
The endeavour to mould one's own desires
so as to fall in with God's Will is man's duty.
In the whole of your work depend entirely
on Him. Skill in action — everything is He,
His. In this spirit try to complete your task.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

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ANANDA VĀRTĀ

*The Eternal, the Ātman—
Itself pilgrim and path of Immortality
Self contained—THAT is all in One.*

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Sri Sri Ma's Utterances

Once a lady devotee of Ma appealed to Her in the following words :

“Mataji, you have said that if a utensil is left for a long time without cleaning it becomes very difficult to remove the dirt settled on it ; therefore, I say, if you do not give us your *darsana* frequently, how will our dirt be removed ? We get cleaned by your *darsana*. Otherwise you yourself would have to take the blame that nothing has happened to us.”

Hearing this, Ma smiled and said “That’s right ! Hence always clean your pots ; don’t make me ashamed, don’t make me shed tears.”

* * *

A young man once asked Ma, “Is there no hope of my further progress ?”

Ma said, “One should not hope for too much. Think of Him.”

The young man said, “I have already so much work ; moreover, my mind is haunted by your thought. Where is the time to think of anyone else ?”

Ma smilingly remarked, “If one could really think of oneself (one’s Self),*—that would really be

*A pun on the word “*apnar*” meaning “of you” and also “of oneself”.

fine! Think of yourselves (your Self)—all of you!”

A gentleman asked, “Ma, a person who has learnt absolutely nothing—what will happen to him?”

Ma replied, “It is only such a person to whom ‘Ma’ pays more attention.”

A gentleman said, “In fact I have come here for the sake of gaining knowledge, since I have no knowledge.”

Ma said, “One has to make effort in order to gain knowledge. Just as, when you have shortage of food, you manage to seek it out somehow or the other, similarly, knowledge can also be obtained if proper search is made.”

The gentleman again asked, “What are the things to be sought out? Besides, what arrangements are to be made?”

Ma said smilingly, “Well, will you listen to what I am going to tell you?”

The gentleman replied, “I’ll of course listen, but I can’t promise if I’ll be able to do accordingly.”

Another person said, “Well, do tell us what to do.”

Ma asked with a smile, “Will you remember the wish of this child? Well, how much time can you afford to give out of 24 hours? On this, some

said they could give one and a half hours, and some others said they were able to give two hours.

Ma said, "All right, give that much time."

The first gentleman said, "But I don't feel any interest in working."

Ma said, "Just as if you only keep toying about with fire, you do get its heat, similarly if you just keep toying about with these things (spiritual practices), you are sure to get at least a little bit of their effect. Keep doing your work—all of you."

A gentleman said, "Ma, in fact we don't have any hunger; so why should we gather foodstuff for cooking?"

Ma laughed and said, "At last you have confessed the truth. All right, if you don't feel hungry, then take medicine and proper diet."

"What medicine?" asked the gentleman. Then Ma replied, "The medicine is His Name. At least for a little while, sit quietly and take His Name. And the diet is the practice of self-control (*samyam vrata*). The medicine and diet being taken, you will gain appetite little by little."

The gentleman queried, "What is the good diet, Ma?"

"Do *samyam vrata*," said Ma, "you know what is *samyam vrata*?" Saying this, she talked about *samyam vrata* as before. After this the gentleman said, "You see, Ma, the day I decide I will not tell lies, I find that on that particular day I happen to tell even more lies." Hearing this, Ma said, "Well do one thing; on the day of *samyam vrata*, do

observe how many lies have been told—note it down. Next time, try again that no lies are uttered. By such repeated practice, a habit is formed.”

* * *

A gentleman put this question to Ma, “Well, Ma, people talk of *sakama* and *niskama karma* (action motivated by desire and desireless action); but since the desire for liberation is also a desire, the desire for God-vision, too, is a desire—so can these actions oriented to liberation and vision of God be called desireless action?”

Ma said, “All that you do for the realization of God is verily *niskama karma*. Worldly action is *kama* (desire or self-interest), work done for God is *prema* (spiritual love).”

* * *

One day, talking about *jnana yoga*, *bhakti yoga* and *karma yoga*, Ma said, “In reality, there is no difference between *jnana yoga* and *bhakti yoga*. *Karma*, *bhakti* and *jnana* are in fact one and the same. For example, you see, ‘I will realize the Self’—this refers to *jnana* (wish to know); *bhakti* is the attraction one feels for realizing the Self; what next? Well, apply soap (or *karma* to remove impurities) and wash away the latter with the water of *jnana-Ganga*—all this refers to *karma*. Verily, one contains all.”

* * *

A lady came out with this question, “Ma, how can one’s eyes be opened?”

Ma said in reply, "Look, sometimes it is inquired of people, 'Where is your home?' All this (world) is just an abode of your breath; all this is a network of relationships sustained by breath. Until one reaches the true home, there is no peace. This world is called *du-niya**, that is, full of dualities. The dualities are the comings and goings, departures and returns—that is why there is sorrow. Hence it is said: go to the doctor for treatment of this disease. Suppose a person has an illness of the eye; an oculist examines his eyes and prescribes spectacles. With the spectacles he begins to see quite well."

At this, another lady asked, "How can one get the spectacles?"

Ma said, "*Sad Guru, satsang*. But *satsang*, the company of good persons, is not always available; to be in contact with good ideas is indeed to be in the company of the good."

*

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One day, while talking with Sri Sankarananda Swamiji, Ma said in a particular context: "Look, all this is enjoyment (*bhoga*); when for instance, you feel pleased to look at a flower—that, too, is enjoyment; you feel pleased to look at a tree, you feel glad to embrace a child—all that

* A pun. "Duniya" means "world" and again, "du" is "two" and "niya" in Bengali means "concerning"; hence "duniya" is "concerned with dualities"—that is what this world is!

is enjoyment, remember this. That, too, is not desirable."

A gentleman queried of Ma, "Ma, how can I quiet my mind and realize Him?"

Ma said, "Keep a room quite clean and well furnished with incense, lamp, etc. to evoke pure thoughts, so that, as soon as you enter that room, you remember Him. In that manner, try to spend as much time as you can in that room,—you will get the result!"

Be anchored in fearlessness. What is worldly life but fear? When you live in the grip of fear, must you not be afraid? It is futile to expect fearlessness there. That you may be delivered from all sorrow you should endeavour to let God be your one and only support.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

In Association with Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee

Sri Amulya Kumar Datta Gupta

(Translated from Bengali)

(*Continued from previous issue*)

The journey to Jhusi

Within 5/7 days of Sri Sri Ma's departure to Jhusi, Khukuni Didi fell ill, and returned to Kashi from Jhusi. I thought that Ma's instruction would arrive with Didi, but she did not give any such indication. But within a few days there was a summon to go to Jhusi. I left from Jhusi on the 15th November, 1948, Monday and arrived there at about 12.30 p.m. Having two ekkas, I took my wife, daughter and luggage, and reached Sri Prabhudatta Brahmachari's Ashram. Sri Sri Ma and her attendants had been housed in small quarter. I went and tendered my pranams to Sri Ma, who asked, "Have you come alone?" I said, "No, Ma; I have brought everybody with me, except Manomohan, who could not come." Srijukta Arun Prakash Banerjee was talking with Sri Sri Ma. After sitting near Ma for some time, I went to have my bath, but as soon as I returned from bath I learnt that Sri Sri Ma had asked for me. So I went at once to her.

I found Ma, Prabhudatta Brahmachari, Swami Paramananda and other devotees were having their meal ; there was a place for me where food was served. I sat down and enjoyed my prasād. I found that Sri Sri Ma daily take her meals with Sri Prabhudatta Brahmachari, and so long as he is having his food, Ma also keeps eating ; since if Ma stops eating, Prabhudatta Brahmachari will do likewise. So this was the situation ! One has to wonder how many people have to be pleased simultaneously by Sri Ma ! It was 2 p.m. when the meals were completed, and *Path* commenced at 2.30 p.m.

One respected Pandit read from the Bhagavata and the Gita in the presence of Haribaba and Prabhudatta Brahmachari. This *Path* lasted until about 5 p.m. ; at the end of which there was some kirtan. But before kirtan was finished, we moved to our places and sat down before Ma.

The speciality of Sri Sri Ma's replies to questions

At night after partaking of our meals we again went and sat down before Ma, when various topics came up for discussion. It was suggested that quite often clear answers were not available to our question to Ma. Whatever one said was true from his own viewpoint, this was the opinion often expressed by Ma. In this way no topic reached any conclusion or proved to be interesting. On listening to all this — Ma said, "Whatever one says is true from his viewpoint, that is what this body maintains, but this is never said to please any body.

There is such a condition of time and place, where it is seen that whatever one says at that time, is correct from his viewpoint, that is what this body maintains, but this is not meant to satisfy everybody. There is such a state of existence when if somebody disagree with somebody's opinion, then it is seen that each is correct from his own viewpoint. Moreover, "yes and no" may co-exist, this also can be felt. This is what is called a state of doubtlessness. Nothing is said here to please anybody.

I: Many people say it is no use asking you questions, because you just listen to him and do not argue with him.

Ma: (laughing) So I just listen and say nothing. I also do not listen to anything, nor do I argue about it.

I: Then is it quite useless to ask you any questions?

Ma: (laughing) You have not understood the question correctly. When I said I do not listen to anybody, it just means that I have no desire to listen, to anything now. There is no question of any doubt or ignoring anybody here. This body always maintains it is just a pair of cymbals. You will hear exactly as you play it, then somebody asks a question, then some kind of an answer emanates from this body. There is no question of any respect or devotion to it, that is why I mention, I do not listen to anything, or hear anything, or say anything. When one has any doubts about any of his questions, then often some-

thing emanates from this body that solves his question, on the other hand if one is adamant about listening to a correct answer, then nothing emanates from this body.

I: Ma, if somebody comes to you adamant on a wrong assumption, then will he have to bear the burden of his mistake all his life? Will you not correct his assumptions even after knowing them?

Ma: No, I have always mentioned that nothing emanates from this body. But sometimes to correct someone, the true answer emanates from this body. The crux of the matter is that whatever happens, let it happen. See how, this evening we talked about who is the Jiva, or Brahma. But nothing emanated from this body. Often this type of topics has been discussed with this body. This did not happen today. Many people wish to learn about the 'Shastras', that is why I said that this body has mentioned this attitude about Jiva and Brahma.

Is there a rebirth?

Hereafter the topic arise about whether or not there was a rebirth. I said, "Ma, Chotoma (a disciple of Sri Sri Vishudananda Paramhansadeva) says there is no rebirth. Ma said, "There is both rebirth and no-rebirth, you may maintain both attitudes. You are changing every second. You may call this change a matter of birth, life and death. You were a child, then became a youth, now you are an old man; your childhood and youth are dead and buried. Yet you realize you are the same persons. Therefore, if you learn your body had

taken another, this is called rebirth. Again, if you change from a childhood to a youth, you may not consider it a rebirth.

Just as if you change your present clothes for another set, so also can you consider changing the body for another. From this standpoint you may consider that "Jiva is born once and dies once. When a Jiva is created, this is his birth, and when he merges with Lord, this is his death."

I: "Ma, Chotoma does not consider a rebirth in your light, I cannot explain to you exactly how she considers rebirth, because I myself do not understand it. Chotoma says that when a Jiva discards his body, the atoms of his body remains here, only his soul moves upwards, but it can not be joined with a purified body, because it is contaminated with the death of previous atoms. But it continuously returns prepared to the earth. But these atoms get joined up with the previous bodies, and hence previous atoms remain. When after death, the soul moves up, it carries their previous atoms, but it does not return any more. So he is not reborn. That is why Gopi Baba (Mahamohopadhyay) terms this as the play of atoms.

Swami Paramananda: With this attitude, birth, life and death are all rendered untrue:

Ma: There is a semblance of truth in what you say. If ever this body consider discussing the topic, you will notice there are plenty to talk about. This topic also has infinite form.

As it was near 11 p.m., we left Ma to have her rest. The room of Girin (Mitra) dada was also

occupied by me. This room was on the road side, and different from the other rooms allotted to Ma's devotees. There was another old gentleman called Sri Durga Mohan Das in the same room. He had come from Dehradun and intended to spend the rest of his life with Ma. As this room was quite spacious, there was no difficulty for all of us staying there.

On the 16th November, 1948, in the early morning kirtan started ; it was quite cold here, just as in the winter month in Bengal. In spite of this cold Ma has to remain at the kirtan ; the room where it was being played was quite open, so men were bothered by the cold. At the end of the kirtan, Ma went along to rest in her room, and we also returned to our respective quarters.

When I reached Ma's room at about 10 a.m., I found that Ganesh Sen had arrived from Allahabad. Ma left for kirtan before we could speak. From 10 a.m. Haribaba's *path* started. He read from Chaitanya Bhagavat. He speaks in Hindi, of which I understand little, but as Ma is present we have to be there. The *path* continued upto 11-30 a.m. Thereafter we all went to bath in the Ganges, which was a long way from the Ashram, nearly one mile. Today was Kartik Purnima, so there was a large crowd. After bath as we returned to the Ashram, we met Ma. As soon as we did our pranams to Ma, she laughed and said, "We may not stay here even seven days ; let us see what happens ; you have come to a dismantled Ashram ; but let us see what happens."

Sri Sri Ma went for her meal and we also left for the same purpose.

At about 2-30 p.m. the *path* recommenced. After reading the Shreemad Bhagavat and the Geeta, the reading of Sri Prabhupada Brahmachari's divine lectures commenced. The same was also done yesterday. A boy does the reading, and he reads quite well. We were told that the book would be completed on 108 volumes. The writing and printing of the book was going on simultaneously ; the subject was the childhood plays of Sri Krishna. It was all in simple Hindi, so I understood a little of it.

Haribaba was now busy to leave Jhusi. His devotees were also waiting to take him to Bandh ; but it was not decided where he would go. Ma would probably accompany Haribaba. The joyful Ashram atmosphere would be spoilt. It was presumed that Ma and Haribaba will remain here upto the 26th November, 1946. But as they were both leaving before that date, Prabhudatta Brahmachari was highly disappointed. So today the previously mentioned disciple read the Brahmachari's written lecture, which was named "Unexpected Happening." In this the Brahmachari has described all about knowledge, devotion, and renunciation ; and also that a Mahatma like Haribaba was living with him through sheer mercy. He added that what the Mahatma desires to do, they do always complete it ; also that they can withdraw from their previous decision and so on. When this *path* was going on, the Brahmachari kept on shedding tears.

(To be continued)

The Advent of Sri Sri Adi Sankaracharya at Kankhal Ashram*

R. K. Banerjee

Under Mataji's inspiration and guidance the Kankhal Ashram has in the last few years grown into an ideal place in salubrious surroundings. Air and water in this area are superior to those of many other towns, the scenery is very picturesque with the backdrop of the lower Himalayas, the winding Ganga and its various channels. Even the snows are visible from the terrace of the Guest House in clear weather.

The ashram contains the Holy of Holies, i. e. the Samadhi Mandir of Sri Sri Muktananda Giri Maharaj (our "Didima"). This sacred spot has now become a place of pilgrimage for her countless disciples and devotees. The ashram also comprises a fine Siva temple, a magnificent pillarless hall of imposing dimensions, a commodious guest-house, a spacious *yajnasala*, a two storeyed building for sadhus, a fruit, vegetable and flower garden and a doctor's chamber under construction.

The only missing link could possibly have been a more direct connection with the immortal Being who had done more than any body else for the *samnyasis* of India by dividing them into ten regular sects, codifying their conduct and establishing

* Published in October 1978.

keymonasteries in the four corners of this country to serve as seats of learning and inspire future aspirants with the lofty ideals and wisdom of our ancient Risi-Gurus. This was Adi Sankaracharya who is believed by historians to have flourished for 32 years only spanning the end of the 8th and beginning of the 9th centuries.

He emerged at a critical time, when vedic learning had been dissipated and maligned by distorted forms of debased religious belief. Forgotten seemed the basic ideal of Truth and Divinity, which had been handed down scrupulously from Guru to disciple for thousands of years in the form of *Advaita Vedanta*.

So what more natural than that Mataji should have the *kheyala* of filling this vacuum in our Sangha? News of the impending installation of Sri Adi Sankaracharya's statue in Kankhal Ashram on May 10th, 1978, holy *Akshay Tertiya* day, filtered through to Mataji's devotees all over India. What more auspicious moment could have been found for the function? It was on *Akshay Tertiya* that *Satya Yuga* had commenced and Badrinath temple is thrown open to the public on that day every spring after six months of hibernation.

Hardwar falls within the domain of Sri Sankaracharya of Jyotirmath, the northernmost of the four *maths* established by Adi Sankaracharya. The others are at Sringeri in the South, Dwarka in the West and Gowardhan (Puri) in East India. There is a fifth *Math* at Kanchi, where Adi Sankarji's private library is alleged to have been established.

Invitations were sent in good time to all Sankaracharyas and to well-known Mahatmas and Mahamandaleswaras to grace the installation. The auspicious occasion of Adi Sankaracharyaji's *janam tithi* (birthday) fell on May 12th, so that the installation ceremonies could be spread over some days before and after May 10th, within the happy orbit of Mataji's birthday celebrations.

Mataji's inspiration of installing Adi Sankaracharya on a lofty marble pedestal within an enclosed temple open to view, with a graded marble base, covered by a brass canopy was put into admirable effect by the untiring efforts of two devotees : Sri P. L. Varma, the renowned architect of Chandigarh and builder of our Gopalji's temple at Varanasi and of Didima's Samadhi Mandir at Kankhal, and Brahmachari Panuda.

The upper temple-like structure had been prefabricated in Delhi, while the marble had been ordered from Makara, Rajasthan, months beforehand. But as so often, seemingly unsurmountable obstacles appeared from nowhere. By April it was realised that the trucks containing the stones were missing and so the order had to be duplicated at the last moment with stone dealers in Delhi who fortunately were able to supply the right quality and quantity.

Skilled stone-masons from Vrindaban were employed who had already proved their merit during the building of our temples at Vrindaban and Delhi, and the metal work was entrusted to the experienced staff at the I.I.T., Delhi. From

the second half of April, the compound between the *Sadhu Kuthia* and the *Yajnasala* became littered with marble stone-blocks, and masons were cutting, chipping, facing and polishing strictly according to specification.

On May 4th (19th Vaisakh), Mataji's birthday puja was solemnly performed from 3 a.m. to 5 a.m. Thereafter were initiated all the various measures observed by Bhaiji during birthday celebrations at Ramna Ashram, Dacca, and ever since, namely : (1) Installation of a seven-coloured flag at the highest point. (2) *Akhanda japa* in Didima's temple. (3) *Akhanda Ma Nama Sankirtana*. (4) Daily recitation of *Durga Sapta Sati* in the Siva temple. (5) Daily *Savitri Yajna* with bel leaves. (6) Special *arati* of Mataji every morning and evening. (7) Daily recitation of *Visnu Sahasra Nama* (1000 names of Visnu). (8) Daily reading of *Hanuman Chalisa* for Mataji's health (a recent innovation.)

From May 5th onwards Mataji's full *kheyala* was directed towards speedy completion of all preliminary work for Adi Sankaracharya's temple. After conferring with Sri Varma and Panuda, the working hours were increased. How strenuously the labourers were united under expert guidance !

In this connection Mr. Varma related, in the privacy of his room, an extraordinary tale. One of the pieces of marble had been cut to a wrong size. Pondering how to eradicate the error, he suddenly had a vision of how this stone could be fitted in to get over a defect in the original design. Sure enough the stone in due course fitted in perfectly.

Such was the *kheyala* of the all-pervading Spirit presiding over the entire operation.

During *satsang* on the 5th, Mataji recalled that when She recently had attended the installation of Sri Lakshmi Narayana elsewhere, the base over which the deities were to be placed was not prepared carefully, which caused delay during the installation ceremony, so that the auspicious time very nearly expired. Mataji remarked that apparently Providence had thus given Her a warning so that similar mistakes could be avoided during the forthcoming installation.

On the 6th, Mataji shifted to Her room close to the hall, so as to be near the scene of operations. With Her blessings all the persons concerned worked heroically, and by the 6th afternoon the beautiful, prefabricated canopy had been hoisted and dipped into its prepared foundations.

A description of the temple now seems appropriate. Its entire base, spread along most of the western wall of the hall, consists of five beautifully engraved scenes in sculptured white stone. The central one depicts Kalady in Kerala, the birth place of Sri Adi Sankaracharyaji. On the extreme left is Saradapith at Dwarka, next to it Sringeri Math; on the other side Jyotir Math and Govardhan Math. Four *Mahavakyas* are inscribed on the four panels: on Dwarka Math "*Tat twam asi*" ("THAT thou art"). On Sringeri Math "*Aham Brahmasmi*" ("I am Brahman"); on Jyotir Math "*Ayam Atma Brahma*" ("The Self is Brahman"); on Gowardhan Math "*Prajnanam Brahma*" ("Supreme Knowledge is

Brahman"). The central panel contains Adi Sankara's famous edict: "*Sarvam khalvidam Brahma*" ("All this is indeed Brahman").

The open lower marble platforms above the sculptured panels have been left empty. Possibly it may be Mataji's future *kheyala* to immortalise the four acharyas, taught and installed by Adi Sankara himself, i. e. Padmapadacharya at Dwarka Trotakacharya at Jyotir Math and Sureswaracharya at Gowardhan. The central platform is higher, so that Adi Sankaracharya may tower over everything, supreme and majestic.

The shining ornamental brass canopy is supported by four brass pillars. The back and sides of the temple are of white marble, and there are low marble engraved screens along the front at various levels, so that a pleasing picture is presented from the front of the entire structure. A simple moving curtain between the two front pillars encloses the shrine at night.

Fourteen specially designed ornate brass oil lamps of South Indian style light up the temple. The effect during evening *arati* is most entrancing.

The statue presents Adi Sankaracharya as a 16 years old ascetic, sitting cross-legged in meditation, the right hand in the pose of the Guru preaching. The expression is majestic, noble and inspiring; this is bound to increase a thousandfold as Sankaracharya continues to be worshipped under Mataji's *kheyala* at Kankhal.

Mataji was so concentrated on the new temple that She used to rest at night on a cot in the hall

in front of the temple. Throughout the daily *aratis* She would gaze straight at Sankaracharyaji.

On May 8th commenced preliminary ceremonies for the installation. From 8 a.m. to 12.30 midday a group of pandits (previously engaged in Didima's *Maharudrabhishekha*) went through the elaborate rituals of the main *Sankalpa* (avowal of the purpose of the *pratistha*), consecration of the temple foundations, and invocation of various deities to be present and bless the installation. In the evening, immersion of Adi Sankarji's *murti* in rice was very reverently carried out by the same priests. A bag was tied round the statue and rice carefully poured into it until it was immersed upto its neck. Then the bag was tied at the top and the statue left thus overnight.

On the 9th morning, twenty-one brahmins fetched 108 pitchers of sacred water from the Ganges that was strained through muslin, for the ceremonial bathing of the statue. The filled vessels were placed neatly in rows in the hall and the statue, which had been cleaned of the rice bath and anointed with ghee, was moved to the south west corner of the hall where the holy water was poured over it to the chanting of mantras. Mataji was present and Swami Akhandananda Saraswati called to meet Ma and view the temple. By 11.30 a.m. the statue was wiped dry with soft muslin and clothed in saffron robes.

(*To be continued*)

The Creative Mind of Gopinath Kaviraj

Goinda Gopal Mukhopadhyaya

Fortunately for us, Dr. Kaviraj himself has discussed at length the nature of creative genius of which he was a living emblem, in a remarkable paper originally contributed to the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute journal, which has later on, been incorporated as the very first article in his book entitled 'Aspects of Indian Thought'. The Indian term for creative genius is *Pratibha* and according to him 'it might be called the supersensuous and suprarational appreception, grasping truth directly'. He further clarifies it by pointing out that 'the prime characteristic of this supersensuous knowledge is its immediacy and intense clarity' and 'nothing escapes its searching light. It is aptly described as simultaneously illuminating everything in every aspect as eternal' (*Yogasutru* III. 84)'.

That Dr. Gopinath Kaviraj himself possessed this creative genius in ample measure was patent to everyone who had the good fortune of hearing him expounding on any topic of his choice or replying to queries of different sorts from different types of seekers or scholars. Whatever he touched upon had this unfailing quality of intense clarity stamped upon it, which was born of the faculty of grasping truth directly and entirely,