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The faithful devotee, the ardent lover of God, the ascetic, the great yogi—all are pilgrims on the path to the Supreme : The revelation of their forgotten SELF, of His touch, their Common goal.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

He Saw God in everything and in loving everyone he loved God or in loving God, he loved everyone.

—Shree Shree Sitaramdas Onkarnath

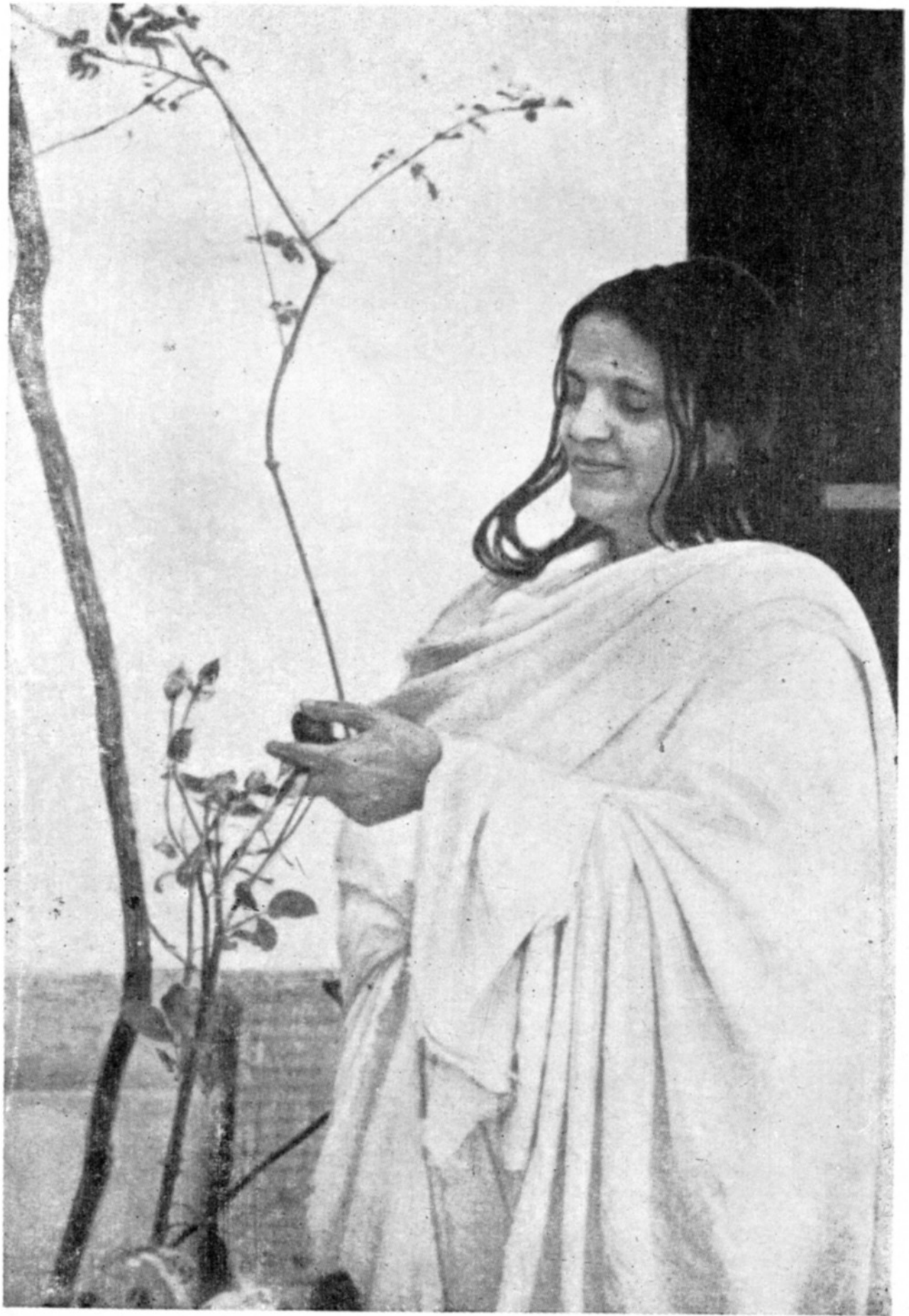
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# ANANDA VĀRTĀ

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

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Vol. XXXXI

● APRIL, 1994 ●

No. 2

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One of God's names is Love. He Himself resides within all, at every moment, everywhere. When man—true to his calling—aspires after the One with uninterrupted intensity, then only His presence manifests.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

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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# Matri Vani

One of God's names is Love. He Himself resides within all, at every moment, everywhere. When man—true to his calling—aspires after the One with uninterrupted intensity, then only His Presence manifests.

\* \* \*

God, the Self, is all-pervading. Where is He not? In all forms and the formless, in all names and the nameless, in all places and conditions, at all times is He. When the desire for Realization awakens, this is an actual manifestation of Him, the indivisible One. Since all names are His indeed, He will let Himself be grasped by any one of them. The keen desire to attain to the Goal must be conceived. The very fact that Self-realization is one's goal means to seek and to find.

\* \* \*

Who am I? With this attitude endeavour to let the mind stand back as a witness. Search after your Self. As long as may be, sit immersed in meditation, becoming quite still, steady and fully concentrated.

\* \* \*

Try your utmost never to succumb to anyone's influence. In order to become firm, calm, deeply

serious, full of heroism, with one's personality wholly intact, pure and holy out of one's own strength, one has to be centred in God.

\* \* \*

To invoke Him, to be constantly intent on realizing Him alone, is man's duty. At all times in His arms, in His embrace—within the Mother. On finding the Mother, everything will be found.

\* \* \*

By saying 'I cannot' one does not get far. One has to acquire capacity and achieve. Truly, for man everything is possible. By God's Grace one is born in a human body. Even though someone may slip and fall, he will not remain lying on the ground but rise, stand up straight and walk again. The speed of advancing must become brisk. In order to find your Self, progress along your own path, in your own rhythm.

\* \* \*

For those who are pilgrims on the path, it is imperative to forge ahead vigorously, energetically, steadily and at great speed. Sitting in a rickety cart will not do. Virile strength of mind is always needed. You yourself have to mould your own life—remember this !

\* \* \*

'Thou art ever close by. The idea that He is distant must be removed far away. Thou, truly,

art within and without, in every nerve and fibre, in every plant and stone, in the world and beyond.

\* \* \*

To live according to the Guru's instruction is the means to Self-realisation. When, promoted by desire to find God, one attempts to awaken Kundalini it is impossible that He should not respond. If one really and truly yearns for God, can it ever happen that He will not reveal Himself? Practices that aim at arousing Kundalini should be undertaken for the sole purpose of finding God. It is impossible that this should remain fruitless; be convinced of this.

\* \* \*

Full of patience—which is so important for Sadhana and anchored in endurance one should cheerfully forge ahead with untrammelled speed in the quest after God. HE who resides in the heart must be revealed within and without.

\* \* \*

One must endeavour to remain constantly engaged in the contemplation of THAT. All other thought engenders anxiety. HE is already holding your hand, so why worry? Do not allow yourself to be overwhelmed; ever be steeped solely in the contemplation of the Supreme.

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*Celebration of*

99th Birth Anniversary of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee

**Shree Shree Anandamayee  
Charitable Society**

"MATRI-MANDIR"

57/1, Ballygunge Circular Road,  
Calcutta-700 019

Phone : 74-8504

Dear Brother/Sister,

With great pleasure we are announcing the celebration of the 99th (Ninetyninth) Birth Anniversary of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee from Friday, the 27th May, 1994 at 6.30 p.m. to Saturday, the 28th May, 1994 afternoon.

Participation at this function of all the devotees of Ma is earnestly requested.

Jai Ma

Yours

In the Service of Ma,  
Members

Dated :

The 31st March, 1994  
(17th Chaitra, 1400)

(Executive Council)  
Shree Shree Anandamayee  
Charitable Society

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## Sad Vani

Each of the five fingers of the hand has its own peculiarity ; each part of the body has its own function, high or low ; the teeth may at times well bite the tongue ; but since the whole of it is your own body you accept all its ways and take great pains to look after every part of it. In the same manner, try to regard as your own every person you contact. By making this a habit you will in due course come to feel that everyone in the universe is part of you. To abolish the distinction between 'I' and 'you' is the sole purpose of all spiritual endeavour.

\* \* \*

By degrees reduce all external diversions, such as going to see people and superficial conversation. Otherwise these will become obstacles on your way to God-realization. The One resides in the sanctuary of your heart ; if your sight and hearing are turned outward, how can you become aware of His presence ? Real worship is of the heart. Outer rites and ceremonies are only a small part of it. As a mother fondles her ailing baby in her lap, so have we in the initial stages of our sadhana to hug the Divine close to our breast as we would do with a sick infant. If at the time of prayer and meditation you are unable to calm yourself and to forget your worldly activities and cares, you will

not get any real experience. Just as when listening at the telephone you focus your attention wholly on hearing, so also when you meditate must you rally all your senses to one point in order to intensify your power of concentration.

\* \* \*

Man is the image of God. To be born in a human body is the highest type of birth. Nowhere in the world can be found such a wealth of hidden treasures as in the domain of the human mind. Like a pearl-diver one has to plunge into the inmost depths of one's being and be at work day at night in the quest of those precious jewels. Kindle the inner flame and let it illumine your life and the world. This is the supreme purpose of human striving.

\* \* \*

To speak means to float on the surface ; unless the mind remains on the surface, words will not come. So long as one is immersed in the depths, there is not even the possibility to talk ; but as soon as one comes up to the surface, speech will issue forth. This is why language cannot always fully express one's feelings and ideas. One can often hear people say : "I am unable to put into words what I feel." Does this not go to show how limited and imperfect human language is ? It cannot even convey the little you understand the hidden language of the heart and you will be able to accomplish everything without words.

In whichever direction you may turn your gaze you will find One Eternal Indivisible Being manifested. Yet it is not at all easy to detect this Presence, because He interpenetrates everything. As a King is known by his majesty, as fire is known by its heat, so the Unmanifest reveals Himself through the world of manifestation. The analysis of the substance of all created things, if carried sufficiently far, will lead to the discovery that what remains is identical and equally present in all creatures : It is He, it is That, Which is styled as Pure Consciousness (chetana).

In the laboratories of universities and hospitals and in many other places all over the world, research of various kinds is being carried on and new theories are constantly evolved. If you carefully think over these, you will see that they only go to prove the existence of the One All pervading Being. If in the midst of the diversity of the world of appearances you make a sustained effort to do all your work as a faithful servant of the Almighty Father of the Universe, love and devotion for Him will awaken in your heart. As the confining prison walls of the ego are broken down, you will become more and more persistent and wholehearted in your pursuit of Reality. Then all the manifold pictures you perceive will merge into the single picture and all your divergent moods and sentiments will be engulfed in the one great ocean of Bliss.

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In order to become pure white, one must make one's mind a blank or else lose oneself in the immensity of the All. Whiteness is the result of a complete reflecting of the combination of all colours ; the form of the formless is white. In order to be snow-white one must be straight and simple. Endeavour to be as white as milk, both inwardly and outwardly, by abiding in the strong fold of truth and sincerity. Then, not only will you yourself be happy, but also become a source of happiness to all who contact you. Renunciation implies immaculate purity and sincerity. If you live in the world, yet are free from pride and selfishness, you will find that people will vie with one another in providing for all your needs. At the same time your ideal way of working and your spirit of dedication will serve as an example wherever you may be. In these days of material pleasures and luxury, uprightness sanctified by renunciation is sorely needed. Perfect renunciation is in very truth perfect enjoyment.

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# Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Volume VI

( Translated by Tara Kini )

( Continued from previous issue )

## Chapter Two

### Ma in Dr. Pant's Sevashram

February 26, Saturday

Nothing of much consequence took place today. We all remain worried about Ma's heart not functioning properly. Ma stayed in bed. Doctors and others declared, "Ma, we have not been able to do anything. Now you please do something for yourself." Ma beckoned the doctor now and then and asked, "What shall I eat? How much shall I eat?" and questions to this effect. She also kept murmuring these questions to herself. In the afternoons the doors to Ma's room were kept closed for three or four hours so that she might rest. But on some days Ma just did not feel like sleeping. When the doctor requested her to rest, she lay absolutely still and did not utter a word—her body assumed a strange stance. Such was her condition.

On the first day when the doctor brought Ma from the *dharmashala* he had said, "Ma, now leave your affliction here and come to the *sevashrama*. I shall perform *kirtan* there. But now not a sound is made in that room. If a person so much as walks rapidly, Ma's heart starts racing wildly. Yet that

day she was carried in a stretcher over three or four miles surrounded by the noise and the dust of the wayside. When we reached, Ma saw that the doctor was engrossed in organising the living arrangements for all of us ; thinking that he might forget to perform *kirtan* after having promised to do so, she called me and said, "In order to safeguard the doctor's utterance it would be well to sing *kirtan*." On the doctor's request Bholanath called all of us into Ma's room and sang *kirtan*. Ma's condition appeared to improve as a result of the *kirtan*.

Today I heard of another incident. Earlier when Ma's condition had deteriorated some *kriya* occurred spontaneously in her body. After that the fever came down. Referring to that event Ma said, "If all this happens of its own accord then it yields fruit. However it does not happen every time. At each moment whatever is necessary occurs." Many people arrived to see Ma. Many pilgrims have arrived in Haridwar for the 'Kumbha Mela'.

### February 27, Sunday

Ma's clothes have not been changed for some days ; the bedsheet on her bedding has also not been washed. This is because it has been impossible to move her. On being requested that we be allowed to change her *dhoti* she said, "No, not now. When I can stand up and change the *dhoti* on my own then I shall change. Why are you worrying about that ? On many occasions earlier

I have lived in the same clothes for days together." She also said the bedding could be changed at the same time. She has not been able to sit up as yet. Only when she stands up will she change her *dhotti*. At one stage she even said, "Let me recover tomorrow and then we shall see."

### February 28, Monday

This morning after Ma's face was washed and she was fed with some prescribed dietary food she told the doctor, "Please make me stand for awhile." He obeyed her and we made her stand up with support. While she stood her *dhotti* was changed. She then sat for some time and also ate a little rice. Today is the *Shivaratri* festival. Big groups of *sadhus* went to the Brahmakunda for a dip. The sound of the harmonium, incantations and invocations filled the town of Haridwar. Thousands had congregated in Haridwar for the *kumbha-mela* which was occurring after a gap of twelve years. The *sadhus* themselves are worth watching. One group consisted of *Naga sannyasins*, while *sannyasinis* (female *sadhus*) marched in another. Famous *sadhus* rode on the backs of elephants followed by their respective groups of disciples. In some places disciples wielded staffs and swords.

This evening Bholanath sang *nama kirtan* with all of us.

### March 1, Tuesday

Today Ma walked with support, went to the verandah and sat there for a long time. None of

us could believe that she was capable of sitting up for she appeared so frail.

Sharada has come. We heard that for the last few days she has been experiencing beautiful *bhavas*. She had been like this for some time before Ma came to Dehradun. It is not as if she does anything with her effort. She is not able to sit for *puja* or *japa* for a long time. But once in a way she goes through these phases by entering into a trance as soon as she sits in concentration. It is also not as if she wills herself to sit down ; she feels compelled to do so. This *bhava* takes place within. One day when she touched Ma she entered into a trance. As long as she is engaged in doing outward jobs, she is not overcome to that extent ; the moment she sits still for awhile, knowledge of the outer world disappears.

On *Shivaratri* day, that is yesterday, Ma sent Swami Akhandananda to Mangalananda Giri's *ashram* in Kankhal saying, "You are a *sannyasin*. Join the group of *sannyasins* and take the ritual bath." He departed as per Ma's orders.

One fact is worth noting. Ma's condition was such that if anyone spoke loudly or walked in her room her heart would be affected immediately and would start pulsating rapidly. So much so that even if she opened her eyes, the view of the outside world seemed to make her heart ache. Though she was in that condition it had been decided that she would be carried on a stretcher through the noise and dust of a three mile journey ; yet she showed no change for the worse. During the journey we



could not perceive any difference in her condition ; in fact she said she was alright. Then, day before, when she asked to be helped to sit up, it was done, but she lay down soon after. Yesterday she asked to be made to stand up and stood for a few minutes. Then in the afternoon she sat up for two and a half hours on her own. Today she walked to the verandah and sat for five or six hours. She also sat up a number of times later on. She said to herself, "The breath is turned upward and cannot be lowered. Do you know why that is so ? The pace of breathing has become so. In that condition an ordinary man would not be alive. Because of that the breath is now continuing upward."

I heard from the respected Nishikant Mitra— "After taking medicine the fever lasted only for a day. On the next day there was no fever. On that day some *kriya* occurred spontaneously in Ma's body. Seeing Ma's *kriya* I felt that Ma would bid farewell to the fever."

At twelve noon everyday the doctor has been shutting Ma's door to let her rest. The door is opened again at four p.m. Today also this was observed. Some people came to meet Ma. She lay down for some time, sat up in between and conversed with all who came. At night the lights were switched off at ten p.m.

Ma lay down. I sat near her. The room was in darkness. All at once Ma laughed like a child and said, "Khukuni, did I tell you that day about the vision of Rama, Krishna, various gods and *rishis* that I had witnessed ?" I laughed a little and

asked, "What had you said?" Laughing in the same way Ma said, "I was seated at a higher level!" I asked, "Did you not say, 'Those people pointed upward, folded their palms together and did *pranama*'?" Ma also laughed lightly and said, "I had said that they were addressing this body." Now speaking with the simplicity of a child she continued, "I don't know what it is. You people remember anything that I say at any time. I blurted out whatever had happened and whatever I had seen. Whoever was seen, that one spoke, then that one also heard."

Ma continued, "Look, when you speak about this, do you know what some will think? They will say Ma was running a fever every two days. The fever had affected her brain which is why she saw such visions. "Ma laughed in her own sweet way. Sitting there I observed Ma's wonderful *bhavas*, her beautiful smile and was enchanted. I felt there was no end to Ma's *bhavas*—they seemed infinite, limitless. Everything about them was beautiful and sweet.

Again Ma said, "Do you know how I saw them? Just as I see you all in this day to day world—alive and real—exactly that way." Ma fell silent. Then she murmured to herself, "You watch yourself. You speak to yourself. You criticize yourself. You know yourself. Whatever is referred to as 'I' is the same as 'you'."

### March 2, Wednesday

This morning, after she had eaten the recommended diet, Ma went to the verandah overlooking

the Ganga and sat there. She had walked up and down on her own and after lunch ; in the afternoon she again walked for some time. Then at twelve noon she was made to lie down and the doors of her room were shut.

In connection with the piece (*khanda*) and the unbroken whole (*akhanda*) Ma had said, "See, there can never be an unbroken whole without the piece. All the pieces are within the whole. Again, that which I refer to as the piece (*khanda*) and that which I call the whole (*akhanda*) are only so many words needed to explain. That kind of question does not arise in that place."

At four p.m. Ma sat up on her bedding ; then the door was opened. Some people had come for Ma's *darshan*. Ma began speaking to them slowly. By dusk Ma was made to lie down. Till ten p.m. some people sat near Ma. Then as per the doctor's orders, as on previous days, every body left and the lights were switched off. The doctor had arranged to keep the doors of Ma's room shut from twelve to four p.m. so that she could rest. Again after ten p.m. she was kept in solitude. This routine was being adhered to over the past few days.

### March 3, Thursday

At seven a.m. as soon as Ma opened her eyes I washed her face and made her eat some food. Ma lay down and spoke to those present. Tarananda Swami had come to Haridwar from Vaidyanath. He arrived and chatted with Ma for some time.

Other *sadhus* who were acquainted with Ma also came to meet her. At eleven a.m. Ma was usually fed rice but to day she was fed with *roti* and vegetable. She remained seated after lunch. Hariram had come. Again by twelve p.m. the door was closed. Ma walked for some time and then lay down.

Today Akhandananda Swami is going to Mirzapur on some work connected with the Vindhyachal ashram. Maharatan left for Bareilly today.

At four p.m. the doors were opened. After Ma had eaten a little food she was made to sit on an easy chair. The doctor, a *sannyasi* and four or five of us were seated in front of Ma. All the shutters of the windows facing the Ganga had been opened. The topic of *asana* was discussed. Ma asked Abhay (Bhola), "Do you still perform *asana*?" Abhay replied, "No Ma, I don't perform *asanas* nowadays." Ma asked, "Why?" and thus the topic of *asana* came up. Ma said, "*Asana* occurs according to the *bhava*. Each *asana* has a dominant *bhava* associated with it—just as one kind of *asana* is assumed while eating. Lying down while sleeping is yet another *asana*. Then while contemplating on sense objects a particular *kriya* or *asana* manifests in the body and accordingly the pace of breathing also changes. By looking at such a person it becomes evident that he is absorbed in contemplating sense objects. By sitting in that posture his contemplation of sense objects is aided which is why he has acquired that stance while sitting. Similarly during spiritual contemplation also *asanas*

are assumed of their own accord. *Kumbhaka* (holding in the breath), *Rechaka* (breathing out) and *Puraka* (breathing in) all occur spontaneously. When *asanas* occur thus of their own accord then it must be understood that the knot (of *samsara*) has been loosened."

Then another topic came up. The doctor said, "A certain person has written that if one sits in solitude with a pure mind and contemplates on the thought, 'Who am I?'" For some time, then knowledge blossoms forth within him spontaneously. I have been trying that for two months now, but I don't understand anything."

Ma commented, "The same arrangement does not hold good for everybody, does it?"

The doctor continued, "In Itawa Ma had once told me to repeat the Name.\* The surprising thing was that on the first day when I sat down to say Ram Ram I saw that just as little balls of wheat are thrown to fish to eat, I seemed to be throwing the Name and a swan kept eating It. Later I reflected, 'What was it that I had seen?' Perhaps I did not possess the requisite purity of *bhava* and therefore I had this vision. The next day I bathed, sat on a stone platform under a tree and repeated the Name, 'Ram Ram'. That day I saw a light with the letter 'ra' in the centre, but I could not see the letter 'ma'. So I shut my eyes and turned my head around in

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\*Ma tells everyone to repeat the Name in this fashion—take his Name, say Ram Ram or Hari Hari, whatever you like. Ma does not tell anyone to repeat any particular Name.

an effort to see the letter 'ma'. At that point my concentration broke. The vision of this *bhava* came about only because I sat down to practise meditation as Ma had instructed."

Ma went in and lay down after all the above conversation. Bhramar, Belu, a girl named Vilas and I were seated near Ma in her room. In connection with the doctor's vision of the syllable 'ra' Ma said, "Listen, a man once heard that if one lakh *japa* is done in this fashion, an experience of this kind is bound to be felt within a certain period of time, so he sat down to practise. Do you know what happened after that? He began repeating the name. Then hearing the sound of a lizard he thought that his experience was about to begin. He finished his one lakh *japa* in this fashion but could experience nothing. His *japa* was not fruitful at all because his mind was absorbed in listening for sounds all around and also because of his anxiety to have that experience. That is why it is said, 'Keep going on the path, do not look for the fruit. If you halt on the way to calculate your progress you fall back only to waste that much time. Go forward, therefore, with one pointed attention'."

At ten p.m. the lights were turned off.

### March 4, Friday

Ma woke at seven thirty a.m. and was fed as usual. Tarananda Swami, who had been invited for *bhiksha*, came from Vaidyanath Dham. He is a worshipper of Tara Mata.

At twelve noon the door of Ma's room was shut. Ma kept absolutely quiet at that time. She had said, "Whatever is done at any time must be done perfectly." Even if anyone spoke she would not utter a sound ; but lay very still. She obeyed all instructions given to her like a child, with the appropriate *bhava*. At some later time this may all get reversed.

At four p.m. the door was opened. Devotees had prepared a meal for Ma and brought it. They fed her with their own hands. After she had eaten, other devotees arrived one or two at a time for Ma's *darshan*. She wanted to hear Bhramar's *kirtan*, so Bhramar sang and the others joined her. *Kirtan* went on till the evening.

Before the *kirtan* started Tarananda Swami arrived with a *brahmachari* disciple. Ma had met this *brahmachari* in Vaidyanath. He was a young Punjabi. The glow of spiritual practice shone on his countenance. He respected Ma greatly. Wearing a loin cloth and a copper coloured cloth on his fair skin, he looked very handsome. Referring to his devotion to his Guru, Ma said, "This kind of devotion to the Guru, this total dedication in the service of the Guru is not found often now." We heard that after having studied and practised for some years he has now set out on his own. On seeing his state his Guru himself had given him instructions to leave home. I was very happy to see the divine expression on this young *brahmachari's* face. Moreover, having heard about his qualities from Ma, I was enchanted. The Guru and the

disciple stayed for some time and then left ; after dusk the others also departed.

Doctor and some of us were seated near Ma. The condition of Ma's heart has improved. In the course of conversation Ma said, "Look, once a person had said to me, 'Ma, seeing you in such an elevated state if someone feels jealous, will he suffer?' I had replied, 'There is a good side to that also. That feeling of jealousy can lead him to progress. For instance the feeling that he can also improve may arise within him. So that though he began by feeling jealous the resulting emotion may actually lead to his welfare. That is why I say that there is good in everything and that this body can never harm anyone'."

In the night Ma spoke to the doctor on many issues. At ten p.m. lights were switched off.

### March 5, Saturday

A few days ago Ma had said, "You must repeat the Name morning and night. Let us see if this heart gets well or not." So saying she had laughed. Ma makes such statements every now and then just to coax people to repeat the Name. But we do not find the time to repeat the Name regularly, even twice a day. Early in the morning Bhramar arrived and sat down to do *nama kirtan*. We joined her. Ma sat on her bedding and listened. *Kirtan* went on till seven thirty a.m. I got restless because I felt that it was getting late for Ma's morning repast. Noticing this Ma said, "The repast can come later. Now keep singing the Name." And so it was.



Ma was fed only when the sun was high up in the sky.

Ofcourse I understood that it was the Name that sustained Ma's body rather than external nourishment. We have received many proofs of this, yet we fail to understand.

After lunch the door of Ma's room was closed. At four p.m. when the doors were again opened many people arrived for Ma's *darshan*. *Kirtan* was sung at dusk. Yogesh Dada had come from Dehradun and he sang *nama kirtan* for some time. Abhay (Bhola) sings beautifully. He is but a child and his singing is endearing. He also sang 'Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare'. Bhramar and the rest of us joined in the singing. Bholanath also sang *kirtan*.

After *kirtan* was over the same topic arose for discussion. Someone had told Ma, "Ma, some people feel jealous on seeing you ; that must be harmful for them." Ma commented on this, "This jealousy can lead to a desire for self improvement. Again, however it may occur, if the thought of something true comes into one's mind, then truth blossoms. Even in such a situation this body is engaged in some service. This body never harms anyone." So saying Ma laughed.

Today Bhramar will leave for Calcutta. Bholanath, hearing of the illness of his brother Reverend Kamini Kumar, is also leaving for Calcutta. At ten p.m. after their departure the doors of Ma's room were closed.

### March 6, Sunday

This morning Ma rose and went to the bathroom. After her hands and face were washed the doctor arrived. Ma said to him, "Son, I had not asked you but I went to the bathroom today." Ma laughed. The Doctor joined his palms and said, "Ma, if you so desire you can do anything. There is no need to ask me." Ma gives everyone due respect in this manner. As written earlier the Doctor shuts the doors of Ma's room for four hours everyday so that she gets rest and she lies down quietly without speaking. In any worldly transaction Ma does not leave anything undone. That is the reason why householders, *sanyasins*, women and men love Ma so much. Two or three *sanyasins* visit Ma almost everyday and they revere her greatly.

This morning again *kirtan* was sung. In the afternoon two gentlemen belonging to these parts came from Dehradun with fruits and flowers. They said, "Ma, we were very much upset by your illness." Ma is loved by all. After they left two *sadhhus* came to enquire about Ma's health. At eleven thirty Ma was offered *bhoga*. All did *pranam* and rose to leave. The Doctor stands near Ma while she eats and did so today. After lunch the doors were shut. This morning Ma said, "The *kheyal* to say every thing is not there at all times. That day I had mentioned about seeing Rama, Krishna and other forms in Kalyanavana. Do you know about another incident that had occurred? '*Akhanda Bhavaghan*'. Each bhava is personified by one

form. Like Krishna is for attraction, the *ramya rasa* (pleasantness) is attributed to Rama, in just that way from the *akhanda bhava* (unbrokenness) to the *ananta bhava* (infiniteness) within and without, these kinds of infinite forms are manifested—they are eternally present. That is why I said there was no end to these forms—they are infinite and limitless like the ocean. Who says all this? Who hears it?” Ma fell silent for some time after this. Then she continued, “It is all the manifestation of One.” She laughed and said, “Why is all this seen or revealed? Do you gain from just hearing about it? Aren’t there many kinds of occurrences?” I replied, “Ma may be you are expressing what *akhanda bhava* is from experience. But that *bhava* cannot be revealed through language. Perhaps, therefore, in order to make us understand at least a little you are telling us about these *bhavas* and these forms.” Ma said, “I don’t know why you people make this body utter all this. Before this such talk has not been heard uttered by anyone else about that which has actually been witnessed—you have made these lips utter some of them. If you want to call it a cinema, then think that it is a cinema, what can be done? Whatever happens is alright.” So saying Ma assumed a serious expression.

Another topic arose next, “Why do diseases reside within Ma’s body for so long? Why does she not chase them away?” Biren had come from Delhi to see Ma and he made these queries. Ma replied, “Look, the *kheyal* that I have is that all

belong to this body. Whatever you people may call them—diseases or sorrows, they are all within this body. Like the arms, legs and other limbs. Therefore there is no question of chasing them away. Do you ever say—‘chase away the arms, drive away the legs, or away with the head’? Just as the body cannot survive without these, it is so in this case as well, nothing else. I say to you householders—whatever diseases and sorrows come to you, treat them like guests. Considering them to be guests, take a little trouble; bearing the suffering is a strength which is but this power. Just as guests mean a little extra work and perhaps a little inconvenience to the householder which he considers his duty to put up with cheerfully, so must you bear with the illness—personified—guest placidly.” She said this and laughed sweetly. All those present were charmed by Ma’s *bhava*. The state in which such utterances occur naturally is beyond our wildest imagination.

In the course of conversation I observed, “Trying to reveal your state in language and words leaves much incomplete. For instance, at times there is mention of your desire whereas you have no desires nor do you have the intention to perform any action.” Ma said, “It cannot be said that there is no desire and no intention (*sankalpa*). What is and what is not—that is enough.” So saying she ended the topic. I understood that whatever is expressed in words will always be incomplete. Such *bhava* cannot be expressed through the medium of language. However, whatever has

been seen, or heard from Ma, whatever has been understood has already been penned earlier. Ma says, "May be I see that this body has stood up and then I say—'I shall go'. Before that there was no desire to leave at all. Probably there was no decision about where I would go either. In the same way, eating with my hands also came to a stop. "Feeling that everything cannot be revealed through language Ma often leaves a subject incomplete and saying, 'Enough', she brings the topic to a close. Ma says, "In whichever way I express it, It will fall short of the truth. All matters cannot be explained through language."

This afternoon again Ma lay down. A boy named Dasu, seventeen or eighteen years old, has come from Chittagong. His mother had handed him over in Ma's care as she had been unable to keep him at home. Dasu had first seen Ma in Chittagong. Now they were considering sending him to Delhi for education. Yogesh *brahmachari* was to take him there. Devotees in Delhi had hired a flat to perform *kirtans* and other spiritual practices there. As per Ma's orders Sadhan had gone to Delhi for some time. Knowing that Ma had sent him, the devotees looked upto him with great regard and affection. Dasu would now be sent to him.

Yesterday Biren Bandopadhyaya came from Delhi. He wanted to take Ma to Delhi for the Holi Purnima festival but Ma's body is still very weak so she will not go. All were told to assemble here and sing *kirtan* in Ma's presence. The Doctor

also expressed great joy about this. Biren Babu will leave tomorrow accompanied by Yogesh *brahmachari* and Dasu. At four p.m. the Rajmata of Solan arrived. She loves listening to *kirtan*. Biren Babu, Yogesh Dada and all of us sang *nama kirtan* for her for a long time. At dusk they all left.

Some people sat near Ma and conversed with her. It is said that when Ma's condition had become very bad her head had turned so cold that Bholanath had to apply warm compresses to warm it. Even now her head becomes cold now and then, and without some warming her body is not normal. Today again Ma's head had become cold, thus requiring some warm compresses. As people continued to converse the hour drew on to ten p.m. ; eventually the lights were turned off so that Ma could sleep.

(To be continued)

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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

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# Ma touches us :

## 13. Evolution of Life

Dr. P. C. Dutta

### ABSTRACT

*Evolution is an accepted fact of which a gross story is expressed in the ontogeny of human embryo, in the rock-strata of different ages, etc. Darwinism is unsatisfactory, it is mechanistic, over-simplified and it ignores the conscious effort for survival. But it significantly supports the basic principle that differentiation is the major component of unity in all Developments and progresses in organisms, society, religions etc. including caste systems of India. Reason has helped development of physical sciences. But reason has certain limitations, for which it has failed to help much in the progress of biology and evolution. Biologies are now dependent on physical science. J. C. Bose wanted to vitalize metallic machines, while modern Biologists are trying to mechanize life. Mind stands at a far distance above the matters for which mind with reason has studied the matter with comparatively better perspective than Biology. Life is too near to mind. Mind fails to view it properly. Therefore, a superior consciousness is necessary for Studying Biology. Thus the concept of evolution is subjective and must be related to the evolution of consciousness to a superior reasoning (or Supra-intellectual) power.*

**Questions on evolution**—Evolution proceeds in every respect in and on the earth, Living Organisms seen on earth are not manufactured by some unknown power. They evolve through changes for adaptation with the environment. Every major

change required several millions of years. Evidences are in the development of embryo where we observe that "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny". Thus if the human embryo is examined at about third week it has unmistakable characters of a fish, its tail is broad. In the throat region are four pairs of clefts corresponding to gill slits. After amphibian and reptilian stages pass and by the end of the second month all these structures have become modified into a mammal. On the seventh month, the human embryo looks like an apex with the soles of the feet turned towards each other (used for grasping the branches). Thus the history is modecked in the embryo development. Palaeobotany and Paleontology discover fossil and other similar preserves deposited in different earth strata of different ages. Thus Nature herself has written the history of evolution of flora and fauna in rocks.

Scientists are unanimous about the fact that evolution occurred. Now, the questions are :

- (1) Does the idea of evolution occur in the mind or in nature of things ?
- (2) What is to be acted upon by this process ?
- (3) What is the force that does this work ?
- (4) What is the object or end to be reached by the process.

### **Mechanism of Evolution**

#### **Theories are unsatisfactory**

Cuvier with Linneus believed that the species are fixed by special divine creation. Influence



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of the idea was so deep that Jean Lamarck's notion that there is a progressive and "imperceptible transformation of one species to another was rejected. Unfortunately Lamarck coupled his valid concept that animals become adapted to modes different from their ancestors, which seemed a naive theory of causation. Without attempting to explain the mechanism whereby the employment of the head in butting could lead to outgrowths of bone and epiderma horns in stags and horns in stags and bulls, he attributed the formation of these projections to an interior sentiment in their fits of anger, which directs the fluid more strongly towards that of their head" (Alexandar, 248).

*Natural Selection* was the mechanism proposed by Charles Robert Darwin (1958, 59). The major significant point is the spontaneous production of *diversities* from which Nature selects the fittest species.

Modern Science has discovered various ways of genetic changes among the progenies. Normally every organism differ from any other of the same species. But the concept of differences, which should not bring about conflict shows how harmoniously the organisms have progressed as a single unit body fighting with diverse forces against diverse environmental resistance. Unity in diversity is the principle of evolution by which Life has conquered the non-living world at micro levels. This adaptability is interesting to study. At micro levels, the answer of the question ; by what mechanism are heritable changes in binots produced and transmitted, is

answered by some as : The primal cause of evolution is a heritable change in the existing and potential biocatalysts, leading to heritable changes in form, function and behaviour (Alexander, 1948).

Darwin considers : (1) Modification during organisms' own life by use and dis-use. (2) Chance variation arising from parents, (3) Sudden unexplained *mutation* (emphasized by DeVries). Weismann over emphasized on the independence of germ-cells from body cells and denied the possibility of 'inheritance of acquired characters'. He stressed on germinal selection instead of natural selection.

By now, science has discovered *different possibilities* of germinal modification e.g. molecular rearrangement of genes, Deletion, Translocation, inversion, of gene lineage multiplication etc. Questions to think are : What is the force that creates and sustains modify on and diversifying processes ? Why all the diversities do not succeed ? What is the goal of evolution ? Why do the species evolve at all from simplicity to complexity and awareness in animals ?

### **Trends of Evolution in Human Society**

Human Societies also show gradual evolution. Like other organisms, Human societies of India, for example, demonstrate marvellous development, in a natural way, not according to whims of cruel forester trying to mould the development in a decorative pattern, or as a *bonshai*. Caste system of India developed in a natural course not by dictation

of any religious preacher. *Sastras*, like *Manu Sanhita*, dealing with the systems are grammars only of the Society. The system has not yet been examined scientifically. People decry it only being influenced by western critics. In ancient India, there were only one caste *Brahman*. Gradually they were divided by Nature into four *Varnas* (not colour, but classes; *Byanjan Varna-Swar Varna* mean consonant-vowel classes of letters), according to capabilities and profession. Gradually these branches are divided into 2000, in present India, allowing Darwin's principle of diversity. Differentiation is a component of development which has not been studied scientifically. Ideas related to the pattern of differentiation are :

(1) Great respect to ancestors and their professions.

(2) Following the ancestors profession, strictly not being greedy of another, even if that becomes more prospective and demanding at any time.

(3) Food and way of life should fit well with the nature of work for livelihood, and castes should mutually help each other in maintaining the caste-based standards and characters of food, education of Technical know-how, independent of external institution of Government organisation.

(4) One should marry a person who can encourage and help in the way of life followed by the ancestors of the family. That is both of a couple should be members of the same caste or profession.

(5) But the families of the two should be genetically distant.

(6) Each family is a follower of one specific religious leader or Sage of the past. Each of the pair should have different Sage-lineage (*gotra*). So, intra-relatives or intra-religious marriage is avoided.

Different races of India developed different caste systems, independently. Inter-racial marriage has been encouraged, resulting in an integral Indian Social Culture. And the caste system has helped in preserving oldest knowledge, skills of chanting, music, arts, cottage industries, valure of warriors, etc. Pandu of Hastinapur (Delhi) married a daughter (Madri) of present Tamilnadu (Madras). Dhritarastra of Hastinapur married an Afgan girl (Gandhari); Arjuna of Mahabharata married a tribal girl (Chitragandha) of Manipur; and a Naga girl *Oolapi* of Nagaland. His elder brother Bhim married a tribal girl Hidimba of Hedambadesh. The king of Kachhar claimed that they were descendants of Ghatotkach. Hedambapur is now Bhimpur of Nagaland (S. Ray in *Desh*, 15-10-93 : II). Tribal Kings of Tripura had matrimonial relations with kshatriyas of Rajasthan, Punjab, Nepal etc. Ballal Sen, king of Banga, brought Kuleen Kshatriyas and Brahmans from Kanyakubja. They married local Bengali girls and settled in Banga. Pandits and Vaishyas also married distant races, Bijoy Singha conquered Lanka with hundreds of traders who mostly married tribal girls of Lankas.

Difference of religions and genetic Lineage should be maintained but not of professional heritage. This was the major principle devolved in a natural way, by which diversities of culture, lan-

guage, religion, have been sustained, nurtured and unified, and cancerous uniformity has been avoided. Diseases pointed out are untouchability, poverty etc. due to their inability to develop their own caste-system like all other races, due to their unsettled life pattern some tribes are regarded as one Caste. They need education in Indian type of hygiene, improved technology related to their hereditary profession, and Indian cultures and religions. They will automatically make a respectable position in the Hindu Society, which has also evolved following Darwinism. "Casteless Society" is a useless political slogan. Ma Anandamayi says: you are sprinkling water on the tree-top instead of pouring of the root.

### **Question on Darwinism**

Evolution produced so many diversities in animals, plants and in societies in order to occupy diverse environments, diversities in structure, function, physiology, so accuracy and specificity of enzymes or other things being supplied to the right steps of functional change, in so much regularity, in so nice rythms, excellent success throughout the organismic tissues, cells etc., the systems cannot come into existance simply by accidents. It is unbelievable. The theory seems to be an over-simplified formula, mechanistic in nature, (to many scientists) for such a complexly organised organism. The role of any conscious effort has not been accepted. Examination of the questions, by culturing or any method is possible for a several

months or years, but not for millions of years, which actually required, for a major change.

### **Is evolution an objective reality ?**

Johnson describes two worlds of science study, plain man's world, and critically minded scientist's world. Plain physicist or chemist considers that there is a real world outside himself composed of matter and energy of which matter can be transformed to energy. He probably considers that the common men's world of colour, taste, odour, etc. is created and bestowed upon by the outside world by the observer's mind and is obviously subjective.

A critically minded Scientist is in a state of bewilderment. Sometimes he regards the world as subjective, creation of mind which selects certain qualities and naturally is limited, but how much of the truth, is not known. Sometimes he considers the mind as Selective not creative. On this view, there must be a background by the selectivity of the special senses. Mind is a "prisoner in a round tower, only able to view the outside through five slits". On such a view we have to decide what is the nature of the background from which all these properties of colour, taste, sound, smell and touch are selected. Obviously it is not material in the form of protons, electron or energy, presumably it is of the nature of mind. The "objective bricks of the physicist's world have not turned out to be straightforward *particles* they were once pictured. They seem elusive in space and time, and leading Physicists, like Heisenberg long ago abandoned objective

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mechanical model atoms, electron, proton etc. It looks as though it, too, is selected from a background by the mind and is to this extent another subjective world."

"If the worlds of art and religion are subjective, mere externalizations of our minds and projections of our wishes, so too, may be worked of scheme. The claims of each to reveal to us an objective world, must infact treated on merits." (Joad in Johnson P. 99).

"Physical science has limited its scope, so as to leave a background, which we are at liberty to, or even invited to, till with a reality of spiritual import" (Eddington). Reasoning in favour of Evolution Process as suggested by Darwin does not answer all questions. It appears as partially and is mechanistic.

Understanding through reasoning has been explained by Ma : "Where the knowledge of absolute is, the ordinary function of understanding (standing under) no longer exists. For to understand means to throw off one load only to stand under a new one. Whereas Knowledge of Supreme Reality is beyond thought and speech (Words 65).

### **Limitation of reason, the highest basis of science**

Mind is a complete instrument in which certainly *reason* occupies highest position among all faculties. In its lower reaches, it is closely linked to the body. In the higher level one of the functions is reasoning. "Methods of reasoning are deductive

and inductive logic, respectively the drawing of the specific applications from a general principle and a discovery of a general principle to embrace specific causes" (Johnson P. 22). Reason can not do anything really new. The observed data, contain all significances latent in them. Reason is an instrument which reveals the symbols and discern relations. The instrument is flexible and can operate to discover the truth if the raw material of observation is fed into it.

"There do, however, seem to be certain basic, or background symbols, which cannot be defined but which are always present. These are space, time and energy. Without them reason can not operate. What they are in themselves, Reason can not tell us. They are the indefinable, conditions or aspects under which Mind appears to view the world of Matter." (Johnson P. 23)

Reason has made remarkable success in physics and chemistry, because matter is in a much lower level than mind. But Life is very near to mind. So the Reason has helped progress only in such areas where physics and chemistry are applicable. "As soon as we ask Reason to do this for living things the characteristic of which is that they are expressions of Mind—we are actually asking Mind to explain itself: A task which may well be beyond its power to do." It is true that we have regarded Reason as the highest function of Mind, a function which we may suppose does not even dawn, until the higher mammalian level is reached". (Johnson P. 23)



Because Reason is the function of higher Mind. Lower Mind is the mind of other mammals. The higher order can substantially explain the lower sub-levels of the own order, but the task constantly being attempted, of understanding the higher in terms of the lower is hopeless. "From it arrive all the mechanistic theories on biology and psychology and all the anthropomorphic concepts of religion" (Johnson p-24). Tyrrell says, "Our usual mind of procedure is to attempt to explain higher levels of significance in terms of lower, is as when we take the living organism and try to explain in terms of physics and chemistry." (Johnson P. 24).

Sir J. C. Bose initiated a vitalistic outlook in physical science. But most of the Scientists apply Physics and Chemistry in Biology, helping expansion of physical sciences into the biological field. But on the phenomena life, the most characteristics of Life, they have thrown no explanatory light.

To facilitate discussions Johnson proposes to call this higher level *buddhi* (wisdom) by which he means intuition, above the reasoning power of mind. *Buddhi* appreciates Truth directly, fragmentary of Truth, of course. It offers no reason. But it makes no mistake ; this wisdom is passed through the mind, there clothed in intelligible form.

Truth cannot filter through the conditioned mind, without suffering major or minor distortion. The greatest spiritual leaders had well-developed *Buddhi*, and a clear, flexible unconditioned mind as the perfectly attuned vehicle of the *buddhi*. This is the importance of *religions exercise* of Mind.

Unless we can attain that stage, True story of Life will not be revealed. This is related to Evolution of human consciousness.

### **A plan of Evolution of Human Consciousness**

The view is commonly expressed, Protoplasm arose in the "primordial oceanic ooze", where the warm oceans were blanketed by heavy mists and an atmosphere rich in carbon dioxide. "Matter itself is pregnant with the possibility of life. Once the self-producing units are formed its speedy spread was limited by the existing physical and chemical conditions :—When once formed a living molecule could serve as a mold or template for the production, not only of incalculable numbers of life molecules, but also of new types arising from modifications of the older ones." (Alexander).

First development of living matters is protoplasm having the responsive property (*chetana*). By further differentiation came *vital force* with a sense of want, and emotional attempts to eat, live, multiply. In plants and lower animals the life force or vitality is almost blind ; gradually it opened like flower with so many emotions and hankerings in human body. Above life the next evolved consciousness is mind which is most evolved in Man, where there are wills and non-wills. Man is waiting for development of a higher consciousness which has been named as SUPERMIND by Shri Aurobindo. As it is beyond the reasoning power, it is supra-intellectual power also. Man will then be evolved as a superior man. Sri Aurobindo considers that

the Divine power was latent in the matter which progressed in evolution which is bi-directoral, the lower consciousnesses will open themselves towards higher or finer powers coming down as grace. So by aspiration from below and grace of the Truth above, the supramental consciousness will develop in the humanity and solve all conflicts of thoughts.

Indian *Maya* Philosophy suggests that the Universe is subjective. It has no objective Reality. It exists only in senses. A desert appears like a lake (mirage) at a certain constant distance from the eye at a particular angle of sunlight. It is desert at other distances. Both the variations vanish with the closing of the eyes. Because they exist in eyes only.

As we accept the universe as subjective, the evolution or development of the Universe, or *sansar* or *sharir* is also subjective. It is like an *Ashwattha* tree (*Ashwattha* means that which exists not even for a day, ephemeral). The tree has its roots grown above (i.e. in the finest infinity) and the shoot with branches and leaves hang downwards (i.e. in the gross sense data). Root is in *Abyaktam*, (which can not be expressed to human mind : It is infinite Bliss). From the roots develop *chitta* or just a *consciousness* which is an infinite power. As there are two (consciousness and *Abyaktam*) a world of *Duality* starts. Now, who will be conscious? The answer is "I"—This I-ness, and consciousness must come very together." "I" is *paraprakriti* as soon as "I" comes, "you, he etc." are to develop soon, as "I" is a relative term. Original "I"

is a seer only a witness only. It is *abyakta* itself. But an apparent "I" develops gradually (in the *Apara prakriti*). This is *Ahankara* means a false superstition that I am the worker of every activity done in the body. What does *Ahamkara* do? At first it understands through BUDDHI? What are to be understood? The MANAN will be evolved to supply material. Reasons are in the highest position of mind. Materials are supplied by creating sensation through *Prana* (emotion). Upto *Buddhi* stage, we may consider to occupy the Evolution of tree trunk. From the mind-emotion complex different branches represent the diverse hungers, wants, greeds, enjoyment of senses which are expressed in songs, arts, books, lectures etc. (which are leaves of the tree). Now what is the condition of 'me'? I have lost my ownself. Eternal Bliss has been lost in the Tree of *Superstition*, and its branches of different types passionate hankerings, and the superstition that the satisfaction of the false wants of sense-pleasure as the way of being happy. But the course of evolution will be completed, if I can free myself, if I can follow the course of Returning to the root "*Abyaktam*". Evolution progressed in an acropetal direction, downwards, centrifugally, or being the extra-vertically, the next phase is of growing pasipetally, upwards, centripetally or introvertically towards the Real "I", the Self. But how can I free myself from the bushy branches of the sense-pleasure tree? "*Asanga Shastrena Dridena Chhitwa*—by cutting the branches by the weapon of

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“Detachment.” You are to stretch your hands towards the root by being detached from all wants. Solutions will come only by this opposite movement by realising everything in Self. Ma Anandamayee asks a scholar, “Have you reached that state where everything is perceived as Self? There lies the solution of whole problem” (Words of Ma Anandamayi, P. 27).

How can I perceive that? The first step must be a strong will to return. “At present what you enjoy, does not impress you, being short lived. But to the extent the spirit of detachment is roused. The relish of such pleasures will die down, for are they not fleeting? ... So long as the world seems enjoyable to you, such a query (what world is?) does not present itself. Since you are progressing towards that, which transcends time, all that belong to time will begin to appear to you in its true light. (Words of Ma Anandamayi, P. 26).

It is the time of returning voyage. Nobody deliberately puts his hands into fire, or treads on a snake; in exactly the same manner you first glance at the object of sense and turn away. Then you will get into a current that takes you in the opposite direction, and later, when you become detached even from detachment, there is no problem of detachment or non-detachment—what is, is that. Some say, by sustained effort one may attain to Enlightenment. But is it true that effort can bring about Enlightenment? Is illumination dependent on action? When the veil has been destroyed, THAT which Is stands revealed (Words of Ma Anandamayi, P. 27).

Mind is a powerful organ which is wild, but if tamed is a powerful helper to realize supra-intellect. "In your innermost heart you know that you are free. Likewise, when by someones good fortune He becomes revealed as action, action will cease of itself, stagnation leads to death. But do not forget this mind which you want to dissolve, is the *Mahayogi*, yes, indeed the sublime yogi." (Words P. 25).

"There are states (of mind) where one soars up and glides down again. But to become established in perfect poise, where ascent or descent are out of question. Surely, this is what is wanted. Not until both *Karma* and *Bhava* are brought to completion, can one go beyond them. (Words of Anandamayi, P. 83-87).

Buddhi leads to *Jnana* and *Vignana* of which *Jnana* means discovery of unity, *Vignana* means seeing diversity in Unity. It is just like you saw a basketful of flowers having no rythm in arrangement. But you discovered that a string is there, (this is *Jnana*), then you pull the string and you find that the flowers were symmetrically beautifully arranged in a string (*Vijnana*). Virtually, only One is there diversity is also play of One. There are many more stations which are not in the Time Tables (Sastra). (Ma Anandamayi).

In the evolution of consciousness, there is another plane in *Vignana*, when you find that the human concept of the numbers, 1, 2, 3, etc. are no more applicable, as Ma Anandamayi points out, One is relative to two, three etc. When many is

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abolished, One also vanishes. Then what is there ? Is it *Shunya* (emptiness). You may call it emptiness, but not in the ordinary sense. Actually it is *Mahashunya* (great emptiness). Empty of Emptiness also. Or you may call it as *Mahabhaba*, which is filled up with emptiness and fullness together. Human language can express only by contrasting words, it is full, filled up with emptiness even : It is empty, neither fullness nor emptiness exists there. It is that what it is. It is *Abyaktam* (unexpressed) to human mind.

Among all these states of evolution of consciousness the *Buddhi* must at least be reached before one wants to know true biological significance of Evolution.

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Just as without the help of teachers and experts one cannot become proficient in the worldly knowledge that is taught in universities, so the sublime knowledge of the Absolute does not come without the guidance of a competent Guru. To find Him is the problem, whether it be for spiritual progress, liberation, or any other matter, however insignificant it may seem.

Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

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# Sai Ram Sahay

M. Rama Rao

## Chanting God's name

### Part—I

Swami Vivekananda says "By Karma, Jnana, Bhakti and Yoga, by one or more of all of these the vision of the Paramatman is obtained.

In my opinion Bhakti is the easiest. Bhakti (Devotion) consists of nine types as stated below by Swami Chinmayananda.

"This process of self-liquidation at the feet of the Lord has been classified under nine types, according to the means adopted: (1) listening to the glory of the Lord (sravanam); (2) singing the glory of the Beloved of your heart (keertanam); (3) constantly thinking about his nature and beauty (smaranam); (4) adoring the feet of the Lord in a spirit of self-obliteration (paadasevanam); (5) with the help of selected mantras and sacred Vedic hymns, employing the necessary things prescribed for worshipping the Lord (archanam); (6) to pay obeisance to the Lord (vandanam); (7) serving the Lord (daasyam); (8) to invoke the Lord affectionately and to discuss with Him as a friend (sakhyam) and lastly (9) to offer oneself, in total self-surrender to the Lord, as a humble gift at His altar (aatmanivedanam)".



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Chanting of God's holy name and singing his glories fall under kirtana.

**Chanting God's name will bring relief :**

Even though the impact of technological advancement has made people highly materialistic in their outlook and forced them to give up adherence to traditional spiritual values, there are still many who firmly believe in divine intervention in their activities, who respect religious guidelines and who show their anxiety to acquire knowledge, carry out the defined duties and thereby secure release from bondage. They realise that the Almighty will not let them down if only they take refuge in Him.

In olden days, all facilities existed for every aspiring person to resort to spiritual pursuits. They had leisure to perform worship to meditate and observe the other injunctions. Devotion is no doubt easy but easier is the association, with saintly men whose only task is to ever sing the divine glory. But such godly men are fast disappearing and even if alive, will not reveal their mystic powers.

The easiest path and very simple too, which can be chosen by anyone, at any time and in any place, is to constantly utter the divine names of God, contained in holy books and propagated by sages and saints. These names are not mere sound syllables but each one of them carries a great import, when elucidated. This is the best solution for the tormented souls as their minds will be cleansed of all impurities so that they can concentrate on God.

(The Hindu ; August 6, 1993)

### PRAYER

O ! Shirdi Nath I like to do your puja (worship)  
 Alas ! I don't know fully sixteen ways of Puja  
 I approach you to offer Archana (1)  
 But I am not well versed in your Satanama or  
 Shahasranam (2)  
 I wish to please you  
 But your attributes and amusements are innumer-  
 able with Charm and form  
 When thousand hundred Naga or Sesha (Divine  
 serpent)  
 Could not describe your Mahima (Glory)  
 I the weak and meek how can I do ?  
 You are Brahma Vishnu Mahesha Fruity gods)  
 from the pangs of love I know only chanting  
 your pavan-nama (3)  
 I pray to forgive me but not forget me  
 Lastly I offer to your Lotus feet Vandana (Saluta-  
 tion) with devotion  
 And seek your grace to cross this mundane ocean  
 I take refuge in you for God-realization.

Sai Kinkar

M. Rama Rao

*p. ps* : (1) Archana means worship god with His  
 hundred or thousand names.

(2) Sata-Nama—hundred names, Sahasra-  
 nama means thousand names.

(3) Pavan nama—Holy name.

By chanting god's name devotee, Dhruva,  
 Droupati, Prahalada, Meera, Chayalanya Prabhu  
 and Tukaram soon got God realization.

Shirdi Sai Baba Promises as noted below :

“If a man utters my name with love, I shall fulfil all his wishes, increase his devotion. And if he sings earnestly my life and my deeds, him I shall beset in front and back and on all sides. Those devotees, who are attached to me heart and soul, will naturally feel happiness when they hear these stories. Believe me that if anybody sings my Leelas, I will give him intense joy and ever-lasting contentment. It is my special characteristic to free any person, who surrenders completely to me and who does worship me faithfully and who remembers me and meditates on me constantly. How can they be conscious of worldly objects and sensations, who utter my name, who worship me, who think of my stories and my life and who thus always remember me? I shall draw out my devotees from the jaws of Death. If my stories are listened to, all the diseases will be got rid of. So hear my stories with respect and think and meditate on them, assimilate them. This is the way of happiness and contentment. The pride and egoism of my devotees will vanish, the mind of the hearers will be set at rest and if it has whole-hearted and complete faith, it will be one with Supreme Consciousness. The simple remembrance of my name as “Sai, Sai will do away with sins of speech and hearing”.

(Sai Satchanta)

Chap. III

In the book ‘Chant and be happy’ (the power of Mantra Meditation), it has been stated on the basis

of the teachings of His Divine grace A. C. Bhakti-vedanta Swami Prabhupada.

### WORDS FROM GEORGE HARRISON

Everybody is looking for K.R.S.N.A.

Some don't realize that they are, but they are K.R.S.N.A. is GOD, the Source of all that exists, the Cause of all that is, was, or ever will be. As God is unlimited, HE has many names.

Allah-Buddha-Jehova-Rama

All are K.R.S.N.A. all are ONE.

By serving GOD through each thought, word, and DEED, and by chanting of HIS Holy Names, the devotee quickly develops God-consciousness.

By chanting.

Hare Krsna Hare Krsna  
Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare  
Hare Rama, Hare Rama  
Rama Rama, Hare Hare

One inevitably arrives at KRSNA Consciousness.

(The proof of the pudding is in the eating ;)

### ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE (KRISHNA)

### HARI BOL

GEORGE

In the magazine East and West Sri I.P. Vaswani says :

To Sadhu Vaswani, therefore, all sectarian strifes and quarrels in the name of religion were due to lack of understanding. "I belong to no sect he said. "I adore but One God. And my faith is,— to worship the One Mystery and to do good to all!"

The essential quality of his life was compassion and tenderness for all those whom the cruel world trampled upon day after day. He judged no one, —not even the thief and the criminal, nor those whom society regarded as sinners and “fallen” ones.

Dear to him were the words of the Persian Sufi :—

Know the One !

Speak of the One !

Aspire to the One !

Seek the One !

And ever chant the One !

In the life of service and sacrifice, he urged, let India find her new alphabet of Freedom.

A labourer came to him one night, and said to him :—“Come and spend a few hours in my hut : I shall be blessed !”

Sadhu Vaswani went to the cottage, slept there for about two hours on a mat of straw, then sang a little song :—

Sing the Song of Name,—the Name Divine !

Suffering comes when we forget Him—‘the Beloved !

Forgetfulness is the seed of suffering !

So sing, Brother ! sing the Song of Name !”

In the book ‘A necklace of sayings by Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharishi it is stated on P. 54. as :

“Name of God and God are not different. The Bible also has it ‘In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God’.

In the name Rama, ‘Ra’ stands for the Self, and ma for the ego. As one goes on repeating Rama,

Rama, the 'ma' disappears getting merged in the Ra and then Ra alone remains. In that state there is no conscious effort as dhyana, but dhyana is always there, for dhyana is our real nature.

In Uddhav Gita Chap. 14 Lord Krishna says :

V. 22. Moving the limbs so as to serve Me, recapitulating My attributes through speech, surrendering the mind unto Me, and banishing all desires from it.

V. 23. Giving up riches, enjoyment and Homa,<sup>1</sup> repeating my name, undertaking vows and austerities all for my sake<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Homa—offering of oblations in the sacred fire.

<sup>2</sup> For My sake—Every act may be conducive to devotion if only it is performed for the sake of the Lord.

By all the above statements we know the efficacy of chanting Gods name.

All over the world Sai devotees are conducting Sai Nam Saptas, Japas, continuously for 2 hours, 24 hours, 3 days and even for 48 days. The Chanting should not be mechanical as parrot talks. It should be with faith and love of god and His creatures.

Sri Sadguru Sainath Seva Samity, Bangalore conducted twice 24 hours continuous Nam Japa in the year 1993.

Hail, hail to you Sainatha forgive all sins ! I impose you ! Those waves of doubts and desolutions ! Roll back immediately'.

(Sainath Stavanmanjari)

# Mother Earth

Nihar Ranjan Chakraborty

(1)

I am not tempted for Heaven  
Quite well on earth.  
I shall stay near to her  
Where I took birth.

(2)

My body is built of earth  
Limbs of dirt-best,  
I will lie down on her cool  
Calm and beautiful breast.

(3)

Tell me not words of greed  
Show me not any fear  
Push me not to unknown, please,  
I am quite well here.

(4)

Whom to fear here, or for whose love  
I shall seek Heaven's gate ?  
I am ready to accept sorrow and gay  
Here, all that brings my fate.

(5)

Heaven ! It is a motionless State  
Unperceivable, as feels a statue ;  
Lids of their eyes are always open  
How boring—think, nothing to do.

(6)

There is no difference to Almighty  
Between man and insect ;  
Happenings of the lovely present  
Are reactions of the past act.

(7)

Act of the honest is always best  
Than that of imagination,  
To build Self, and to the ghost  
As that of dreadful emotion.

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I, Debabrata Pal, General Secretary, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Debabrata Pal  
General Secretary

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# THE ATI RUDRA MAHAYAJNA AT KANKHAL

R. K. Banerjee

If we take a close look at Ma's activities through the Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha to uphold and perpetuate in this problem-stricken twentieth century the highest ideals of our Sanatana Dharma, we find that a prominent place has been allotted to orthodox yajnas as performed by Rishis in the days of yore. The meticulous care with which sacrificial fires have been kindled and kept burning in some of our Ashrams is a significant pointer in this direction.

Yajnas are an integral part of most of our religious functions : sacred thread ceremony, marriage, installation of Deities, Sakti puja, Ma's birthday puja, Chandipath, Bhagavata Saptah, etc. By Ma's grace I was able to take part in the seven days yajna performed in 1959 before the Siva Linga installation in the Kishenpur Ashram, Dehradun.

In the Gita (IV, 23-24) Lord Krishna tells Arjuna that those who perform yajnas wholeheartedly, thinking of the Brahman, eventually merge with the Brahman. Yet again the Lord declares (X, 25) that among all the various sacrifices the yajna of japa is supreme.

So why was so much stress laid on carrying out this most difficult Ati Rudra Mahayajna with its eleven *kundas* (Fire pits)? About a year ago a somewhat similar yajna on

a smaller scale had been accomplished, not strictly under Sangha auspices. This time this complex task was entrusted to a small group of Ma's fully trained, dedicated, senior brahmacharinis under the capable leadership of Dr. Padma Misra as President of the Ati Rudra Mahayajna Committee, a very senior retired Professor of the B.H.U. who is the Vice-President of our Kanyapith. Brahmacharini Purnananda bore the brunt of the work as secretary of the Committee and official *Jajman*, representing the Ashram in the yajna. What an excellent job this group of girls, inspired by Ma, made of it!

The site of the yajna, being in the vicinity of Daksheshwar Mandir adjoining our Ashram, was thus quite close to where the famous Daksha yajna is said to have been performed. The spacious mandap occupied a bounded space to the south of Ma's bungalow. Two small pandals — one for ladies, the other for men- with a wide, covered passage for Ma in Her chair, were just behind Ma's abode. To the south of the mandap, leaving enough space for *parikrama* (circumambulation), another simple pandal facilitated the gathering of priests when they were not engaged in *havana* and was used by guests at other times. A pucca store to the west of this pandal contained the various essential articles needed for the yajna, such as sacrificial ghi, ingredients for puja, wood, etc.

From the four corners of the mandap the roof rose by layers to a high, pointed summit, decorated with saffron flags and buntings. Each successive roof layer allowed exhaustion of hot rising fumes for ventilation. Wind and rain were sought to be kept out by roofing composed of layers of straw lined with plastic sheets.

There were five kundas in a row from north to south along the center of the mandap and two parallel rows of three kundas each on either side. Ma's couch was placed at a convenient point in the north-west corner.

On May 5th the mandap was open for devotees for the last time, to see for themselves the beautiful pictures hanging on the pillars, the elaborate decorations of the five vedis etc. Thereafter the mandap was strictly out of bounds for all except those officiating in the yajna and invited mahatmas.

An acharya of unique calibre, Dr. Vamadeva Misra, Ph. D., Vedacharya, from Varanasi, who mastered his subject thoroughly, led the 135 pandits, all well versed in the four Vedas — Rik, Jajur, Sama, Atharva. Each had his respective part to play at the right juncture.

On the 5th evening they went in procession to Ma's cottage to be introduced to Her officially. A number of them had obtained their doctorates under the guidance of Dr. Padma Misra, Later that evening Dr. Vamadeva Misra made a personal appeal to the priests during a thorough briefing in the hall, exhorting them to remember their respective roles and play their parts at the right time in the right manner, following his lead through the loudspeaker.

On May 6th was *Akshaya Tritiya*. At early dawn Km. Chhabi led the Usha Kirtan, circumambulating round the mandap. Later Ma and some mahatmas entered ceremonially. At 11 a.m. all the priests assembled in the hall and were, in the presence of Ma, officially vested with new robes and presented with religious books, fruit, etc. They had been put up at the Nirvani Akhara and were served their meals there under the supervision of two senior

brahmacharinis.

On the 6th afternoon preliminary pujas were performed in the mandap. On the 7th morning an elaborate main puja was carried out by all the pandits, and the five specially decorated vedis were worshipped with full rituals. The 7th evening witnessed an elaborate ritual called "*Jal Yatra*". The pandits went to the Ganga at Daksheshwar Ghat and bring them back to the mandap in procession, preceded both ways by the Ashram kirtan party. This was an exhilarating experience, particularly the solemn period when the vessels were being filled amidst the chanting of Vedic mantras.

On May 8th, Sri Adi Shankaracharya's birthday, which is considered most auspicious the ceremonial lighting of the sacrificial fires (*agni sthapana*) took place in Ma's presence. A special type of hard wood is used for the purpose. Prolonged friction of two pieces of this wood produces sparks which are utilized to put fire to cotton wool or the like. With great care the fire is built up and then carried round to the kundas amidst the chanting of mantras. At the crucial moment Ma stood up, as if to invoke all the elements, and amidst the blowing of conches and singing of kirtan by Km. Chhabi and Ashram brahmacharinis, the first spark was struck in a flash, visible to some even outside the mandap. Special pujas and havans occupied the rest of the day.

A brief account from a concise but clear booklet in Hindi by Dr. Vamadeva Misra, explaining the gist of the Ati Rudra Yajna Mahotsava, would perhaps be appropriate here.

The great yajna was performed at Kankhal for eleven

days between 6th & 16th May for the welfare of the whole world. The time fell within Ma's birthday celebrations (May 2nd to 23rd), which had a very special significance for the devotees.

The entire universe represents a continuous yajna carried out by Nature under the Creator's jurisdiction. Sun, moon, stars rise and set each day, the tides ebb and flow at regular intervals in the ocean, clouds are formed through evaporation of earthly moisture by the sun's rays and are duly condensed into beneficial rain for the growth of crops to feed mankind and all creatures.

Yet another kind of yajna is celebrated according to vedic rites, worshipping the creator by oblations of *havi* obtained from pure cow's milk, the most perfect edible product from natural sources. This kind of yajna is very necessary from time to time to remind man of his obligation to dedicate to his Creator a small part at least of what he has received from Him.

To behold God in *Agni Deva* (God of Fire) is to behold Him as Rudra, and to behold Him as *soma* (the moon) is to consider Him as Siva, the Supreme Benefactor of mankind. Both are actually attributes of the Paramatma — the Supreme Being.

The Rishis used to divide Creation into its constituents, namely earth, water, energy (*teja*), air, sky, sun, moon, lightning (totalling eight sub-elements) and the three aspects of fire — its burning, destroying and cleansing properties — making a total of eleven. In fact Rudra Deva possesses infinite attributes, but eleven is a symbolic number to facilitate ritual worship. This worship can take the form of japa, or recitation of appropriate mantras or

ritual worship or *havana* (offering of *ahuti*). The simplest form of yajna involves 202 *ahutis* (oblations), a more detailed version 1818 oblations, the next 19998 *ahutis*, the penultimate version or Maharudra yajna eleven times  $19998 \times 11 = 21,9978$ , and the ultimate or Ati Maharudra Yajna eleven times  $21,9978 \times 11 = 24,19,758$  *ahutis*.

Since those inside the mandap were vested with the full responsibility of execution, what was our duty? Ma said: "Just *darsana*, try to imbibe the sense of everything you see and hear." Ma also stressed that *parikrama* (circumambulation) of the mandap with bare feet was an important duty for all without exception. 108 *parikramas* spread over the entire period of the yajna was the ideal number to be attempted, but at least one was the minimum for everyone. We were told to walk round the yajna in silence, with covered heads, folded hands, without touching anyone and to do japa as far as possible while walking round.

All great yajnas are subject to obstacles — both natural and otherwise. Even in ancient times, whenever special yajnas were performed by Rishis, both gods and demons would be afraid of the consequences. It is related in the Puranas that even Indra (the god of thunder and lightning) and rakshasas tried to destroy great yajnas.

Ma must have foreseen the obstacles looming large on our horizon, because on the 7th morning, while being carried in Her chair to the mandaps, She suddenly halted in the passage and quietly and authoritatively exhorted all to keep extremely calm and collected during the coming days, even in the face of severe provocation, and to observe self restraint both in spirit and in behaviour.

In spite of Ma's repeated and clear-cut instructions we must have failed, for Ma's health deteriorated on the 9th night and Ma did not come to the hall for the evening *arati* for two days as She needed complete rest.

The programme of Ma's birthday celebrations from May 2nd to 23rd included daily recitation of 108 Hanuman Chalisas besides perpetual japa throughout the whole period. Because of Ma's indisposition, Hanuman Chalisas were increased to 1008 per day, i.e. over hundred people reciting in unison eleven times every day. Uninterrupted singing of Ma's name was also started with as many participants as possible. Mataji's arati was performed daily at 4-30 a.m. on Her veranda and on most evenings inside the enclosure in the hall, in full view of the assembly, at about 8 p.m. Thereafter, whenever the time could be spared, the Acharya or one of the pandits would speak on some aspect of the yajna. Ma graced the afternoon satsang at about 5 p.m. whenever Sri Vishmashram or Sri Narayan Goswami spoke. In connection with the Mahayajna, Kumari Puja of 108 Kumaris was celebrated one morning in the hall, when Ma moved about them in an excellent mood.

On the 10th evening rain came down in torrents, preceded by a gale. Soon there were puddles in the mandap. Fortunately the eleven *kundas* were effectively protected by corrugated iron sheets at roof level. Even so there was fear that the blasts of wind and the torrents of water might cause catastrophe. Over and above, electricity failed due to the storm. However, Ma's succour was implored and sure enough wind and water abated. Repairs were carried out in the night and all was peaceful and normal next morning.

Throughout the yajna we were regaled with the purest vedic chanting.

On the 13th morning His Holiness Sri Shankaracharya Abhinava Tirtha, Pithadhisha of Dwarka Nath, arrived from Delhi. Full honours were shown to him at the station by our Ashram as well as by leading samnyasis of the Niranjani and Nirvani Akharas. The Ashram kirtan party was present in full force in an open truck with a loudspeaker. The procession was headed by the caparisoned elephant followed by samnyasi outriders on horseback with drawn swords in front of the open, decorated land-rover of the Shankaracharyaji. The President of our Sangha, Sri B. K. Shah and Dr. Triguna Sen led the volunteers on foot, followed by cars.

Mataji was waiting in the hall to welcome the honoured guest before the statue of Adi Shankaracharya, where arati was performed. The Shankaracharyaji was allocated a cottage in Ma's compound.

A grand assembly of twenty-four Mahamandaleswaras officially welcomed the Pithadish of Dwarka at 11 a.m. in the hall and were later entertained to a feast. A wonderful spectacle, reminding of the installation of Adi Shankaracharya's vigraha a few years ago. Among those present were : Sri Rama Swarupa Maharaj, President of Vedanta Sammelan, Sri Saccidananda Maharaj, head of Bhola Giri Ashram, Sri Shyam Sunder Maharaj, Sri Brahmananda Maharaj of Surat Giri Ashram, Sri Prakashananda Maharaj of Jagat Guru Ashram, Sri Vareshananda Maharaj of the R. K. Mission, Sri Brajo Kishore Puri Maharaj of Geeta Bhavan, Sri Girdhar Narayan Puri of Daksheshwar Mandir, Sri Brahma Hari Maharaj of



Sri Chetan Deva Avadhuta Ashram.

The mahatmas were presented with gifts including sacred books, cloth and a beautiful, large medallion with the effigy of Siva on one side and the words : "*Namami Sivam Siva Kalpatarum, Kankhal 1981, Ati Rudra Mahayajna*" on the other side in Devnagari script as a souvenir.

Sri Shankaracharyaji opened the proceedings by enlarging on the uniqueness of the Ati Rudra Mahayajna. Then Sri Brahmanandaji emphasized the reasons why the Daksha yajna had failed : Daksha's object had been to insult Siva, and Sati had tried to atone for her father's sin by sacrificing her life. Whereas here 'Sakti Herself' was personally directing the yajna to worship Siva so as to bring peace to all mankind. How then could this yajna fail to succeed.

Sri Brahma Hari Maharaj, a most eloquent speaker, on a subsequent occasion dealt with the question whether in these days of high inflation the profuse use of pure ghi for a yajna was justified. Sri Brahma Hariji explained that since it was the duty of the householder to offer one tenth of his income to God, it was surely fitting to spend on large scale yajnas which were of immense benefit to the whole country and to the world at large.

Sri Vidyananda Maharaj of Kailash Ashram, our host during the Samyam Vrata in 1980, visited Ma and the yajna on the 11th. Swami Akhandananda Saraswati, in spite of indifferent health was present for the lighting of the fire on the 8th and the Purnahuti on the 16th.

Swami Chidanandaji, head of the Divine Life Society, came several times. His simple dignity, humility and

ascetic bearing always create a profound impression as spontaneous manifestation of the highest bhakti and shraddha.

Every evening at 6 p.m. Sri Shankaracharyaji gave impressive talks on the yajna, on Adi Shankaracharya, and on the 16th he spoke on Ma. On the 16th at about midday, Sri Shankaracharyaji, followed by Ma in open vehicles, led the procession to Brahmakunda for the ritual bathing (*Yajna antha snana*) of the priests after completion of the yajna.

While Shankaracharyaji was in residence in our Ashram we were encouraged by Mataji to visit him and offer puja to his famous *chandramouleshwar sphatica* (crystal) *Siva linga*, said to be inherited directly from the Adi Shankaracharya.

No sooner had the yajna been completed with the sprinkling of shanti jal from the Brahmakunda on all present and putting holy ashes on their foreheads, than Ma's birthday celebrations were commenced.

The memory of the Ati Rudra Mahayajna will remain alive with all who had the wonderful opportunity to witness this unique function the like of which has rarely been celebrated since pre-Mahabharata days.

At Ma's request Chhabi Banerjee sang Meerabai's famous song "Yogi, *mat jao* (don't leave)" before Shankaracharyaji's departure on the 16th evening.

Three scenes from Ma's birthday celebrations stand out vividly in my mind :

(1) Ma sitting graciously in front of the brilliant array of Mahamandaleswaras occupying the raised stage of the Rasa lila on the 20th morning.

(2) Ma sitting with folded hands in divine splendour on the banks of Ganga at Brahmakunda on the 21st evening with the backdrops of the Himalayas behind Her, and the illustrious City Fathers of the Ganga Sabha worshipping Ma and the Ganga simultaneously before *arati*.

(3) Ma's electrifying burst of "Krishna Nama" during the last satsang on the 22nd when Name and the Named became one in the truest sense.

May Rudra Deva be pleased with the celebration of the Ati Rudra Yajna at Kankhal and may Siva's blessings pour forth in abundance for the welfare of the whole universe through Ma's kheyala in the days to come!

"Jai Rudra Deva, Jai Ma."

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*Satsang means keeping company with the Lord who is Truth Itself. So long as you dwell in the company of the Wise and Holy, reflecting on Truth, listening to spiritual discourses — so long as you remain in this atmosphere you are progressing on your pilgrimage toward Self revelation.*

**Sri Sri Anandamayi Ma**

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# SRI SRI MA

Chaitanyaben Divatia

In January 1945 I had my first *darsana* of Sri Sri Ma at late Kantibhai Munshaw's place and at Samartheshwar Mahadeva Mandir in Ahmedabad. I saw my own mother in Her. It was not mere imagination but actual reality for a few moments, hardly one or two minutes. But these precious moments had a profound effect on my mind and heart. From that day onward, whenever Mataji visited Ahmedabad, which happened at intervals of two or three years, I without fail would go for Her *darsana*. Each time I felt greatly attracted and experienced a deep love and joy which I can't describe in words.

Several times I had the chance of talking to Mataji in private. Her superhuman qualities, Her powerful eyes radiating boundless love, completely captured my mind. In those days circumstances did not permit me to visit Sri Sri Ma's Ashrams. But although I was engaged in various types of mental and physical work, Mataji possessed my inner self. I remember distinctly how in a private interview, She gave me the following advice: "As soon as you get up in the morning, pray to Ma (*Devi Bhagavati*): 'Let me do all my work today not of my own volition but as an instrument in your hands.' And when you go to sleep at night pray to Her that you may sleep in Her Lap."

These words Sri Sri Ma spoke to me with so much love and motherly affection that I made it a rule to regularly

carry out Her instructions to the letter. This was only the beginning.

A few years later, when reading some books on Majaji's life and "Ananda Varta", I learnt that during *Maha Sivaratri* Mataji's presence had a wonderful effect. I at once wrote to Her for permission to attend this festival and Mataji replied that I should come. But unfortunately or fortunately I was unable to leave and so, greatly disappointed, I wrote again and asked Mataji how to perform *Siva puja* on *Mahasivaratri* at home as I had already been observing Sivaratri at my home for several years.

Mataji sent Her reply in one or two sentences : "There is no need to perform puja. Just practise *japa* of Siva's name the whole day without a break". She asked me to keep it secret and not to speak about it to anyone.

I carried out Her instructions with deep faith. The result cannot be imagined without one's personal experience ! Who is Ma ? What is Her Grace ? Her compassion ? How can I explain it ? Ma Herself told me not to.

My father was an ardent devotee of Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He used to read from the Gospel of the Master every day. I too would sit by his side and read the *Kathamrita*. While doing so I often used to wonder whether I would ever in my life find a God-like (*Brahmanista*) Guru. I also went with my father for Mataji's *darsana* and it pleased him greatly to see my faith and my devotion to Sri Sri Ma.

God heard my heart's prayer. I found my Guru at my very first *darsana* of Sri Sri Ma — the Goddess in person. After that I began visiting Her ashrams regularly. Even though Mataji is all-knowing and all-pervading, we cannot know or understand Her with our human limitations. For Her those

who go to Her ashrams and those who don't are alike. Sri Sri Ma has come to us in human form as Mother. She imbues us with a rare strength by Her Grace and Her compassionate glance.

We should pray to Her so that we may become worthy to deserve Her Grace and Blessing. Sri Sri Ma is *Narayani* (the Goddess) incarnate. If one is able to receive and absorb even a particle of the deep peace and the radiant light that Mataji emanates, one becomes transformed. Slowly but steadily Her grace works upon us and gradually changes our hearts, our minds, our very nature. The greater our faith the more are we able to receive. As Ma says : "According to your playing you hear the sound".

Ma ! Bless me with the grace of your glance and the power of your touch. Receive me unto yourself totally and in all ways. Be in me so that only your thought remains ! May I think of you day and night and never forget you for a single moment to the very last-this is all that I pray for !

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*"You must submit and allow God to do what He pleases with you. Reconcile yourself to the situation in which He Places you. Do not try to change it. Do not get disturbed under any circumstances."*

— Swami Ramdas

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# ASHRAM NEWS

## KANKHAL

On 14th of January, 1994, on the occasion of Paush Sankranti, Special Puja and Kirtan were performed.

Like earlier years, this year too, Saraswati Puja and Shiva Ratri Vrata Festival were performed with deep devotion and gaiety. On 14th April, 1994 - Thursday, on the occasion of Maha Chaitra Sankranti, Sannyas Utsav of 1008 Swami Muktananda Giriji was observed at Giriji's Samadhi Mandir. At noon Sadhu Bhandara was also performed.

## CALCUTTA

Agarpara Ashram - Saraswati Puja, Shiva Ratri Vrata and Dol Yatra Festival were observed with deep devotion and gaiety.

On 14th April, 1994, on Chaitra Sankranti, the Sannyas Utsav of 1008 Swami Muktananda Giriji was performed at Giriji's Mandir. During this occasion Special Puja was performed and prasadam was distributed among the devotees assembled, in the Ashram.

Head Office of Shree Shree Anandamayee Charitable Society at Matri-Mandir, 57/1, Ballygunge Circular Road, Calcutta - 700019. Like earlier years, this year too, from 19th March, 1994 to 20th March, 1994, the Annual Nam-Kirtan and pujas of the Society were held at this office at Matri-Mandir with deep devotion and great grandeur.

On 19th March, 1994 - Saturday, in the evening the

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function was inaugurated through religious rites. On the next day i.e. on 20th March, 1994 - Sunday, from the very dawn Nam-Sankirtan was started which continued till dusk. On this occasion Special Pujas of Shree Shree Ma and Shree Shree Narayan was performed. Hundreds of the devotees participated in the function. At noon after puja, bhog and arati, prasadam was distributed among the devotees who attended the function.

On 14th April, 1994 - Thursday, the Sannyas Utsav of 1008 Swami Muktananda Giri Maharaj was observed with due solemnity and devotion. A large number of devotees attended the function and took prasadam at noon after the performance of Special Puja, bhog and arati.

### PROGRAMME OF CEREMONIES APRIL TO JULY, 1994

1. 14th April, 1994, 31st Chaitra, Thursday, *Maha Bisudha Sankranti - Sannyas Utsav of Shree Shree 1008 Swami Muktananda Giri Maharaj*
2. 15th April, 1994, 1st Baisakh, Friday, *Bengali New Year*
3. 20th April, 1994, 6th Baisakh, Wednesday, *Ram Navami*
4. 13th May, 1994, 29th Baisakh, Friday, *Akshay Tritiya*
5. 18th May, 1994, 3rd Jaistha, Wednesday, *Death Anniversary of Baba Bholanath*
6. 25th May, 1994, 10th Jaistha, Wednesday, *Buddha Purnima*
7. 27th May, 1994, 12th Jaistha, Friday, *99th Birth Anniversary of Shree Shree MA*
8. 18th June, 1994, 3rd Asar, Saturday, *Ganga Dasahara*
9. 10th July, 1994, 25th Asar, Sunday, *Ratha Yatra*
10. 22nd July, 1994, 5th Shraban, Friday, *Guru Purnima*