
No evil can ever overcome him who cleaves to God's name. What one suffers is in exact keeping with the nature of one's actions. If the flow of God's name is sustained, all work will beget the good.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee

Everywhere Nama received its due honour. Nobody could object to Nama. Who could object if one repeated Rama, Rama, Krishna, Krishna, Allah, Allah, Christ, Christ or the name of any other God? But Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was of the view that Nama had to be properly done and whoever did it should do it with full faith and reverence. If the person repeating Nama had no faith or reverence then Nama, instead of producing good result, might adversely affect the singer.

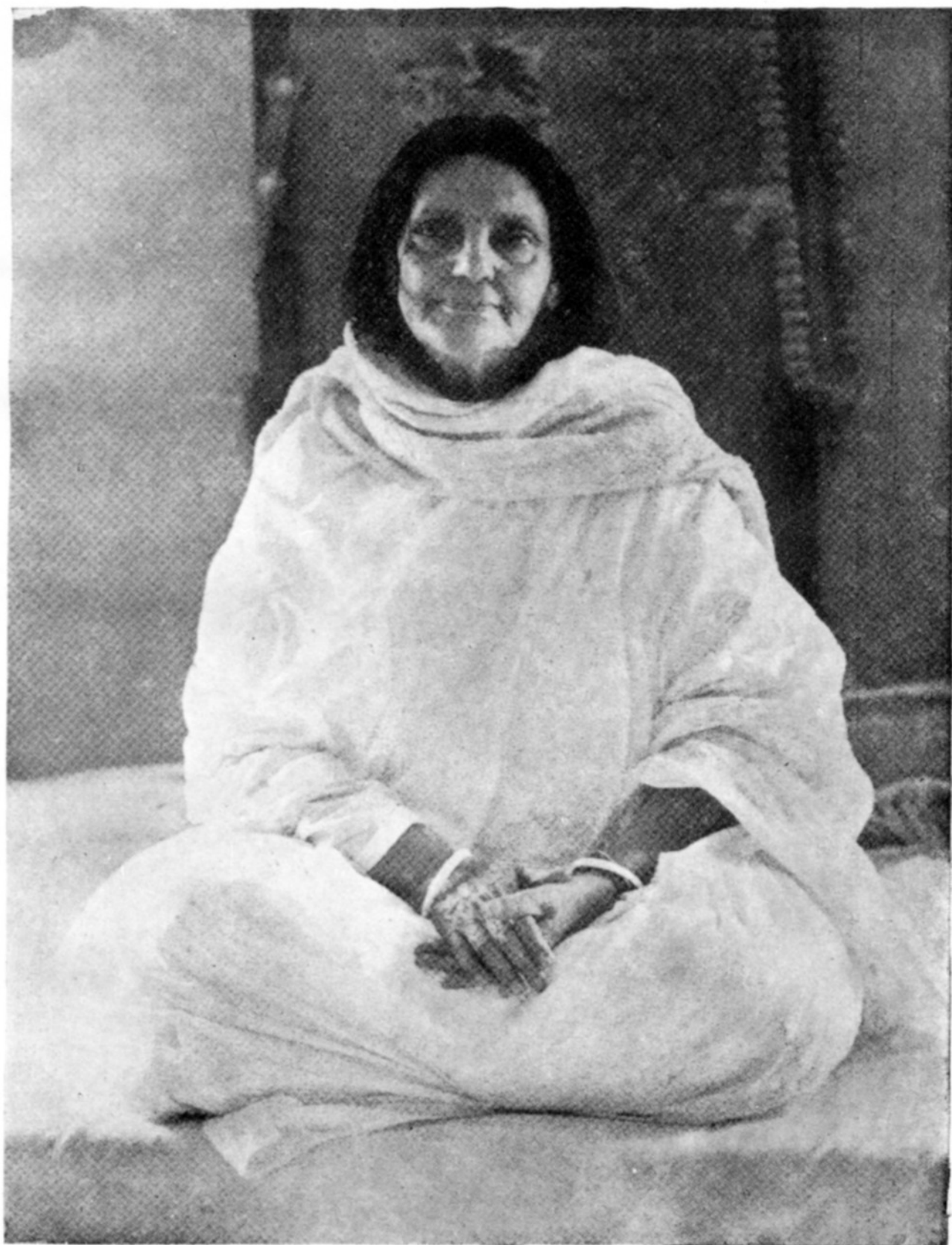
—Shree Shree Sitaramdas Onkarnath

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ĀNANDA VĀRTĀ

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

Vol. XXXX

● APRIL, 1993 ●

No. 2

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God's Holy Name is itself the rite for exercising undesirable influences. In the presence of God's Name ghosts and evil spirits cannot remain.

—Shree Shree Ma Anandamayi

'Namakirtan' will remove the fear of death's envoy and all troubles to be suffered in hell and also the fear of punishment after death.

—Shree Shree Sitaramdas Onkarnath

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Sri Sri Ma's Utterances

One day the Rajmata (the mother of the king) of Solan said to Ma, "Ma, a long time back, once I told you that I had heard so much of *nirvikalpa samadhi*, and that it was my ardent wish if I could experience that ! But now I have become old, how can I aspire for it at this stage ?"

Ma : "Why not ? It *will* happen, no matter when. Look, don't think ; since the body has grown old, what hope is there ? If the moment comes, if His Grace is manifested, it may be possible even within the time left. Why despair ? In His territory, mind you, there is nothing as 'impossible'."

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Ma was narrating the incident of Baba Bholanath's *diksa*. She said, "Of course, I did not give him *diksa* in that way (in the usual manner). You know how it took place ? I told Bholanath to sit on the *asana*. Then the Name which used to be repeated in my mind as *japa* gradually came out louder and louder. Bholanath brought his ear near the mouth of this body (referring to Herself) —though I had not told him to come near— and, nodding his head, said, 'Yes, I have heard it' ; but I myself did not tell him anything. He himself did so (adopted the Name). Meanwhile, perhaps, I

once touched Bholanath's hand with my own hand."

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Question : "During the period of *sadhana*, is it possible to sustain the body with food ?"

Ma : "It may happen in this way—there is absolutely no need for food. Again, it may also be that the food necessary for the sustenance of the body is derived from the five elements in a subtle form. In still another case, what you people talk about—the nectar drops from the *sahasrara*, so on and so forth —by that itself the body is sustained. The health looks quite fine. Like this, there are so many things. This, too, is of infinite varieties."

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One day, during meditation, a person sat to meditate with his back towards Ma (who was sitting there in disguise). Later, in this context, the question was put to Her, "Is it wrong to do so ?"

Ma said, "Since you have asked the question, let me reply. The fact is that if there is scarcity of room in the meditation hall, then of course you must sit wherever possible, whether behind or in front of one another. But if there is sufficient room in the hall then one never take one's seat exactly in front of another person."

On the same occasion, since Ma was sitting in a playful disguise among the meditators, they thought that Ma was not there, and many persons absented themselves from the meditation. Referring to this incident, Ma said, "I noticed that many

people did not come to meditate at all since 'Ma' was not there ! What is this ? It is necessary to go on doing one's work regularly. I was watching it all, and again I kept seated in such a manner (in a still posture) as is recommended for showing due respect to the saffron clothes (in which She was clad to conceal Herself)."

* * *

Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Kanyapeeth was permanently transferred to Varanasi. The girl-students of the school came to offer *pranama* to Ma before leaving for Varanasi. Ma said to them, "Now you are going to *Kashi* (Varanasi). Try to be very good girls. Don't bear ill will towards anyone. Always try to tell the truth. You should not have the tendency to hurt any one with your words. Always try to take His Name. You will see what joy you get in it."

In one form or another the grace of the Guru must be obtained. Until the Guru is found it is man's duty to invoke and try to realize God by looking upon all forms as His Form, all names as His Name, and all modes of being as His.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Ma touches us :

11. In Caste Biology

Prof P. C. Datta

Basic Biology of Caste

When we start with the scientific study of caste system we find a dirth of correct approach of understanding the caste system, its origin and evolution. This is relative to another fundamental aspect, whether the science of development of a social system should be regarded as that of a living organ or organism. This is a very important step, because mechanistic approach considers the society as composed of some dead material like clay or a melted metal. The leaders of thoughts suggest different systems of processing, leading to pouring the material in artificial moulds prepared according to whims of their ego-inspired brain. This process gives enormous freedom to the leaders in drawing excellent models according to their beautiful dreams.

On the contrary, the vitalistic thinkers have no scope of indulging in dreams of model societies. Actually they have to be absorbed in understanding dreams of Nature, who has created the living plants and animals with their unique physiological systems following genetic codes hidden in the organisms. This is truly a scientific approach. Ego based

mechanistic approach has created innumerable reformers. Vitalistic approach has created a few scientists watching actually the inherent laws of nature. But voices of their approach are not heard in the universe of chaotic sounds created by emotional shouting of the reformers. The scientific approach is clearly noticed in the Indian sages, including Swami Vivekananda who pointed out the diseases of the societies but discarded reformers activities as detrimental. When we accept the scientific vitalistic approach we must throw away our emotional inclinations to likes and dislikes, and we must also follow the development biology of the processes. Here also, we must be clear in defining the principle of development. From embryonic condition two phenomena work simultaneously, One is *growth* (irreversible increase in mass by multiplication of homogeneous units) and the other is *differentiation* (being different from each other and the mother unit). So there is no development in nature without differentiation and growth. There is no example in the healthy living being having growth without differentiation. Differentiation without growth is a common phenomenon. Growth without differentiation is a dangerous phenomenon found in cancer tissues or tumours. So fundamental scientific approach will never search for multiplication of uniformity. The reformers abhor diversities, for which the scientists await.

India produces four castes in the society which have later been differentiated into hundreds. This

increasing diversity indicates a developmental progress. Now the questions are : How did it originate in India and what were the steps of evolution and why is the system deeply rooted with no sign of weakening of the structural framework.

Science of origin and development

Regarding origin, none will be able to show any scientific relation to any religious preacher. The scriptures explaining social systems are actually grammars, on the ever changing systems of bold races of India. Anyone respectful to the social science and are not emotionally allergic, will be able to follow the steps of evolution of caste system. If one studies the "*Shaiva*" community of Kashmir, Rajasthan and Nepal will find differences of origin and evolution of the system. Thus the norms have no relation to religions, as found in Christians and Muslims. Indians mostly believe that the forefathers of the families become happy to see their descendants prosperously developing the professional skills, but become unhappy if wives of their children coming from other families having different profession neglect the trends. Family traditions, cultural heritage and devotional pride for the value, knowledge and capabilities of the family were never allowed to be drowned by the foreign technical waves from wives. In India naturally scholars married daughters of scholars, warriors daughters of warriors, industrialists daughters of industrialists and so on. Monetary gain was given less importance than the tradition. Priest

class was poorest of all classes even more than *sudras*. Nobody gave up traditional professions and encroach others' fields of earning.

The social system encouraged matrimonial relation between different races and discouraged relation between families having the same name (*Bansha*) and between *Santanans* of the same spiritual sages.

The question is : In the Darwinian process of evolution, changes in progenies are related to beneficial adjustment with environment. What benefit was exploited by nature for the survival of the society. The answers are in apparent preservation of traditional oldest repositories of human knowledge in *Vedas* and *Vedantas*, inspiring moral and honest system of the warrior classes and adventurous process in the development of interlinks between different parts in India and some countries of the west. The process also disallowed very close genetic relation (*Swabansa*) and also grouping within families of the same religious heritage (*Swagotra*).

Regarding origin of the system western Indologist also consider that *no evidence* can be produced to show that the caste system was improvised by any group of men with motives, whose planned models were super-imposed on the whole country.

Some of the western Indologists missed many precious contributions of caste system e.g. literature, philosophy, religion, technology and many arts. The defect of caste system which they presented exaggeratedly, were evident only against the development of machine-based civilisation. Some

other Indologists write that caste system is a wonderful discovery, a type of social order which has protected the Hindu society ages after ages from lawlessness, wretched conditions in mechanistic industrial growth and strongly competitive life. At the beginning it may appear as an antagonistic weak system. Actually it is comparable to a powerful trade union. (Bhattacharya).

The famous Indologist Blunt says : externally the system appears to be demarcated by certain fixed ideas but internally it appears to be ever-changing and flexible. It never stands on a fixed position. It moves and evolves always, and the evolution is still going on. New castes and branch castes are being produced, old ones are vanishing. Prevalent caste related customs are quickly changing, the main structure remains unchanged.

Trick of caste-system

But the tendency of criticising the system and tabulating some aspects as good and some as bad, antagonise the attempts to understand scientifically. No personal feeling, no personal liking or disliking can determine whether, the system will survive or not. The special socio-historical processes that have built up the system, particularly social, economic, political and religious elements that caused survival of the system, that is so long as these conditions are effective, the existing arrangements in the system will survive. The existence of the arrangements do not depend upon whether it is moral or immoral or how far it

is tasteful, whatever may be the personal views. Even the political powers can not stabilise the system or uproot it. It has been compared with a banyan tree which suck the soil nutrients with specialised roots. The tree will survive so long as the roots survive (Narendranath Bhattacharya).

This is vitalistic view which is more scientific than the outlook of reformists (Mechanistic outlook). According to Nirmal Kr. Basu "The first apparent aspect of the societies of India have been created by synthesis of many races. In other countries also the defeated race is influenced by the conqueror by losing political or economic identities. One extracts the juices of the other and introduces with different new systems of production and new distribution patterns. But in India new genius has been coming to life. In several political ups and downs, several calamities of the luck, India has saved its culture from possible deaths. The *trick* of India remains in the caste system. The old sociologists in India consider the caste system was applicable to all the societies where there are many races. India has converted them to a reduced number *four* (castes). Every race was divisible into four if people worked according to capability, without disturbing others' profession, and lived together in a co-operation preventing starving of others. Defeated groups or races in India never revolted against the conqueror because both had the same social system—caste system. There is no reason to believe of motives of the Brahmins.

They install the economic vertebral column in the caste system.

Untouchability vs. castes

In spite of this good effects the system accompanies some unwanted diseases such as untouchability, intercaste hatred (occasionally). Those are actually politically improvised by selfish motives. Though most of the races in India have created caste system of their own, certain tribes have failed to progress in the same way. They are not yet regarded as *Brahman* or even *Sudra*. Spreading of education, improvement of standard of life, development of respect to Hindu hygiene, etc. not by political processions leading to temples.

Most of authors of caste system relate untouchability with it. But actually they have no causal relation, and the untouchability is not an effect of caste system (Bhattacharya). Reports of untouchability in America and Europe ("coloured and dogs are not allowed",—posters on waiting rooms) are not available in India. Many a pious people of India prepare his or her own food untouched by other members of the family. The idea that works behind this is the purity of food, uncontaminated or unpolluted things, is the basic inclination. Infection comes about not only by germs but also by anger, ego, hatred etc. also.

Many invaders from Iran and Middle East, Greece, Germany, etc. were Kshatriyas at the beginning, some of them neglected *upanayana* system and merged into *Sudra* caste (Bhattacharya).

Hindu Dharma is actually an integration of innumerable religious paths originated in India, which include even atheism. Hinduism gives every freedom to individuals in accepting any path, does not revolt against the system. Caste-system is usually regarded as one of ecological factors which changes automatically in time and space with which a spiritual aspirant should adjust and utilize it. Basically all religions prescribe SAMADRISTI, but without neglecting apparent differences Hindu-dharma and Hindu-Caste system have not even slightest ontogenetic or phylogenetic relation (Bhattacharya). They are like-two plants growing side by side on two distinctly different roots. Jain religion, though suggested *Sama-dristi* praises Brahmanic culture, and developed a caste system of the other Hindu type. The picture of society drawn in Buddhist literature is of the common Indian type, giving superior position to Brahman caste. *Dhammapada* includes one full chapter praising Brahmans. The book also says that attacking a Brahman is an unforgivable crime.

Cultural stability was related to the following type (simplified) of system of marriage. Suppose two races (A & B) reside together in a locality. They have two (I, II) castes each (suppose). So the combinations of race and castes if freely mixed are AI, AII, BI, BII. Suppose each have two *Vansas* (families), a and b, resulting combinations being AIa, AIb, AIIa, AIIb, BIa, BIb, BIIa, BIIb. Suppose each has two (i, ii) *gotras* (spiritual guides whom they followed generation after genera-

tion). If they are allowed free marriage, the following would be the 16 character types :—Alai, Alaii etc., actually, 8 types of each race. Each character type (4 in each caste) can pair in 4 compatible combinations. The principles discard inter-caste marriage (which may weaken the heritage of required professional skill), intra-*bansa* marriage and intra-*gotra* marriage (i.e. within the same religious lineage).

Husbands → Wives ↓	Alai	Alaii	Albi	Albii	Allai	Allaii	Allbi	Allbii	Blai	Blaii	Bibi	Bibii	Blilai	Blilaii	Libi	Libii
Alai	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Allaii	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Albi	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48
Albii	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64
Allai	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
Allaii	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96
Allbi	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112
Allbii	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128
Blai	129	130	131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144
Blaii	145	146	147	148	149	150	151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160
Bibi	161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176
Bibii	177	178	179	180	181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192
Blilai	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208
Blilaii	209	210	211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224
Blilbi	225	226	227	228	229	230	231	232	233	234	235	236	237	238	239	240
Blilbii	241	242	243	244	245	246	247	248	249	250	251	252	253	254	255	256

The 4 types, ai, aii, bi, bii of the Table join comparatively in combin, 4, 19, 34, 49 for example, in the same caste. If the barrier between the two castes is removed, the possibility is doubled. The caste system maintains the caste boundary, but removes that between the races resulting in the same doubling process.

Lepcha tribe of North Bengal has now been on the way of extinction Barring intercaste (inter profession) marriage and opening the inter races boundary will revitalize the tribe.

Spiritualists view

How is it looked upon by spiritual teachers of India ? Usually they dislike caste-hatred and un-touchability (which are not related to the system at all). Usually they look at the system as a biologist's subject, a dynamic development, just like a tree differentiating with development producing newer and newer organs, casting off old ones. Ma Anandamayi is beyond *samskaras*, she has no like or dislike on the process but accepts all changes.

Once a boy of the Ghosh family of Dhaka, was mentally protesting against some activities of Ma, supporting caste system. When a *kirtan* was going on at the corner of the yard, a dog was eating *Vatasa* prasad thrown there. Ma participated with the dog, and uttered, "Can I have any caste superstition ?" Ma explained many times, that though She is free, the people gathered around Her are not. It is for the benefit of them that She behaves like them.

Once Dr. Dasgupta of Varanasi asked Ma, "Do you support caste system ?—for you were calling Brahmana kumaris for *Kumari Puja*." Ma replied, "This body is never inclined or disinclined to any thing. Still an artist follows certain conventional systems and requirements for drawing pictures, or for performing a festival."

Some body asked : Should we observe caste distinctions ? Ma : What do you feel ? (I explain as, where do you stand on the topography of the Map of caste *Samskars* ?)

He replied : I think, we should !

Ma : In that case you should, for one's *Bhava* should not be spoiled. Your particular *Bhava* emerges from your *samskar*. You must progress on that very path (*Hypocrisy* will block your spiritual path). The same path is not prescribed for all. One should behave indeed according to whatever *Samskar* one has.

Again, one should also try (scrupulously) to find out how at all a particular *Samskara* has been formed. Sometimes it so happens that you do not observe certain rules of good conduct due to laziness. On the other hand a person may be seen to observe particular codes of conduct since childhood, by which he got accustomed but inwardly he has a different *Samskar*. Various troubles arise out of that *Samskar*. But his habit does not permit him to act according to his *samskara* : Like this there are various other cases.

(Our leaders and politicians superficially declare a future ideal of *casteless society*, which is unscientific, nonbiological and antidevelopmental—according to the author of the present article. Ma, on such a casteless society says : if such a stage comes, it will come through changes in the social *samskara* and you must be ready to accept. Still, you should try to detect the *samskara* within and adjust with the spiritual line).

Q. : How can we detect the unreal *Samskara* or *Bhava* ? (Suppose some one pretends to be like you).

Ma : “He will hurt himself. For whosoever has had even the slightest experience in this field

will detect him as an imposter. One who behaves hypocritically will also fall with a crash, getting all the more injured (while he will injure others). You see, you should hold on to the advice of the *Mahapurushas* with concentrations. Do not try to imitate their activities from outside.”

For *Ashrams*, a general instruction of Ma, is to follow or evolve such a system or behavior, which will not hurt any one of the aspirants, having different types of *samskara*. Help them all in the advancement in real life and liberation from the unreal *samskara*.

●

Ishvara, the Lord of the world is not a thing to be perceived by the senses or grasped by the mind. By contemplating the Divine, peace is won. God Himself draws you towards Him.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Reminiscences of Anandamayee Ma*

8. Touch of the Divine Mother

Professor Bireshwar Ganguly, D. Litt

(*Continued from previous issue*)

Most of the devotees of the Mother are familiar with instructions or advice, viz., "Please don't touch the feet of the Mother, salute Her from a distance." However, there is a natural and intense aspiration of every devotee to pay his obeisance to the Mother by lying prostrate and touching Her feet in utter surrender to receive Her touch on the head along with Her affection, compassion and blessing. From the very first day of my visit (on the day of Saraswati Puja in 1951) I had reconciled to such instructions from Swami Paramananda or Sri Sri Gurupriya Devi. But I found that many devotees were displeased with this dispensation and used to openly criticize it. Attempts were made to explain the reasons. One such reason was that the Mother used to return the salutation by touching the feet of the devotee, while She was at Dhaka. Hence the convention of paying obeisance by touching Her feet was discontinued under instructions from Father Bholanath. Another reason cited by

*Translated by the author from *Ananda Varta* (Bengali ed.), July, 1990 & October, 1990.

Swamiji was that we do not know the exact mood of the Mother at any moment in her divine play. Hence the moment a layman touches Her body, Her facial expression as well as the radiance of Her face change, for Her mood is adversely affected. Sometimes it was observed that the disease of a suffering devotee was transmitted to Her body after physical contact and then Her face would become very grave. In some cases the devotees felt electric shock after touching Her feet, and so on. However, though I had willingly accepted the constraint of not touching Her feet, I had the rare opportunity of having occasional contacts with the physical body of the Mother. Even to-day, I am overwhelmed with a holy emotion, when I recollect the spiritual sensation derived from a few such contacts. I would like to narrate a few such incidents and share the joy with other devotees.

Since it was forbidden to touch the physical body of the Mother, inspite of intense desire, the suppressed desire used to accumulate in the subconscious mind and the dream-like fulfilment of such desires would sometimes be manifested in some external situations. After the first encounter with the Mother at Patna during the Saraswati Puja of 1951, I used to start for Varanasi from Patna by the afternoon train of every Saturday, provided that Mother was staying at Varanasi, and spend the whole Sunday in the Varanasi *ashram* in the presence of the Mother, to return to Patna in the morning of Monday. At the time of devotional music in the presence of the Mother in the morning

and evening *Sat-sanga* (spiritual congregation), I often felt shivering and trembling of the body at the end of which I used to fall asleep. One day, while Professor Sudhir Gopal Mukherjee was having a discourse on *Srimad Bhagavatam* after 11 a.m., I fell asleep at the end of such a temporary feeling of shivering, trembling, rolling down of tears etc. When I was awake again, the Mother remarked, "Did you dive down the stream of consciousness?" On hearing this I had another round of spontaneous rolling down of tears, etc. The Mother then looked at me with deep compassion and said, "Nilmani, come near this body." I moved slowly and sat near the feet of Mother, who was seated on a chair. The Mother pulled my head slightly near her knees, covered with Her white cloth and began patting it with Her right fingers. This produced a cold electric current from the bottom of my body towards the head and tears rolled down my cheeks. I did not know the meaning of *Brahmananda* (divine bliss). I recollected the experience of the unique comfort that I felt when my own mother used to pat my head during illness in my boyhood. But the sensation of the Divine Mother's touch can not be compared with any mundane experience and it is not possible for me to describe properly this kind of experience due to the poverty of my literary expression. The only feeling that persists is that my human life was blessed by the affectionate touch of the incarnation of the Divine Mother and heavenly bliss could never be superior to this experience. I began

experiencing the joyful sensation in every atom of my subtle body by the blissful touch of the joy-permeated Ma Anandamayee, and I again fell asleep on the lap of the Mother.

At the beginning of the Summer vacation of 1951, when I reached the Kashi *ashram*, I learnt that the Mother would be leaving for Vindhyachal the next day along with a few of Her devotees. The Mother was to travel by the motor car of Yogi-Bhai, the Raja Saheb of Solan and that in two other cars Swami Paramananda, Pandit Gopinath Kaviraj and a few others would be accompanying the Mother. On the previous day a few male and female attendants had left for Vindhyachal to make prior arrangements in the *ashram* for Mother and Her party. I had a great desire to accompany the Mother, but it was not possible without any hint from the Mother or Gurupriya Didi. Yet I was ready for a call after performing my morning duties, such as morning bath, *puja*, breakfast, etc. When everybody was seated in his allotted seat in the cars, Mother asked me with a smiling face, "Nilmani, do you really desire to come with us?" When I said, "yes", Gurupriya Didi said, "But there is no vacant seat in any of the cars." Mother said, "He will get some accommodation in this very car. Go Nilmani, fetch your suitcase." I brought my suitcase and kept it in the luggage deck and as I attempted to occupy the vacant seat by the side of Yogi Bhai in the front row of the car, Mother said, "No, not there, Baba may feel uncomfortable, you should rather sit by my side." Mother was seated in the

middle of the rear seat, Gurupriya Didi was seated at the left of Her, Udasji was seated near the feet of Mother and the right side seat was vacant. I was hesitating to do so. Hence Gurupriya Didi asked me to sit near Mother's feet without any further delay, but the Mother said, "No, no, sit by my side and go on muttering your *Ishta-Mantra*." I was not ready for this unexpected kindness of the Mother, but it was not possible for me to decline this coveted offer. I uttered 'Jai Ma', touched Her feet with my hands as well as head, took my seat by the right side of the Mother and began uttering my *Ishta-Mantra* silently with tears in my eyes. The car started. I fell asleep within a few minutes and dreamt that I was sleeping on Mother's lap like a small child. Perhaps the time is not yet ripe to narrate other incidents of the dream, for there is no indication from the Mother in this regard.

The Mother arrived at the Anandamayee Ashram of Ranchi on the auspicious occasion of *Akshay Tritia*, 17th April, 1980 for the installation of the marble statue of Didima (Giriji). On hearing this news I came to Ranchi by bus from Gaya along with a musician friend, Sri Govardhan Mishra in the night of 16th April. The next day there was a huge congregation of devotees in the *ashram* from early morning on account of the installation ceremony. It was difficult to approach the Mother and talk to Her ; hence the only alternative was to look at Her from a distance. However, it was imperative for me to return to Gaya the next day, in connection with some important work in the

(Magadh) University. Govardhan Mishra expressed his intense desire to sing a few devotional songs in the presence of the Mother. Finally we decided to take *prasad* (holy lunch) in the pandal at Peppi compound. All of a sudden the sky began reverberating with the sound of 'Jai Ma', and we observed that the Mother was looking at us with a smiling face from the verandah of Khoka Babu. When the lunch was over, many of us congregated around the verandah on three sides and began looking at the Mother's face. Mother looked at me for a few second without winking and spread her compassion and grace towards me. Tears came in my eyes, I felt a little shivering and thought that our communication did take place without words as well as blessings were showered on me. Just then Mother threw an apple and I caught it with both my hands. The next moment Govardhan Mishra caught hold of an orange. I told Govardhanji that the purpose of my visit was successful ; however, if he wanted to sing a few devotional songs, he could do so the next day, but that I had to return that very day by bus to Gaya. Mishraji said that his purpose of the visit was also fulfilled, for he had also received Her blessings through Her eyes and that he would receive further satisfaction by singing devotional songs in front of Mother's photograph. Thus another aspect of Mother's subtle touch was revealed this time.

(To be continued)

Divya Sharir of Shri MA

ER. Girish Chandra

I have taken upon myself the task of writing on the above subject which is a very complex one. How many people are there who know Shri MA fully? Yet I shall make an attempt to deal with the subject from various aspects in the hope that it will induce greater devotion among the disciples of Shri MA.

I am fully convinced that Shri MA's sharir was not like that of an ordinary human being. It was extremely sensitive to impure vibrations and impure physical contact etc. I shall quote an example which will throw light in the matter. Many years ago, one business-man from Calcutta came to have Shri MA's Darshan and by mistake he touched MA's arm. One of Shri MA's devotees Smt. Sushila Modwel was near Her. After the visitor left, Shri MA told Smt. Modwel that SHE was experiencing a burning sensation in the arm. When Smt. Modwel had a look at the affected spot, She told MA: "There are burn marks of four fingers on the arm." From this incident, readers can judge how sensitive was Shri MA's sharir to impure contact.

In the early stages when Shri MA was at Dhaka around 1930 or so, people had come to know of HER spiritual powers. When people tried to touch Her feet, SHE would get a burning sensation in Her feet. After sometime, people were advised not to touch Her feet.

It is one of the famous sayings of Shri MA that spiritual vibrations issue from the holy feet of a Mahapurush ; therefore, Pranams should be offered at their feet. Visitors to Shri MA would remember that SHE used to put on white socks—presumably to prevent outside impure vibrations entering Her body and cause adverse reaction.

Visitors to the Ashram would remember that while talking to people generally, Shri MA would put some cloth in front of Her mouth. Smt. Modwel once picked up courage to ask Shri MA directly why She did so. She replied that She was not able to withstand vibrations from people talking to HER.

It is generally advised in holy scriptures that we should meditate on the unmanifest aspect of a Mahapurush e.g. all pervading and ever present in full consciousness. Majority of us cannot do this and have to meditate on the lotus feet of SHRI MA and performing Japa of Her Name ; this practice will lead to meditation on Her unmanifest aspect. Just as a frog clings to the stem of a lotus plant, we should cling to Her lotus feet which is the repository of Bhakti, bliss and grace. There are no words to express the benefit derived from backing in Her Glorious presence. To look at Her was to have one's mind stilled. To fall within the sphere of Her beatific vision was to be inwardly elevated.

Sai Baba of Shirdi had said : "Every particle of dust from my tomb will answer the devotees prayers". This is equally true of Shri MA's Mahasamadhi Mandir. Shri MA is present in HER

Samadhi Mandir and also resides in the recess of our heart and answer our prayers.

Shri MA emanated powerful waves of bliss. A question arises if SHE emanated such bliss at all times. This question has been answered by Raman Maharishi : “Mahapurush directs the spiritual emanation ; sometimes these are powerful at other times not so.”

During the early stage of Her life, She did not take food for several months, She lived on hardly a few grains of rice. She explained that Her body could draw the necessary nourishment from air.

Once a lady visitor from Punjab asked Shri MA abruptly : “why can you not eat with your own hand and why others have to feed you ?” She explained that all hands are HER hands and all mouths are HER mouth. Through this answer, Shri MA gave an idea of Her feeling for the body during “Sahaj Samadhi” which was Her permanent state even while asleep.

Shri MA reflected all the essential qualities of God e.g. compassion, love and grace towards all living beings. This phenomenon has been explained by Raman Maharishi : “God’s qualities can be reflected only by one who possesses a pure mind”.

Physical proximity with Shri MA promoted spiritual advancement—people might not have felt it in their life—but it was a fact. People who came to Shri MA for the sake of curiosity would be blessed with “Shradha” ; seekers would be blessed with Bhakti and Gyan and advanced Sadhaka would get a feeling of the self effulgent SELF. In

