Paramātmā* of *Gita*. This implies *samyag Jnāna* or the philosophy of total vision of the truth of both Being and Becoming. This is endorsed by the *Gita*, in statement that *jnana* is the synthesis of the knowledge of the Self and not-Self- क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोर्ज्ञानम् यत् तत् ज्ञानं मतं मम । xiii. 2..

Sri Ramakrishna, in one of his profound utterances (*The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, N.Y. 1962, p. 257) declared, "A man should reach *Nitya*, the Absolute, by following the trail of the *lila*, the Relative. This is my final and most mature opinion".

"So work," says Vadanta," putting God in every thing, and knowing Him to be in everything. Work incessantly holding life as something deified, as God Himself.... God is in every thing, where else shall we go to find Him? He is already in every work, in every thought, in every feeling. Thus knowing, we must work, that is the only way, there is no other... We have seen how false desires are the cause of all the misery and evil we suffer, but when they are thus deified, purified, through God, they bring no evil, they bring no misery".<sup>1</sup>

According to Swami Ranganathananda, "Universality is.....the characteristic temper of this literature and human fulfilment its running theme..... Such a study in its fullness is the *Gita*, which, as I said earlier, has the *Isa Upanisad* for its inspiration" <sup>2</sup>

## The Central Philosophy of Bhagavad Gita:

We get the central philosophy of *Gita* in the fifteenth chapter on *Purushottama Yoga*. According to Lord Krishna, *Purushottama Paramātmā* is the highest, absolute and monistic reality, which has two aspects, within it, viz. (i) *Kshara Purusha* or *Aparā Prakriti* or *Kshetra* or the physical and subtle universe (including mind, intellect, will and ego) and (ii) *Akshara Purusha* or *Parā prakriti* or *Kshetrajna*, which includes innumerable individual *Jivātmās* (souls) within one

1. Complete Works, Vol II, 9th ed. P. 150.

2. The Message of the Upanishads, Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, Bombay, 7th ed, 1993, p. 134.

immortal Self. God or *Purushottama Paramātmā* is immanent in *Kshara* and *Akshara Purushas*, as well as transcendental *Para Brahma*.

द्वविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च ।  
क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्चते ॥ १६

"The perishable and the imperishable too— these are the two kinds of *Purushas* in this world. Of these, the bodies of all beings are spoken of as the perishable; while the *Jivātmā* or the embodied soul is called imperishable".

However, the *Jivatma* is only a portion or particle of God. Qualitatively both *Paramātmā* and *Jivātmā* are the same, as both are *Brahman* or consciousness, but quantitatively (with reference to the *Shakti* or power of God), *Paramātmā* symbolizes whole or full or infinite consciousness, and *Jivātmā*, symbolizes only a part or particle of that infinite whole.

ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।  
मनः षष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥ ७

"The eternal *Jivātmā* in this body is a particle of my own being; and it is that alone which draws around itself the mind and the five senses, which rest in *Prakriti*."

The seventeenth verse discusses the essential character of the supreme person or God, who is superior to both *Kshara Purusha* and *Akshara Purusha*.

उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः ।  
यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य विभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः ॥ १७

"The Supreme Person is yet other than these, who having entered all the three worlds, upholds and maintains all and has been spoken of as the imperishable Lord and the Supreme Spirit."

Therefore, Lord Krishna asserts in the nineteenth verse that the wise man who thus realizes God as the Supreme Person, constantly worships Him.

Though *Vedanta* declares that the *Jivātmā* is not other than *Brahman* (जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः) and the *Brahma Jnāni* simply realizes it (ब्रह्मवित् ब्रह्मैव भवति), yet even the realized soul does not possess the full powers of God to create, sustain and annihilate the infinite universe. The *Brahmasutra* has unequivocally declared that the realized souls have no power in *Jagat-vyāpāra* i.e. manifestation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe, though they realize the bliss and knowledge of *Brahman* and can even enjoy the bliss of all heavens, if they wish to do so. जगद् व्यापारवर्जं प्रकरणादसन्निहितत्वाच्च । (ब्रह्मसूत्र - ४।४।१७)

As mortal life in the world is full of suffering (दुःखालयमशाश्वतम्), hence the *mumukshu Jivātmā* (aspirant for liberation) is exhorted by Lord Krishna to worship Him always (इमं प्राप्य भजस्य माम्). However, this exhortation to worship God does not exclude works of life. Rather works of life have to be sublimated to the level of worship by a wonderful combination of *Jnāna Yoga*, *Bhakti Yoga* and *Karma Yoga*. The synthetic *sāadhanā* (technique of God realization) of Gita is thus one step ahead of the pure *Jnāna Yoga* of most of the Upanishads.

Regarding the attempts at synthesis of *yoga* (technique of self-realization) in the long spiritual tradition of India, Sri Aurobindo refers to the following phases:

a) "The Vedic synthesis of the psychological being of man in highest flights and widest rangings of divine knowledge, power, joy, life and glory with the cosmic existence of the gods, pursued behind the symbols of the material universe into those superior planes which are hidden from the physical sense and the material mentality."

b) "The Upanishads take up this crowning experience of the earlier seers and make it their starting point for a high and profound synthesis of spiritual knowledge".

c) "The Gita starts from this Vedantic synthesis and upon the basis of its essential ideas, builds another harmony of the three great means and powers : Love, Knowledge and Works, through which the soul of man can directly approach and cast itself into the Eternal."

d) "There is yet another, the *Tantric*, which though less subtle and spiritually profound, is even more bold and forceful than the synthesis of Gita, – for it seizes even upon the obstacles to the spiritual life and compels them to become the means for a richer spiritual conquest." (Essays on the Gita, p.7, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1987).

When Arjuna, the best Pandava warrior was depressed with a moral crisis regarding the virtue of battle for a Kshatriya, Lord Krishna exhorted him to shake off his un-manliness and cowardice with his historic clarion call :

क्लैव्यं मास्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वल्युपपद्यते ।

क्षुद्रं हृदय दौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्योत्तिष्ठ परन्तप ॥ २.३ ॥

"Yield not to unmanliness Arjuna, ill does it become you. Shaking off this paltry faint–heartedness stand up, O Scorcher of enemies". (II–3)

Among the various arguments advanced by Krishna in favour of his inspiring exhortation, the two most important are that the physical body may die, but the indwelling immortal Self cannot die, and that by performing one's duty in detached

and righteous manner, one may even get liberation, for the highest ideal of life is to become a *sthitaprajna* in this very life and such a man of steadfast wisdom shall attain *Brahma-nirvān* or total merger with God at the end of life.

Lord Krishna said :

प्रजहाति यदा कामान् सर्वान् पार्थ मनोगतान् ।  
आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ॥ २.५५ ॥

"Arjuna, when one thoroughly dismisses all cravings of the mind and is satisfied in the Self through (the joy of) the Self, then he is called stable of mind." (II-55).

Krishna explained that the aspirant devotee has the right to work only in this life and never to the fruit there of, if he wants that his work should not bind him to the world but be a means of Yoga. (II-47, 48).

Krishna affirmed categorically that keenly devoted to his own natural and moral duty, man attains the highest perfection in the shape of God-realization. (XVIII, 45).



**"The more you think of God the nearer will  
you be to Him."**

**—Ma Anandamayee**

## BECAUSE YOU LOVE ME

[The song usually sung in the Ashram in Hawaii]

For All the Times *you* stand by me  
 For All the Truth that *you* make me see  
 For All the joy *you* bring to my life  
 For All the wrong that *you* make right  
 For every dream *you* make come true  
 For all the love I find in *you*  
 I'll be Forever thankful, *ma*  
*You're* the one who holds me up  
 Never let me fall  
*You're* the one who sees me through  
 Through it all.

*You* are my strength when I am weak----(refrain)-----  
*You* are my voice when I cannot speak  
*You* are my eyes when I cannot see  
*You* see the best there is in me  
*You* lift me up when I cannot reach  
*You* give me faith with all *you* teach  
 I'm blessed, oh yes I am, because *you* love me-----  
*You* Give me wings and make me fly  
*You* touch my Hand, can touch the sky  
 I lost my faith, you gave it back to me  
 You say that you're not out of reach  
 You stand by me so I won't fall  
 I have your love, I have it all  
 I'm grateful for each day you give me  
 Maybe i don't know that much  
 But I know this much is true  
 I am Blessed because I am loved by you.

(refrain)

You are always there for me  
 The tender wind that carries me  
 A light in the dark, shining your love into my life  
 You are my inspiration  
 Through the lies you are the truth  
 My world is a better place because of you.

(refrain - then last line 2 extra times)

## FROM OLD DIARY LEAVES

—Atmananda

*Question* : Can *Prārabdha* be annulled by prayer ?

*Mataji* : No. To annul *Prārabdha* is most difficult, some say impossible. According to one doctrine it cannot even be blotted out by liberation (*Jivanmukti*). But since where liberation is there can be no individual, where does *Prārabdha* come in ? This body says, if by the flame of liberation everything is consumed, why not *Prārabdha* as well ? It is like the revolutions of an electric fan after the switch has been turned off. When the connection is cut off the movement is bound to cease after a little while. But for one who is liberated not even this kind of movement exists, for who is to experience the *Prārabdha* ? For the liberated there is no body—although you may see a body.

*Question* : Is prayer effective ?

*Mataji* : Yes. Prayer invariably has a result, not necessarily the result you pray for, but since prayer connects you with God, it is always beneficial. Suppose you pray for the recovery of your sick child and the child dies. Your prayer has not been granted, yet it will help your child in some way. You do not know what is for your real good. Suppose you pray for employment and secure it, but get ill; or for money, but a dacoit waylays and kills you for sake of it. God alone knows your real need. At times, just as a child is given a biscuit to make it stop crying, you may not get what you desire, but something else.

*Question* : Why should one pray to God at all ? He in any case does all that is necessary.

*Mataji* : Yes, this also is true on one level. But prayer is good, for to pray means turning one's thoughts to God.

There are various kinds of prayer. At first, man prays for material things like wealth, health, family position, etc. On that level, if he did not pray for these and similar boons, he would not remember God at all. To be reminded of Him, no matter from what motive, is beneficial.

Then there is a stage, especially in the line of bhakti when prayer spontaneously flows from one's heart. One yearns and pines for God and cannot help praying : "I cannot bear to be without Thee, reveal Thyself ! When wilt Thou bless me with Thy vision ?" It is like a fever that cannot be allayed by anything but union with Him. The first type of prayer is of the ego; the second is still of the ego, but of an ego that



is about to disintegrate; when its prayer has been fulfilled, there will be no other prayer.

There is another state when one prays : "Do what Thou wilt with me. I am a tool in Thy hand, only vouchsafe me the strength to endure whatever Thou mayst require of me."

There is a further state when one does not pray at all. One feels : "God does all that is necessary, for what am I to pray ?" Then in the firm belief that He provides for all the needs of His creatures, one becomes free from worry and remains absorbed in deep meditation.

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A young university student asked : Why do sādhus wear a special dress, matted hair, long beards and so on ? What has all this to do with spirituality ?

*Mataji* : Why do you put oil on your hair and part it in front of a mirror ? Whom do you wish to please ? Who is it that is your own and that you are trying to impress by your elegant appearance ? You think : "What will people say ?" You really are afraid of public opinion. You like to look like a gentleman. You admire well-dressed people and so you say to yourself : "I must also dress in the same fashion." What benefit do you expect to get out of it ?

*The young student* : It gives me satisfaction to look neat and nice.

*Mataji* : Exactly. It gives you pleasure. And what will this kind of satisfaction lead to? Can you tell ?

*The young student* : It is difficult to tell.

*Mataji* : You do not find an answer. All this dressing up is done for the sake of self-satisfaction. A genuine *sādhaka* is too preoccupied with his search to bother about his appearance. He is impatient to attain to the vision of the Supreme. He has no time to look after his clothes, to cut his nails, trim his beard, etc.; all his time and energy are spent in *sādhanā* and therefore he goes about looking anyhow. He feels : "Whom should I please by being well-dressed ?" A sādhu is out for Self-realization and hence cannot give thought or time to his appearance.

The Rishis of old used to have matted hair and long beards, in spite of this being very troublesome in the hot weather. They put up with the inconvenience because matted hair and long beards had become, as it were, the badge of a Rishi, it was known as the outer signs of a man intent on Self-realization.

Now have you still other doubts concerning this question ?

*The young man* : Does the special dress of a *sannyāsī* help him in his *sādhanā* ?

*Mataji* : You dress well for your own pleasure, not because it brings you nearer to God. The real sādhu is eager for Supreme Bliss. Of course, not all sādhus are genuine. There are also 'babu sādhus.' Although they have taken the robe, they are still worldly-minded.

Once, coming down from Mussoorie in a bus, we were travelling with a sādhu whose face seemed to shine with inner radiance. People were greatly impressed by him, but later he was caught painting his cheeks.

I have heard of another sādhu with a large following, whose *charanāmrita* was said to taste sweet water. The sādhu always used to have a bath before people took his *charanāmrita*<sup>1</sup>." But one physician insisted on washing and drying the sādhu's feet with his own hands and on cutting his toe-nails before proceeding with the ceremony. As a result, the *charanāmrita* did not taste sweet. The actual fact was, when the sādhu went for his bath he put sacharin under his toe-nails. Many people who have been disillusioned in similar ways have come to this body and related various stories of the same kind.

It is said that a sannyāsi wears the ochre robe as a symbol of the fire of renunciation and he shaves his head and face to indicate that this fire has burnt away everything, not leaving even a single hair on his head. These outer observances are meant to remind him constantly of this fact. You may say, "why should a man who has not attained to complete desirelessness take *sannyāsa* ?" "Taking" *sannyāsa* is one thing, but it is quite another when renunciation just happens effortlessly. Initiation into the order of *sannyāsa* is an aid, so that real *sannyāsa*, which is supreme renunciation, may come about.

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*Question* : It is said that what one eats affects the mind. Is this true ? What is the connection between the mind and food ?

*Mataji* : There is indeed a close inter-relationship between the mind and food. Sri Krishnananda Avadhutaji explained this in detail to you only the other day, and your *Śāstras* also give elaborate instructions on this theme. *Sāttwic* food will produce *sāttwic* qualities, *rājasic* food *rājasic* qualities, and so on. Therefore, people observe special rules concerning their diet. But, if someone engages in *sādhanā* he will automatically feel the necessity of giving up certain types of food and of introducing others. He will come to experience an aversion for the eatables

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1. It is a custom to ceremonially wash (or rather dip into water) the feet of saints. The water is then called *charanāmrita* and is drunk by people in the belief that power and purity are transmitted to them by it.

that hinder his *sādhana*. Just as a fever patient craves for water, so will the *sādhaka* instinctively conceive a desire for particular articles of diet and a distaste for others. But, also by reasoning, one may adopt a *sāttwic* diet and later gradually develop a taste for it.

*Question* : We see that people cannot live without food. Yet, we are told that during your life there were times when you ate infinitesimal quantities, as for instance, three grains of rice daily or as much as can be given in one breath, etc.

*Mataji* : Once I had to travel by carriage, it was overcrowded, so I sat on a woman's lap. The *kheyāla* came to this body that it would be too heavy for her, so this body became lighter than a leaf. When afterwards it got out of the carriage this body sat down on the ground, again assuming its normal weight. That was *yoga kriya* (a yogic process). This is one thing.

Another is as follows : When a kite flies in the air it gets into a state of poise so that the frame to which it is attached is also held in the air in balance, although at other times it would fall down. Similarly there is a state of poise in which the rhythm of the breath is such that six months may become equal to six hours. At the time when this body lived on such a scanty diet its health was excellent. It could walk for hours and climb without getting breathless. When walking up a steep hill people usually pant, but at that time this body did not feel any fatigue or exertion. If there had been the *kheyāla*, it could have remained in that condition for years or for a whole age. But this also is only a state, namely, the state of a yogi. Since this body does nothing by personal will, but everything happens spontaneously, it now behaves like other human beings; it gets a stomach-ache, a pain in the foot and so on—it is all the same.

Another point is this : The energy of the grain or fruit is absorbed into oneself by eating them. But if this energy is within one's reach in a more direct way, no food is required. Where the power to create, preserve and destroy is present—what is it, not to eat ? Nothing at all.

## SRI MA'S ASHRAM IN DELHI—HOW IT CAME UP

—A devotee

Sri Ma Anandamayee first visited Simla in the year 1936 and stayed at the Kali Bari Guest House. The Kali Bari was then a centre for the meeting of Bengalees, who were primarily Government officers, spending six months of the year in Simla and the other six months in Delhi.

This group of people started in Simla a school, organised dramas, plays and music recitals for which the Kali Bari had a theatre and organised regular kirtans, religious discussions and pujas and thus provided for all tastes. The religious group had sent their representatives to Bengal and brought the tradition of Nama Yagna as it was practised in Nadia and started by Mahaprabhu. Nama Kirtan and Nama Yagna became very popular and it was celebrated at the Kali Bari and the homes of various people with great devotion and faith. There were a number of good singers and the participation of people was so great that the space was never adequate - and people accommodated themselves in passages or in the open and the vibration of the kirtan brought happiness, concentration and joy leading them even to a stupor.

It was during the Annual Nama Yagna celebrations of 1936 that Sri Ma first visited Simla and the way she revealed Herself, participating in the kirtan - Her *mahabhava* etc. made ardent devotees of everyone who saw her there as they had read about Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and His *mahabhava*, but had never witnessed the same earlier. Ma almost instantly became the most important topic of all discussions in the then Summer Capital of India and people started flocking to Kali Bari to have Her darshan.

A group of 30 to 40 families became Her ardent devotees and followed Her wherever She went as often as possible. They spread the news also to their friends in Delhi and Meerut, who were not Government employees and so did not go to Simla in summer. This way Ma's family of devotees increased.

During the years 1936 to 1939 Ma normally stayed in Delhi at the residences of Her various devotees, i.e. in tents which were erected in the lawns of their houses. Shri Panchanan Mukherjee (Panchu Babu) stayed near Gole Post Office on Irwin Road, a house which has since been demolished and on which stands the Casualty Department of the Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, and he was fortunate to have Ma staying with him on a number of occasions whenever she visited Delhi.

Around 1939, once Ma suggested out of Her own Kheyala to Her devotees that since they often complained of small houses with disturbances which were not conducive to their satsang they could perhaps find a place where there would be peace and solitude, where they could retreat whenever they felt the urge and need to do sadhana individually or collectively.

The first Ashram was thus started in a rented house at the end of Panchkuin Road, away from the city; there was only a *samshan* (Burning ghat) and the jungle of the ridge thereafter, as the city had not spread beyond this point.

The ashram was subsequently shifted to Babar Lane around 1942 as the lease of the Panchkuin Road ashram could not be renewed. This place was rather small and since it was within a residential colony, it was not very ideal for an ashram. The premises were vacated and the pujas and kirtans were held in the premises of devotees. During this period the residences of Shri Amal Sen at Jan Path (Queens Avenue) and Shri D.C. Mukherjee at Baba Kharak Singh Marg (Irwin Road) served the purpose of our Ashram.

After the Babar Lane Ashram was closed, Ma used to visit the house of Dr. J. K. Sen, a well-known medical practitioner, whose residence was at 48, Hanuman Road, New Delhi. He had a house with a large garden wherein he had a green house of a hexagonal construction having an area of about 200 sq. ft. Behind this green house he built a small platform on which a small tent could be erected. Ma stayed in the tent and the green house was used for giving darshan, path and kirtan. The few people who then accompanied Ma were housed in one of the rooms of the specious house.

In 1948 Dr J. K. Sen built two new rooms with a bathroom and toilet for Ma's use as an annexe to his house.

Devotees had been all along trying to build an ashram a little outside the city to meet their requirements as Dr J. K. Sen's house was in the heart of the city and could never become an ashram for ever. A plot of land was first selected at Timarpur, which was later acquired by the All India Radio.

Around 1952-53 compensation was received for the acquired land and one Sri Mittal, a devotee from Dehradun, offered the present site of the ashram at Kalkaji, at that time called 'Chandralok'. There was no water except from the tank in the Chandiwala Estate from where it had to be carried to the Ashram. The area was rocky without any approach road and with a Gujjar colony nearby and therefore of no commercial value. However, the financial conditions of devotees did not permit the luxury of buying a better site.

Once the land at Kalkaji was obtained, then started the major work of raising funds for the building. In those days the number of Ma's devotees was rather limited and most of them worked in the offices of the Government of India. They hardly had any surplus to donate for charities and yet they contributed their mite and with a lot of difficulty two rooms, a kitchen and store and the base of the hall upto the DPC level was built and Ma visited the Ashram amid all the difficulties and hardships. There was no boundary wall and the entire area was full of thorns and bushes.

In 1957 it was decided to hold the Samyam Saptaha in the new Ashram and Ma sent Swami Paramanandaji to build the hall of the Ashram and make necessary arrangements for the Samyam Saptaha. Swamiji, as everyone knows, had infinite faith in Ma's *kheyal* and he started the construction by borrowing only Rs. 10,000/- from one of Ma's devotees. Swamiji achieved the impossible and with Ma's *kheyal* the hall was soon completed along with two other rooms, i.e. Hari Baba's room and Didi's room .

The first floor construction came up later and in 1970 Swami Swarupananda built a separate house for Ma, the Sadhu Kutia, the Kitchen with the adjoining dining hall and servants' quarters and the Shiv Mandir. The twin temples of Didima and Ma Kali alongwith the construction at the back of the mandir called the Bhog Ghar were built in 1978-79.

The people who originally started the project could not ever dream that their efforts would be instrumental for building such a nice Ashram, which has been graced by so many mahatmas and dignitaries. They were really very much devoted to Ma and they all considered themselves extremely blessed that they could, through Ma's Divine Grace, lay the foundations of one of the most beautiful ashrams of Sri Ma's organisation these days.

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## ON LIFE AND MATTER

—P.N. Nagu

Life is a process of growing. In doing so, one can learn from others and teach oneself those moral as well as ethical values, that build the process of growing worth while and meaningful.

Nature of a person predominately goes a long way in living within the realm of 'value orientation'. It is so, as understanding of the meaning of 'values' may differ from person to person.

A sadhu was once bathing in a river. He saw one scorpion drowning. The sadhu got hold of the scorpion and saved a life by releasing the scorpion on the bank of the river. The scorpion however bit the sadhu when set free. The sadhu started writhing with pain. An on-looker asked the sadhu, as to why did he have to save the scorpion's life and more so, why he did not kill the scorpion, when bitten. The sadhu replied, "It is in my nature to save a life even if it costs me my own and it is in the nature of the scorpion to bite. So, why should I blame myself or for that matter the scorpion". This proves to show that nature brings about in person to act in a manner, which he deems as invaluable manifestation of ideals and spiritual bearing.

In the present context of day-to-day life one may not be able to act as per one's inner voice or nature. But if one has to perform, what one feels is against one's nature, it results in a degree of unhappiness. This during a process of time, culminates in to an unhappy existence. It is so because in most cases, a person's basic nature can't change. Blessed are those who can live with their own characteristics without fear or favour and of course not making others unhappy in doing so. Why do some people seek isolation and try to have a defeatist attitude, primarily because they are much too selfish to deny themselves of comforts, which they seek to enjoy. They want to shun the responsibility of helping others in the process of growing, which they enjoyed while growing themselves.

The mother bears and gives birth to a child. It then becomes our natural duty to help the mother in child's process of growing. This will result in the child to react in the same manner, when required of him. We should not meddle with human nature, which can have adverse implication on one's psychology. If we analyze we would conclude most of criminal actions are committed by those who have had an unhappy and neglected childhood.

So, the primary responsibility is to help mankind in the development of nature. Two basic factors may bring about some change in nature of a person. Firstly temptation and secondly circumstances. If one can somehow or the other overcome these factors, question of having guilty feeling would not arise. It is very unhealthy and unfair for one to live with a state of mind like that. So, as far as possible, we should act according to our intuition and inner voice, even if it amounts to foregoing some of our pleasures in life.

One of the most useful teachings is to learn from the experiences of others. We should not make same mistakes, as we see others have made, during the process of growing. We should ourselves make our present and future worth living by cherishing those values in life which matter most. Sometimes when we look and think in retrospect, we feel how soon the time has gone and so much of water has flown under the bridge. After all, time does not wait for anyone. So it is never too late in life to preach those values which bring happiness to others and thereby to ourselves. "There is nothing like the present". So what are we waiting for ?

Dr. Radhakrishnan has rightly said, "God, you have given us eyes but no sight, brains but no soul, science but no philosophy".

This brings us to the main question of how much does a person need to feel satisfied. There is no limit to it. One always wants a little extra. But if our ambitions are within natural limits and if we reach that limit, then feel fully satisfied. One should always have good intentions in achieving these objectives and trust in God, with no malafides. Intention is the mirror of our nature.

Yet another adverse trait of growing is lack of communication or too much of it. One must have an open mind to discuss and try to sort out problems in direct dialogue, to patch up differences, should they arise for one reason or the other. Lack of communication over a period of time escalates problems, until they reach a point of no return. We should put our ego on the shelf, let it gather dust.

Humility in a person is a powerful weapon to counteract complexes in life.

Complexity of any kind distorts our personality and brings about an unknown and imaginary weakness to our otherwise strong character. We should treat everyone as equal, and should not give it to arrogance. Confidence in ourselves is what we need most.

To maintain balance in life style is a must. Extremism is harmful. Forming habit for anything shows lack of will-power. Balance can be achieved by moderation. Caring for the near and dear ones is as important as going to office. Extreme tendencies completely disrupts balance and thereby our life pattern is distorted. Our motto should be—"*Be happy and make others happy*".





## FROM NOTES TAKEN IN SREE MA'S PRESENCE

—'Kirpal'

**Kishenpur, Dehradun, 6-5-1959**

Sri Jogesh Brahmachariji—It is said that there are five 'fathers' and seven 'mothers' in the country. Which one is Ma Anandamayi ?

Ma— This is your small daughter, whatever you say that is applicable.

Q. — What is the form of the Divine Mother ?

Ma— The form of the Mother is described in your *shastras*. this is your little child.

Q. — I have done everything for God, but .....

Ma— That God will accept your efforts but not give you in return is not possible. Pray for his blessings.

Q. — If we beg from God, you will say that we are traders—

Ma— That is not so, you would be a bargainer when you say I have done so much. But if you pray — God is my innermost soul , my beloved lord and I must pray to him — you should not calculate the results of your efforts.

Sri Jogesh Brahmachariji— Until God is realized.....

Ma — The innate strength that God has bestowed on you, God is present in that form. Utilize that power. In whatever form God may reveal Himself.

This is absolutely true that the mirror of the soul is cleansed by the name of God. To purify the mind, as you have cooked and eaten for many days, but have not cleansed the vessels, nor washed them and their original colour is lost. So, this body says, as you have to scrub and scrape, you have to use tamarind (*imli*). So that the dirt and dark stains are removed you have to apply the remedy. It is not only sufficient to apply the *imli*, you have to brush it hard. The dark stains on the mirror of your soul for ages and ages in your many comings and goings and the dirt has accumulated. As each has a different cleanser, the supreme remover of the stains on the mirror of the soul is the name of God. The aim should be to purify the soul, so that the love of God and faith may be revealed, the soul that has been stained may be cleansed by the name of God, How ? With a singleminded concentration, The mind should not wander hither and thither. To cleanse your mind you have to perform some rites. To be concentrated on a single aim, for the

revelation, the holy touch, faith and devotion, the Divine love. Remain engrossed in the name of the Divine Lord.

"One is, while engaged in walking, eating etc. in all activities, to be completely engrossed in God's Name, Another is, you are repeating God's Name, but your mind is wandering towards worldly matters and hence the results are not experienced. If you follow the discipline strictly, the inherent power within you will be revealed.

God is present in all forms, in one's own self. If you follow the path of the *nitya dasa* (servant of the Lord), the eternity that is within you will be revealed and unending bliss will be yours. Where God is, there is no question of limitation; there is only one *Atma* in all creations, self revealed, the One in one's own self will be realized.

If the Divine Name becomes intertwined in one's each action, walking, eating, sleeping and the mind is engrossed in the name of God, He who is within one's own self, is revealed. This body always says that one should practice the Name in rythm with the breath.

[ To be continued ]

## **PLEA TO THE DIVINE MOTHER**

—Michael Allgaier

A wesome vortex of the universe,  
Swirl me down into your place of peace;  
Drown my weakness in your flow of strength;  
Snap the moorings that still keep me bound;  
Flood my consciousness with boundless love.

Please dissolve the twoness of our hearts.

## MA ON THE INTERNET

—Jacques Vigne

A super website has already been arranged and named after Ma. Mr. Christopher Pegler, an ardent devotee of Ma in London, has advanced money to buy the domain. The movement of Oliver Shanti (who has four ashrams in Germany and Portugal) will contribute and myself as well. The space which is available is 10 Mb (a book takes between 0.4 and 0.4 Mb), photos need more space. Address should be <http://www.anandamyai.org>. There was a slight hesitation for "anandamayi. char", like charitable organisation; as this will imply that the main object of the site is fund raising, which is not the case. So "org", like organisation will probably be the definitive choice.

The German website is already on line. Chaitanya from Oliver Shanti's ashram will send the reprint of the main pages and contents. It will be probably integrated in the domain, or at least very clearly linked to it in both senses.

Valentin Mazloy, a Russian devotee, has started a part in Russian, his native tongue. A way the Indian side could help the project is for those texts which are not scannable, they are indeed many. We could organize from Delhi their typing on floppy, and even their conversion in HTML, the Internet language. Typing in India is much less expensive than in the West. Texts could even be transferred by E-mail if needed.

The main person is now Mr. Christopher Pegler, who seems quite dedicated to the project and is able to communicate.

His address :

28 Perryfield Way, Ham. Richmond, Surrey TW 107 SP

Res : 00 44 181 940 01 39 (ph, and automatic switch to fax after the 18th ring)

Off : 00 44 171 488 07 77

E-mail : [Czjp.Pegler@btinternet.com](mailto:Czjp.Pegler@btinternet.com)

For the German Website,

Sumitra Schang, Matri Mandir, im Kirchgarten 2

67308 Lautersheim GERMANY

Ph. 00 49 63 51 44 01, Fax 63 51 44 047

Once the reprints of the main part of the sites and the confirmation of the address are received I will try to write in details for Amrita Varta, and perhaps to prepare a board for the Matri Museum to present Ma on Internet.