

What is perceived in this world is in the nature of a dream, similar to what one sees in dreams. The only difference is that the former takes place in the waking state and the latter during sleep. Albeit, I am always with you, mother.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

What was really required was to show him away to achieve the Truth. For this he preached 'Nama'—the Taraka Brahma Nama—Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Hare, Hare; Hare Ram, Hare Ram, Ram Ram, Hare Hare! Repeat Nama constantly, sitting or standing, walking or lying down, but go on repeating it constantly. Then Nama will itself make impact on the Kundalini.

—Shree Shree Sitaramdas Onkarnath

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# ANANDA VĀRTĀ

*A quarterly presenting the divine life and teaching of  
SRI ANANDAMAYI MA and various aspects of  
Universal Dhrama*

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ANANDA VARTĀ welcomes contributions on the life and teachings of Ma and reflections and personal experiences of Ma's devotees and admirers. Articles on religious and philosophical subjects as well as on lives of saints and sages of all countries and all times are also invited. Articles should as far as practicable be typed with double spacing and on one side of the page.

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# ANANDA VARTA

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

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No. 1

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On the auspice of the Birth Centenary of Shree Shree MA Anandamayee the following year long programme has been adopted by Shree Shree MA Anandamayee Abirbhab Satabarsa Utsav Committee :

- A grand holy procession of Shree Shree Hari Nam will start from Matri-Mandir to Shree Shree MA Anandamayee Ashram, Agarpara via Baikunthadham.

Date : May 18, 1995

Time : From Matri Mandir : 5.30 A.M.

From Baikunthadham : 6.00 A.M.

- a) Special Tithi Puja and Kumari Puja
  - b) Adhibas on May 16, 1995 : Shree Shree Hari Nam Yagna.
  - c) 'Akhand Japa'
  - d) Special Arati of Shree Shree MA by Jatu Bhai.
- 'Viswa Kalyan Yagna'.
  - Recitation of 'Sata Chandi'.
  - 'Shrimat Bhagabatparayan Saptaha'.
  - Seminar and discussion on the teachings and messages of Shree Shree MA Anandamayee.
- Participants : Religious and Intelligentsia from all walks of life.
- A full page supplementary in some reputed Dailies.
  - Sadhu Bhandara, Balak Bhojan, Naranarayan Seva, distribution of clothes at Matri Mandir.
  - Special Issue of Ananda Varta.
  - A special trip from Calcutta to Hardwar with the devotees of Shree Shree MA Anandamayee.
  - Exhibition of paintings on MA and HER Teachings.
  - A Special Programme of devotional songs — Bhajan & Kirtan of Shree Shree MA Anandamayee.

For the successful implementation of the programme please send your generous contribution to Shree Shree MA Anandamayee Abirbhab Satabarsa Utsav Committee, Shree Shree Anandamayee Charitable Society, MATRI-MANDIR, 57/1, Ballygunge Circular Road, Calcutta-700019, Phone : 74-8504.

# Matri Vani

To be always in a happy mood helps spiritual endeavour. Dejection creates obstacles on the path. If one is to abide in His presence one has to be free from bondage. During the mind inwards one must be intent on the Revolution of the Supreme One who pervades all.



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 worthy? Do not allow yourself to be overwhelmed; ever be steeped solely in the contemplation of the Supreme.



At all times to be vowed to the search after Truth and consequently to be completely truthful in every respect is man's duty. God's Grace streams forth all times.



Human beings have to be dwellers of the inner cave so that the Supreme Being who resides within may be revealed.



Man must ever be intent on discovering the Matra-yoga that will reveal his eternal union with the Divine.



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Where mature spiritual experience is a fact, agitation should certainly not be brought in one speaks of transformation when worldly attachment stackens. In the measure that wordly interests decrease one progresses towards real joy.



God's mercy pours down everywhere and at all times, one becomes aware of this by making oneself respective to it. To pray constantly for His grace is man's duty.



Keep on repeating the Name of the Lord. Pray : "Lord be pleased to manifest in the form of diksha" Endeavour at all times to remain merged, plunged in the Name, Solely for the Sake of God must His Name be repeated remember this.



With this body it is like this; it does not talk to anyone, nor go to see anyone, nor eat at anyone's house.



# 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.



If you can make your life like a running stream that swiftly and steadily flows towards its goal without ever halting, not only will no impurity of any kind be able to accumulate within you, but even other people will be cleansed by your presence. Fire flares up high into the sky, yet there is a point beyond which the flame cannot retain its own nature and is converted into smoke. But the current of ceaselessly flowing water is so powerful that, undeterred by the trees and rocks without number which get in the way, rivers and streams traverse thousands of miles until they arrive at their final destination. If you want to attain to Truth, you must, as a river, keep on advancing indefatigably with great singleness of purpose.



As a mother is known by her affection and tenderness for her children, a wife by her love and devotion for her husband, a friend by his fellow-feeling and loyalty to his comrades, so a religious person can be recognized by his God-centred, dedi-



cated life. Merely to say that one believes in God is quite useless. Religion must be practised by one's attitude of mind and heart and by one's actions. When engaging in austerity-fasts and vigils and the like-if real devotion is lacking they becomes mere mechanical observances. Carefully examine your heart and mind and try to eradicate short-comings that you discover in yourself. In this way, performing the duties that befit your station of life, steadily forge ahead : a day will come when your actions will be in harmony with your aspirations and then you will be capable of true spiritual progress.



To taste is the natural function of the tongue. But unless some bitter, sweet, salty or sour substance touches it, there is no taste. The wonderful thing is that whatever is put on the tongue, be it pungent or delicious, its taste will be faithfully produced. In a similar manner, the possibility which the human body does not contain has yet to be discovered; for this reason it may also be called a microcosm. Keep it in any way you like, it will respond. If you seek worldly experience, you will see how it will entice you, only leave you surfeited. But if you train it to serve the spiritual life, it will let you grow calm and serene.



The body is valuable yet it is not : If you want to cross a river, the boat is of great importance to you, but once you have reached the other shore, you never even give a thought to the ferry that took you across. The usefulness of the human body is of a like nature. When the "I-ness" has become extinct, the world and with it the body have gone out of the field of one's vision.

# Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Volume VI

(Translated by Tara Kini)

*(Continued from previous issue)*

## March 20 Sunday

Ma's health again suffered a setback last night. This morning Jiten Babu arrived from Delhi for Ma's *darshan*. Gangacharan Babu and family have come from Baroda. Seeing that Ma's health had deteriorated again, everybody felt depressed. Ma's heart was beating faster and within a short time her countenance looked wan. After a while, though, her face appeared to brighten up. Today she seemed to be in ill health the whole day and by evening her head, hands and feet had turned cold. On being fomented they warmed slightly. Engrossed in her own *bhava* Ma murmured, "Alright, a *kirtan* is in progress within this body." But everyone harbours fear about what Ma might do next.

## March 21 Monday

The whole night through Ma's heart continued to palpitate fast and this morning she appeared pulled down. This morning Bhupati Dada arrived on two months leave from Dhaka. In the morning Ma came to the room downstairs and began conversing with the people present. As she was unwell we kept requesting her not to talk too much, yet we were afraid that she might then have the *kheyal* to clamp up completely and observe *mauna*; so when she spoke of her own accord we participated in the conversation.

Doctor Jatish and family arrived from Jamshedpur. Their six month old daughter sat in Ma's lap and made all kinds of

sounds. Hearing that Ma said, "These are signs of imminent speech — she is making all kinds of sounds. Then suddenly she will say 'Baba' or 'Dada'. It is not as if she is making these sounds of her own volition — it happens spontaneously. The knot of speech unravels of its own accord. A kind of vibration occurs within the body." Ma continued, indicating her own body, "When *mantra* and other chants emanated from within the words were pushed out just like this. But in the case of these children there is *samskara*, external teaching; is there not the play of ignorance? For example, 'Baba' and 'Dada' are words taught externally. But in this body there was none of that — everything happened naturally."

Ma continued, "The states attained by a *sadhaka* (one who performs spiritual practices) are so beautiful. At first when the *bhava* of *advaita* (nonduality) evolves then one feels 'I am this', 'I am also that', the emphasis lies on that. Then what happens? The *bhava* arises — 'There is nothing other than I', 'Only I exist'. To say 'There is nothing other than I' is impure, for language (*bhasha*) is after all that which is revealed (*bhasa*). That great *bhava* cannot be revealed through language."

Ma then said, "The impressions of *samskaras* are present even within the one engaged in spiritual practices. However exalted be the state which he attains, the effects of the first threads can still be felt. Because the *sadhaka* exists, so does the state. It is a different situation when the *sadhaka* goes beyond that state. It is true that the seeker may do a lot towards educating the people, but on paying attention one can discern what is done for educating others and what is done as a consequence of inner *samskara*. But in an *avatara* (incarnation) there is no play of *samskara* at all. Therefore his actions are called 'sport' or '*leela*'." Saying so much Ma laughed.

This morning Ma caused some commotion. She had gone to the toilet. The toilet is poorly ventilated. Suddenly the bolt of the door dropped and she came to the door and started calling out loudly like a child, 'Khukuni, Khukuni'. At first we could not understand what had happened. But the next moment I got hold of Belu and went running to the door. It was some time before Ma managed to open the door. When she came out she said, "The door got shut and there was no *kheyal* to open it. So I called out. When I finally opened it I was pushing at the door from the wrong side !"

On occasions we have observed that Ma just does not have the *kheyal* to open or close a door, so much so that she is unable to even release an ordinary bolt while at other times she performs with great ease tasks that ordinary people find difficult. This is the reason why when Ma goes to the toilet in a train I always leave the door slightly ajar and stand holding it. Even when I am not present, she leaves the door of the toilet ajar and holds on to the handle. For it is possible that if she were to bolt the door and then not have the *kheyal* to open it people outside would believe that Ma had not finished, whereas in the closed room Ma's body may have assumed a completely different rhythm. In this manner Ma's behaviour is sometimes completely ordinary and next moment it may suddenly become extremely unusual. We have observed many such kinds of *leela* within that one substratum.

### March 22 Tuesday

Ma awoke around eight a.m. and still did not appear well. At eleven a.m. she had *bhoga* and at twelve noon the doors were shut. I was seated near Ma. Ma spoke about her childhood. Everytime I hear about Ma's wonderful life I find something utterly new. Ma said, "This feeling of pleasure that all people gain from touching, by embracing mother, father,

brother, sister or children, that has never transpired with this body. Now I see all around, how much pleasure a mother derives from embracing her child; but I always had my back turned to my mother as I lay near her. Later during *kirtan* when this body went through all kinds of contortions you people have got yourselves embraced by it. When the inside and the outside appeared the same, then perhaps this body placed its head on the father's shoulder and a photograph was then taken. But before that happened such a *bhava* had never been observed. Perhaps it was not required and therefore the body never behaved thus."

Bholanath has always declared that Ma is a permanent *brahmacharini*. I have mentioned this earlier. That urge which no one in this world has been able to escape, never arose in the body of my Ma. Ma says, "May be that would be of no use to you people. Nothing is manifested in this body unless it is needed. No *bhava* in this body is detrimental to it." Bholanath often used to say about Ma's childhood, "How wonderful it was — I have never heard of anything like this." To which Ma had replied, "Perhaps it is just not necessary". So much so that if such an emotion did arise even slightly within Bholanath, Ma's body would immediately assume such alterations that Bholanath would become afraid and would start fussing around anxiously, trying to reinstate Ma in her normal condition. Ma says, "There was no need to touch anybody. I would be lying on my bedding. If there was any change in Bholanath's *bhava* this body immediately reacted by assuming a supernatural condition."

Ma says, "There was no feeling as to whether I should accept this or relinquish it. This body just went along a certain path. Perhaps that is what was necessary for you and therefore this body behaved that way. Suppose you were to ask why this body did not indulge in such pleasures, such a question would

be meaningless. But you can also ask why I do not speak in English. Why do I not eat the food of English people or that eaten by some other race of men? Why did this body acquire that colour or that *bhava*? Such questions can be asked about every subject. Why should I go? Where? Every action can be questioned with a 'why?' Many such points can be raised endlessly. Therefore I say whatever you people need, that happens within this body."

In connection with these topics the subject of the Kalyanavan incident came up. Ma said, "See, some matters are such that as soon as they arise within they cannot be withheld from being revealed outside — just as it is difficult to withhold the urge to puke. These matters that are being discussed are in a manner vomiting out." At times when Ma is lying down at night she suddenly turns around and says, "Tomorrow remind me about this matter." And then she lies down quietly. Referring to that Ma now said, "I have no carry-bag with me — even if I did have a bag it has no stitches on its underside — or it is like what you people call a 'pipe', open at both ends. There is no room for anything to be stored in it. Therefore you people keep everything. Only after displaying everything to you all do I find release. Again sometimes you also do ask. You people keep all articles and things, also food and drink are your responsibility. Only conversation is presented before you." So saying Ma laughed in her own sweet fashion.

After some time she laughed again and continued, "Look, one matter has come up. If I do not tell you about it you will depart after shutting the door and I shall remain laughing all by myself. That is why I shall tell you about it. It was during my childhood — I must have been eleven or twelve years old, when all of a sudden there was a marriage proposal for this body from some place along with a photograph of the

bridegroom. We girls in the village had not seen a photograph till then. Everybody looked at it. At that time I used to hum some verse of a song to myself, play and talk to plants and trees. That day, hearing the word 'photograph' I sang, 'Photograph, photograph, photograph, photograph ! This body's grandfather heard the song through a chink in the door and coming before me he asked, 'What is happening ?' I had no notion that the photograph had come in connection with my marriage. Yet at that moment grandfather's laughter caused me such a degree of embarrassment that I burst into tears." Narrating this incident Ma laughed and said, "What kinds of amusing incidents have occurred !" I also laughed heartily on hearing this story.

At four p.m. many people arrived and Ma began conversing with them. Jiten Babu is to leave today. On being asked something concerning the Delhi *ashram* Ma said, "Look Baba, I do not want your *ashram*, I do not want anything. I only say that you must all live together peacefully. I only want that pure emotions should develop and increase within you. All of you try to live in peace and happiness. If you talk of an *ashram*, that is again for your sake and you can make it. After all, the aim of the *ashram* is to increase the peace and happiness within each of you. If that is not achieved and only factions are created then what is the use of having an *ashram*? It is better then not to have an *ashram* at all. There is joy only in your joy. If you speak of 'my *ashram*' then the whole world is but one *ashram*, or the *ashram* is limitless." Jiten Babu did *pranam* at Ma's feet and said, "Ma we shall try to follow your advice to the best of our abilities. Please give us your blessings so that we may obey your instructions." Ma replied, "His blessings are always there. Keep your attention in that direction and keep doing your duty."

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**March 23 Wednesday**

Ma woke up at nine a.m. today. From the last two days she has instructed us, "Do not call me in the morning before I wake up on my own." This is being followed. I washed her face and hands and made her drink some water. She then started speaking to the people who had assembled for her *darshan*. Some impressions of Ma's palms and sole were taken. At eleven a.m. *bhoga* was offered and by twelve noon the doors were shut as usual.

From the past two days Ma's health has deteriorated. At four p.m. Ma got up and sat on the verandah where many people had assembled. Ma is able to establish empathy with each person therefore all who come to Ma feel so happy. Before dusk Ma went to the terrace and stayed there till ten p.m.

After meals Ma was brought downstairs. One gentleman came and said, "Ma I have heard that you are not keeping well. Ma, if you want to you can get well yourself, so please get well now." Ma laughed and replied, "I am always well. What you people observe in this body is but the play of this body." Later in the course of conversation Ma again laughed and said, "What you said just now about getting well only when there is the desire to do so is quite right. If the *kheyal* arises then what you people deem as 'healthy' will certainly come to pass. But now there is just no *kheyal*. What can be done about that ? Tell me ."

Conversation went on in this manner till ten p.m. after which the lights were switched off.

**March 25 Friday**

Last night around eleven p.m. we had barely laid down when Ma got up softly and slipped out on her own. Suddenly I awoke and found Ma was not on her bedding. I went upstairs



to find her lying down on the terrace. Seeing me Ma said, "I just did not feel like sleeping. I also felt some kind of pain in my stomach." Abhay was sleeping in the same room. I picked up Ma's blanket and went to her room. The whole night through Ma's body was unwell. In the morning the door was shut for some time and opened at eight a.m. Ma said, "What is the use of lying down? The body is restless and therefore it has sat up." I washed her hands and face and made her eat some food recommended for patients.

Soon after, people arrived for *darshan*. Shankari Mata came with her disciples to meet Ma. She began showing her regard for Ma in various ways. Ma also addressed her as 'Ma' and spoke to her. Shankari Mata said, "I have seen you often in my dreams — seated in my lap." She spent some time with Ma and then went to Kankhal. Another *sadhu* arrived to speak privately with Ma. Later on I heard that he had said, "Ma, I come to you to ask many questions, but because so many others are present I am not able to speak to you alone. However, the surprising fact is that in my presence, when you speak to others, I find all my doubts being clarified by what you are saying. I find that most astonishing."

Today Shri Jatin Kaviraj of Dhaka returned with family to Haridwar after a tour of Agra, Delhi and other places. Before lunch Bhupati Dada raised the subject of the Dhaka *ashram*. Ma said, "There is no need for this body to say anything about the *ashram*. You people do exactly what you think best." During festivals there is a lot of confusion in connection with the opening of the doors of the Kali temple. Bhupati Dada requested Ma to make a clear injunction on this matter. The clarification made was that on the birthday, that is the day on which Ma's body appeared on earth, after the morning's worship at the temple, the door of the Kali temple should be opened, and an accounting done on the money collected in the

donation vault. Then the doors of the Annapurna temple should be opened. At that time everybody should be allowed to enter the temple. The doors are to be kept open till eight p.m. Then the doors of the Annapurna temple are to be shut, the temple cleaned and the Kali *puja* performed.

After that, at the time of the appearance of Kali Ma, that is, in the remaining hours of the night, Ma's *puja* is to be performed. At dawn, after the worship, the doors of the Kali temple are to be shut. This was the schedule on the first occasion. Ma also said, "If the image of Kali suffers even the smallest bodily injury then as far as possible it should be set right in all purity. And if, when the doors are open, it is ever observed that any such part of the image is destroyed which, if it had happened to a human being, would have caused death, then the doors should be closed immediately. The doors should be securely fortified with bricks. Then the money collected should no longer be counted nor should it be spent. At the end of the year the money should be totalled and given towards the amount that is intended for donation to the *mahant* of the *Kali Bari* of Ramna.

Gangacharan Babu asked Ma, "Ma, Why is your bodily health so poor? If you so desire you can get well at once. If not for your sake, then at least for ours, please get well." In reply Ma said, "This body exists only for the sake of you all. If this body serves you all in some way, you people will preserve it, otherwise it will go. I have no worry at all." As she said this Ma's countenance appeared to acquire a particularly relaxed and composed expression. Every syllable that Ma utters is perfectly true — this is always vividly apparent from Ma's behaviour and also from the expression on her face. All those who were present stared at Ma's face in awed silence.

After dinner, since there was still time to go before ten p.m., people kept sitting in Ma's room. As Gola and Godavari

had done something wrong around four p.m. today, Ma told them, "Do *japa* ten thousand times and repent for this."

Gola is a particularly religious minded girl. She often observes *mauna* and says she does not have the desire to speak. A *brahmachari* who is here saw Gola and suggested that she should be invested with the sacred thread. Ma said, "Alright, you people get everything ready." But Ma did not seem very insistent. The day before yesterday Ma had stopped Gola from observing *mauna* all the time. This morning, in connection with some matter Ma had said to her, "It is worth thinking about whether it would be appropriate to give you the responsibility of such a big task (the *kriya* of investiture with the sacred thread)." Ma laughed slightly.

We were not able to understand Ma's words properly. The girl's attitude was good but Ma broke her *mauna* and then made a comment like this today. What was the reason for it? Ma never clarifies any of her statements fully. She only says, "You should understand by what happens."

Tonight we understood the significance of Ma's comment. When Ma explained Gola's mistake and told her to do ten thousand *japa*, the girl became absolutely still. Ma called her and spoke to her very sweetly, explaining patiently. Suddenly the girl rose, walked into the verandah and began wailing loudly. As she sobbed and wept she became nearly unconscious. We realised then that though the girl was good, she was a little weak in the head. We also understood then the reason for Ma's interrupting her *mauna* and expressing that kind of an opinion about the girl. The girl was again brought to Ma. She lay on the ground and began weeping uncontrollably again. Ma said gravely, "If this kind of behaviour continues, then no special task can be entrusted to you, is it not so?" Ma was smiling but did not reveal that to the girl. When Gola heard a reference to the sacred thread ceremony

she cheered up immediately and thus Ma's comment put a stop to her weeping. Ma looked at us and laughed. We then realized that Ma had spoken in this fashion only to halt the girl's outburst.

Ma instructed that Gola be taken and given a wash, after which the girl sat placidly near Ma. Later Ma explained, "Having discerned this trait in her character I did not encourage the idea of the investiture. The sacred thread is no frivolous matter, is it? It will not be possible for this girl to maintain the *kriyas* required." Ma told us, "You people would not have understood this girl's nature, therefore I said nothing. But now that her disposition stands revealed, you must have all gauged her condition. This is why I always say that words cannot establish anything. Deeds reveal the truth; and I also reiterate that every occurrence has its use. Today this incident occurred only because Gola and Godavari committed a mistake. That also had its use." So saying Ma laughed. At ten p.m. the doors of Ma's room were shut.

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*Endeavour to keep your body healthy and your mind engrossed in japa and meditation. It is but natural for man to become agitated at times. Nevertheless, try to advance speedily beyond the level on which agitation occurs. Time is gliding away.*

**Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi**

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God is Complete. Thus for full revelation one has to go to Him. Only because of the notion of God's absence is there sorrow in the World. Where God is manifest there are no 'two'. Sorrow has no place.

—Shree Shree 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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## Sri Sri Ma's Utterances

Ma said, "Health? disease? So long as the patient is still breathing, it is necessary to look after him with full dedication. Verily, to this body, to live and to die are just the same; but while the patient is alive, it is necessary to do all that is needed for the alleviation of his suffering."

About a girl who was introduced to Ma, Ma said, "Yes, I have met her."

The girl : "Perhaps you don't remember me, since I haven't come here many times."

Ma : "Do you take the name of God, a little?"

The girl : "Not at all. I don't even feel the need to take God's name—and there is no time to realize the need."

Ma : "All right, in that case, just try to sit silent and quiet in a solitary room for some time."

The girl : "O.K., I'll do so."

After a little while, the girl said, "But God is protecting me."

Ma : "You see, you *have* to bring in God. You just can't do without Him."

The girl : "Yes, very often I feel that God is saving me from calamities."

Ma said with a smile, "In whichever way you feel like, try to pass a little bit of time with Him."

The girl nodded assent to this.

From a letter to Ma, written by a lady : "Ma, day by day newer and ever newer *karmas* are laying their snares around me; I see no end to it. And yet the Guru's words are : 'Certainly you will rise to the state of your true being; certainly you will be established in peace.' His words cannot be false. I have a great fear."

A part of Ma's reply : "It is certainly one's duty to have faith in the words of the Guru. The contact of worldly life! Where is peace is that? There is scorching pain ever present. Within the 24 hours,

stay in a solitary room for some time. You must devote some time to the search of the Perfect Plenum, with all your mind and soul reverted up to Him. For some time, have your mind totally blank and stay with the instructions of the Guru. Where there is void, there is Plenitude."

From the letter of a devotee : "It was my mistake to marry. Why did you advise me to marry? Now I will start business."

Ma dictated the following reply : "Is it compulsory to stay for ever in the life of the house holder, just on account of having married? Have you not yet been able to provide for the one whom you have brought home? Now you are going to start business, aren't you? Try to go beyond all business."

Once on the day of Jhulan Purnima, Ma was narrating the incident of Her *diksha*. The play of Ma's *diksha* had taken place on such a day of Jhulan Purnima. Ma said, "On the occasion of Jhulan Purnima, people at Bajitpur decorate the deities for display. A woman of the neighbourhood came to invite me to go with her to have *darshan* of the deities in festive decoration. My physical condition was a little out of the normal state from that morning. I said, "I will not go." After that, having served meal to all and having prepared the *lukha* for Bholanath, when I sat down, the body was in an unusual state. In that very state I sat down; then gradually all those things started manifesting automatically. The *sthandila* (Square-shaped pit for fire-sacrifice), as you call it—I myself was making all that. A *bija* was also written in it. After this, oblations began to be offered with that very *bija*. That *bija*, two, had come from within."

Question : "Was that *bija* of one letter or two?"

Ma : "One."

Question : "At what hour of the night did it happen?"

Ma : "You see, I sat down after having served meal to everybody. So, you may say, it was not before 9.30 or 10 p.m. From that time and by 12 O'clock, all those things took place."

# Holy Reminiscences\*

Swami Joyananda Giri

*(Continued from the last issue)*

## 2. My Second Darshan of Ma

After my first darshan of Ma in November 1955, I never thought of Her again, as in the light of my own clear experience described in the first article, Ma was a celestial being to whom a seeker like me with so many imperfections did not deserve any access. The Divine Mother, the 'patita pavani' (purifier of the fallen) had, however, decided otherwise. Seeing the miserable plight of Her child who was failing repeatedly in his struggles against his weaknesses, the Kripamayi's karuna (compassion) had been aroused, bringing me into the region of Her kheyala and so I could not remain outside the circle of Her devotee, all of whom, as we understand, are chosen by Her.

### Ma's Significant Visit to Delhi

How this happened throws also an interesting light on Her super-dynamic '*lila*' (divine play). Mother is always on the move and everyone of Her incessant movements is full of significance. One of these brought Her one day to Delhi, some twenty-eight months after I had had Her first darshan.

Now, apparently unconnected with Her visit, a small worldly *lila* was going on in our family circle. My father's youngest brother and his wife had come to Delhi with their youngest son who had just passed the I.A.S. examination. A talk had been initiated for his engagement with a girl whose father I learnt later was an old and well-known devotee of

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\*Reprinted from Ananda Varta (E) Vol.XXII, No.1, pp.22-26.



Mataji and we were all booked for dinner at his place on Saturday, the 8th of March, 1958, the day on which Ma came to Delhi. So we went to his house that night and while we were chatting there, he announced casually that Ma Anandamayi had come to town that day and that she and his wife would like to take us all for Her darshan to Sri Anandamayi Ashram in Kalkaji the next morning.

### **I go for Ma's Second Darshan**

Naturally, when I heard the name of Mataji, I was completely taken aback. Apart from the fact that the girl's father suddenly went up in my estimation as some sort of an angel because he seemed to be so familiar with Mataji, and his family a blessed family which enjoyed the protection of a sage of that order, the prospect of a second divine darshan brought back a vivid recollection of my past experience. While considering myself as not deserving of the rare privilege, I still welcomed the opportunity as God-sent and began looking forward to the moments I would be spending in Her blessed Presence.

When we arrived at the Ashram the next morning, Ma was giving darshan in the central hall. As the girl's father had requested permission to do Ma's puja in Her own room, we were escorted there and before long found Ma in our midst. As soon as She entered the room, my subconscious mind recalled the soul-stirring experience of my first darshan at Kali Bari in Nov., 1955 and I was overcome with such an emotional upheaval within me that I could neither look straight into Ma's face nor register any details of what was happening in the room during Her presence there. I lost my composure completely and all I was able to roughly recollect later was that the girl's mother had done the puja and Ma had said "Hari katha hi katha aur sab vritha" (Real talk is only

about God, all else is useless and painful.)

### **The Divine Compassion**

As far as I remember, Ma did not say or do anything else at that time and left the room after a few minutes when the puja was over. Afterwards, when we had all come out of Ma's room, I found to my dumb-founded amazement, my uncle addressing me with the words: "Ma was looking at you all the time, it did not seem to make any difference whether the rest of us were in the room or not".

This remark and comment shook me to my roots. I could not have imagined even in a dream that a Divine Being could possibly take notice of and much less take any interest in such a small person as myself. For the first time that day I realized that Ma was not only the topmost living sage in India and a superhuman being but also an embodiment of karuna (compassion):

The thought that She had taken so much notice of me was so overwhelming in its effect that I had to retire at once to a secluded corner outside the Ashram compound and allow the torrent of tears of gratitude and joy at my good fortune to flow unhampered till I felt relieved of the unbearable emotional tension.

### **A Parallel from the Life of Christ**

For long I could not understand why Mother had shown this interest in my case. Then years later, I came across the following passage in the Bible, Matthew 9 (10-13).

"10, And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples.

"11. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?"

“12. But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, “They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

“13. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice : for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance”.

So this is what the Incarnations do. And I got a fully satisfactory answer to my earnest query, “Why had Ma taken notice of me?” Because I needed help. I was sick and helpless and very unhappy with my repeated failures in the fight against my imperfections and Her mission was to heal the sick.

To conclude : my first darshan of Ma had ended in my firm conviction that She was a celestial dweller of the high Heavens with whom a crawling insect like myself could have no relationship. But after my second darshan that day, which I felt completely sure She had Herself arranged by coming to Delhi for just one day, and that particular day—She left on the night of March 9th\*-an invisible but unbreakable link was firmly established between this child and his divine Mother. From then onwards, I who had not thought of Ma for over two years after the first darshan, began thinking of Her frequently with love and a feeling of personal relationship, collecting Her pictures, reading avidly about Her and attending with joy, and enthusiasm almost every function whenever and wherever it was held in Her presence.

*(To be continued)*

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\*See Ananda Varta, Vol. VI, No.1, p.72.

# Matrideva Bhaba

Manjulika Chaudhuri

*(Continued from previous issue)*

It is a very natural phenomenon that when a human being is born he or she is going to be developed both physically and mentally. It is very natural to say that the development of the individual is going on. But there are so many 'its' and 'buts' in the process of his/her development. His physical progress may be hampered by nutritional deficiencies or by attacks of infectious diseases. In fact, these two are the greatest killers of the third world countries. To be killed is after all a defect on the way of progress. Statistics shows that 60,000 children are dying everyday in the undeveloped countries. Those who survive under the defensive mechanism of the body itself and of the natural environment present a morbid picture of population growth. Here our statistics remain silent. Two-thirds of the major populations of third world countries are manifestations of morbidity. Poor countries are unable to make their future citizens worthy of the name. We are not making progress. Lacking in full physical development they remain mentally unhealthy. A Society consisting of such unhealthy persons cannot make any mark in different fields of knowledge. As a matter of fact such countries lack in the fundamentals and basic needs of life and as a consequence, illiteracy and poverty are rampant among their citizens.

On the contrary, the developed countries which I have already mentioned above have a marked and definite achievement in all the fields of life. But here also we are unable to use the term 'progress' with 'Achievement'. The degenerative process of illness which is often associated with mental illness is the under-current against which they have to fight. They are

developed in many ways but can not stop the use of tranquilisers. Drug abuse, alcoholism and very recently AIDS are the outcome of their modernism. Of course, Third World countries also have already acquired these vices of the so-called civilised modern world. Vices have the tremendous force to influence others. Anyway we fail to define 'progress' in terms of success or development. We can safely land on the moon, but we can not prevent the air pollution. Global picture of population is like this : more than 15 million people die of starvation each year, five hundred millions are undernourished, approximately 40% of world population are beyond the domain of professional health services. Are these the marks of real progress?

Progress may be defined as success in every sphere of life which again leads to the principle "live and to let live" happily on the cosmos. Irrespective of the developed or underdeveloped countries, we are nowhere near this state of existence. In the progressive world we have to take into account the whole of the world which is nothing, but a complex wheel of inter-related varieties with which a man is confronted. This is a rational act. The more we are rational, the more we can arrive at that objectivity which is nothing, but seeing nature, the world and all its contents as they are. Herein lies the supremacy of reason over intelligence. Intellect is the man's instrument to manipulate the world whereas Reason is an instrument for arriving at the truth. So rationality is the word which is in tune with progress. To make progress we have to develop this rationality, to grasp the world in its totality by thought. Along with the development of rationality mankind as a whole will achieve an integrated mental activity which can guide human beings to the path of progress. In the context of modern civilisation.

In the context of modern civilisation, we find Man not as

a human being, but as a machine. His reason has deteriorated, but there is a spectacular rise of his intelligence. This change has brought about a dangerous situation in which Man has suffered from the loss of sanity. Einstein says — "All human beings, whatever their position in Society, are suffering from this process of deterioration unknowingly. Prisoners of their own egoism, they feel insecure, lonely and deprived of the naive, simple and unsophisticated enjoyment of life."

To develop a healthy atmosphere we need co-operation and co-ordination among the health personnel, that is to say, between the health system and the systems of economics and politics. With the improvement of socio-economic condition above, it is possible to improve the preventive and promotive aspects of health. In his notable work 'The Modern Rise of Population,' Thomas Mckeown remarks — "There need be no disappointment" and concludes that "Medical measures of immunisation and treatment are relatively ineffective; they are also unnecessary." He believes that water supplies and sanitation, decent housing and particularly the availability of food can bring about dramatic improvement in health. A tertiary health care system should be developed. The caronic state of poverty and under development must be the point of our focus today. In the words of J.O. Field, "Conceptual Simplicity is essential to implementation . . . . programmes that call for extensive co-ordination are specially vulnerable as are programmes that rely heavily on popular support and participation for their success. The longer duration of implementation, the slimmer the possibility that the original policy will prevail." Every aspect of health including the social, economic and political factors that infringe upon our health are to be a part of our programme. Both the directors of policy making and of implementors of our health programme must go hand in hand. From time to time their physical presence at the

tertiary level is urgently needed. They are all conversant with what is going on at the periphery level through the hierarchical system. But there should be a direct touch with the periphery level. Being the highest authority of our health programmes they can influence the social, political and economic factors at the tertiary level.

In the evolution of the health system, the people of third-world countries are going to face the challenge of coping with three factors viz. 1) Infectious diseases linked to poverty, malnutrition and poor personal hygiene, 2) Chronic diseases, particularly cardiac problems, cancer and mental disorders, 3) Environmental hazards. Therefore, real progress consists in the development of rationality so that we can proceed through co-operation and co-ordination within the health system and outside. In this process of development two other terms, viz. rigidity and flexibility, must be taken into account by the public health programme implementors. We must be rigid in respect to the target of our health programme. In the process of achievement of our target we have totally with the Socio-economic factors as well as with man as such : Every man has a close bond of blood and soil. But he must make himself free from these ties in order that he may establish a relationship with strangers. To be perfectly human, he must develop his rationality by which he can overcome his fixation or attachment for a particular person or a group. He must realise that abnormal emotional attachment to another person or persons stands in the way of self-realisation. More precisely, we find the same principle working in different parts of the system of body-machine. The different systems such as the digestive system, nervous system, Cardiovascular system etc. all have their respective functions of maintaining themselves as well as to tally with other systems. Let me recall the W.H.O. declaration of Alma-Ata-Health for all by 2000 A.D. It will help us

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to understand the health problem and its proper cure.

to face the challenge of the crisis in health sphere we need both rigidity and flexibility only a rational frame of mind this quality. For a moment let me concentrate on the word 'crisis': Any presence of 'crisis' in any field of activity demands attention. We can overcome it through analysis and synthesis crisis appears as an act of transformation. We already know the presence of health crisis. But the crisis — producing elements remain in some other systems of Society, viz. economy, environment etc. We have to remember that even the best medicine can not be the antidote for all diseases, so to overcome the diseases of ill-health we need a series of therapy on the other systems too. Sorokin says that the crisis we are facing today is not an ordinary one. It is one of the transitional phases in the previous cycles of human history. As Toynbee remarks: History of civilisation is the record of this type of transition from a static condition to dynamism.

Having regard to the facts and observations made above, the question naturally arises. Is there any remedy for the evils responsible for creating the problem? The answer may be summed in one sentence. What we need is an inter-disciplinary approach to the facts of life. A profound change is necessary in our thoughts, perceptions and values. The medical profession in India is still unaware of the reality of country's health problems and fails to question the basic premise as to whether this system is at all suited to the needs of the people. Once Dr. Mahler, the D.G. of WHO, called the mystification of modern medicine by creating the myth that only doctors know how to deliver health care. Far from realising their limitations the profession dissuades non-medical persons from taking any active interest in the field of health care. This attitude develops out of a notion about the term 'Health'. What the country needs is a simple, cheap but



effective community health service with emphasis on prevention and health and not a sophisticated personalised and expensive "Illness Service" which is being provided in reality. Health as Gandhiji says is an attitude of the mind which helps develop habits of cleanliness, correct food habits etc. Water supply, sanitation, medicines and even food can be delivered to the individual or community, but its correct utilisation depends on the attitude of the recipient. Unless health awareness is created among the people, no health programme can succeed. The people must therefore be participants as well as initiators of health programmes and not passive recipients as at present. The existing preventive services could be much more effective if the public were aware of their importance in the maintenance of their own health.

Again, to overcome 'crisis' in any sphere of life. We have to understand the two type of forces underlying it. Wise men of the past and the present clearly reveal the fact that in a society a crisis arises when there is supremacy of certain human qualities such as, rigidity, competitiveness, aggressiveness, etc. Such qualities are more pronounced in the Patriarchal system of the society where the approach to a problem is more reason-based and analytic then being intellect-based and synthetic. Herein lies the cause of conflict and struggle. In a Matriarchal system of the Society, on the other hand, the approach is of a co-operative, responsive, and constructive nature which is necessary to counteract the patriarchal qualities. These feminine characteristics season the patriarchal ones in order to bring about harmony. The crisis is they overcome. History of mankind sometime shows the supremacy of masculine attitude over feminine attitude and vice-versa. These two kind of activity are closely related. These are the characteristic properties of the human mind through-out the ages. These are the complementary modes of functioning

of the human mind.

There are three levels of health — individual, social and ecological all of which need to be supplemented by the two types of activity of mind mentioned above. Our Medical Institutions today represent the qualities of the patriarchal system of the society devoid of matriarchal properties. Not only scientific and technical skills, but also wisdom, compassion and patience to provide the human mind with comfort and reassurance are required in the process of curing the diseases. To dispel the depressive disorder of the modern world, the above qualities must be generated among the medical students. A student of California School of Medicine once said, "The Medical School is felt like a family where the mother is gone and only the hard father remained at home."

To overcome the present worldwide crisis of illness of the developed world and of the importance public health programme of the third world countries, the abovementioned three levels of health need to be supplemented by feminine qualities.

Let me hear a music — a quote from Alice Walker's poem 'Remember'? A woman part of the developed country, America —

I am the woman  
With the healing eye  
the ear that hears.

I am the woman: Dark,  
repaired, healed  
Listening to you.

I would give  
to the human race  
only hope.

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I am the woman  
Offering two flowers  
whose roofs are twin  
justice and Hope  
Let us begin.

यद्भद्रं तत्र आसुब।

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*By God's Name the pull of evil is vanquished. There is a saying that it is impossible for man to commit as many sins as can be annulled by God's Name : just as a single spark of fire can consume more things than you are ever able to accumulate, so by the contemplation of the Supreme Being, by the endeavour to approach Him, all your sins will be obliterated. The destructible will be destroyed and Reality stand revealed.*

**Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi**

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# Guru and Disciple

Atmanandaji

Mataji is very emphatic about the importance of obeying the Guru's orders implicitly without criticism.

"Be very careful whom you accept as your Guru. Don't be in a hurry. Take your time over it and use your intelligence. But once you have accepted a Guru, it is irrevocable and you must surrender completely. If you fail in this, I maintain you have not accepted him as your Guru."

Several years ago some Westerners came to Mataji and had a discussion with Her, which throws an interesting sidelight on this question. One of them asked : "How can I get Self-realization?"

Mataji : He is Self-effulgent, it is not you who can bring it about.

"Still, should we not make an effort?"

Mataji : Yes, the Self is hidden by a veil, you have to wear it down by your own exertion.

"What is the process by which this can be accomplished?"

Mataji : Do you really want Self-realization?

"Of course, I do!"

Mataji : Then are you prepared to do exactly as I tell you without letting your judgement interfere?

Here the gentleman became thoughtful and hesitated. He evidently was feeling uncomfortable.

Mataji smiled at him encouragingly.

At last he said : "I regard Sri Ramana Maharshi as my Guru, but I have not met Him as yet. I intend going to Tiruvannamalai shortly."

Mataji : Then you must do exactly as He instructs you — But do you really want Self-realization?

"Certainly, have I not come all the way to India for this

purpose?"

"For this and nothing else?" questioned Mataji once more.

"For this and nothing else," confirmed the seeker.

Three times Mataji had repeated the question and three times the response had been the same. Mataji became very serious. Her voice was definite and powerful when She spoke : "If this is so, if you want Self-realization and nothing else, it does not matter whether you do as I tell you. If you really want this one thing only, you will find a way, there is no doubt about it!"

**Question :** While living in the Guru's Ashram, what is better, serving the Guru (Guru Seva) or engaging in meditation (Japa-dhyana)?

**Mataji :** Whatever the Guru advises is best.

**Question :** But the Guru does not say anything about this.

**Mataji :** Then he is not a Guru.

Today the Guru's personal service is not possible for everyone. It requires Special Capacity. Suppose you do the Guru's personal work for a time and then someone else is asked to continue and does it in a different way, and this upsets or irritates you. This is not called service. You should on the contrary, feel happy that some other person also has the chance to serve your Beloved in his or her own way.

Always remember that whomever you serve you are serving God (Janjanardana) in that particular guise. So many people come to the Ashram and there is no end to the opportunities of serving them in this spirit, even if some of them be bad or mean, do not forget that they have come to the temple of God. For this reason, serve them to the limit of your capacity, although they may not keep the same attitude after leaving the Ashram. Serve the pure intention that has moved them for the moment. Whether you provide them with food or water, or sweep the place for them or assist them in any other way, it is service to God in the shape of man. Thus

there is any amount of scope for service in an Ashram.

Obey the Guru implicitly! Whatever He may ask you to do, try to carry it out, if it be disagreeable or troublesome, accept it as your tapasya. Although it is true that, so long as one is bound by the knots (granthi) of the I-ness, perfect faith is impossible, nevertheless exert yourself to the utmost to act upon the Guru's orders, if you are able to remain in meditation continuously, nobody will even dream of expecting any service from you. But if you linger about aimlessly for part of the time, you should certainly do service of some sort.

**Question :** But is it not Guru who tells them to wear the Sannyasi colour!

**Mataji :** Well, if the Guru tells them, He does so because it is helpful. For those who believe in it, it is an aid, for others all colours are alike, be they white, red, or black. The robe of the Sannyasi is flame coloured to remind him that he has burnt rajas—greed, passion, anger and so forth to remind him that he is burning ghat. For this reason he also has to share his head, for when entering fire, the hair will be burnt first of all.

However, there is of course, a state where one has risen beyond colour for colour is part of this world, in that state it is quite immaterial is still influenced by one's surroundings, it is helpful to adopt the garb of a Sannyasi.

**Question :** Suppose one has intense faith in God and leaves everything to Him and does not consult a doctor? Can one be cured even so?

**Mataji :** There are two ways : One way is to have intense faith that God will do all that is needed and pray to him to be cured. If one has reached a state of genuine faith it will have the power to bring about the cure, if on the other hand one's faith is merely superficial, it will not act.

The other way is, not to pray to God for anything, but leave everything to Him. Then whether one gets well or not

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is exactly the same.

**Question :** We are told that if a man dies in Kashi or in certain other sacred place he will be liberated, is this true?

**Mataji :** There is a story of a man who had committed some wicked deeds, but because below the spot on which he died, there happened to be a Saligram, the messengers of death had no power over him and he was taken by the messengers of Visnu instead.

**Question :** God has given us the sense of 'I', He will remove it again, what need is there for self-surrender?

**Mataji :** Why do you ask? Just keep still and do nothing!

**Question :** How can one possibly keep still?

**Mataji :** This is why self-surrender is necessary.

**Question :** God lavishes His Grace on some and not on others, How can one speak of equality and justice?

**Mataji :** He does according to His pleasure.

**Question :** Why should His pleasure be to our cost?

**Mataji :** Where there is 'mine', and 'thine' it appears as you complain. Actually the claps, His own lands and hears Himself the sound — just the one SELF.

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# Expel of Sita

(সীতা-নির্বাসন ।। দ্বিজেন্দ্রলাল রায় ১৮৬৩-১৯১৩ খৃঃ)

*Translator* : Nihar Ranjan Chakraborty

Place : King's Councillor

Time : Morning

(Ram is sitting alone on the throne)

Bharat : Maharaja, Is it true that I have heard to-day?

Ram : Is the news circulated throughout the city within so short time?

Bharat : No, Maharaja, only within the palace premises. Is it real?

Ram : Yes, Dear.

Bharat : Have you settled?

Ram : Yes, it is settled.

Bharat : It is impossible. Raghur, you are religious, righteous, intellectual — Is this cruelty befit your nature?

Ram : Not impossible. You know that all the subjects of Ayodhya want me to expel Sita.

Bharat : Maharaja, Is it therefore essential to do what they want? If the subjects want you to shut the flow of river Sarajo, if they want you to pullout Kailas peak and throw away Moheshwar in dust; if the inhabitants of Ayodhya want you to destroy the palace, temples in all the cities; if they want you to open a lawlessness all over; if they want you to take life of friends, ministers, brothers, mother, wife — is that also to be doen? Is it the politics of Ayodhya now? Where is Sita and where the mean-minded subjects of Ayodhya are? Far above, where the bright shine of star in the blue sky, and where the dirty insects are?

Ram : My dear — what am I to do? There is no other



alternative. Listen, Bharat — it is the verdict of Kulaguru Bashista.

Bharat : I have understand. It is the crude order of that grey-haired, long beared, thin and rude ascetic Bashista! What that unkind, effectionless, thought emerged, un-attached Brahmin knows about secrad relation of lives of the world? What he knows about the peace giving love of soft hearted Sati? Will you throw away such precious jewel in dust? Oh, Maharaja, if such is your behaviour to a pious lady, — then who else will respect the women? Life of the weak and pationate women will be the objects of gamble in the world. Their worries will be treated as fun by their husbands, men will not bear any responsibility towards their wives in the country and abroad.

Ram : Bharat, all these arguments are useless — my firm decision cannot be altered.

Bharat : (Remaining silent for a while)

If it be so, then Ayodhya is confronting a very great danger. Who am I to speak above, if it is finally decided by the Maharaja of Ayodhya? Then take it also sure that I will quit Ayodhya — go far away in village where there is no such cruelty, no such punishment to sati, no such insult to a woman and no such lawlessness and injustice. I will leave this country-this kingdom.

Ram : Bharat, Bharat — you are so unkind to me!

(Entered Kaushalya)

Kaushalya : Loving Son — Ram!

Ram : Mother, mother, how are you here?

Kaushalya : Listening such a heart-breaking news how can I keep myself quiet in female-ward-my dear! Will you expel the Queen, the goody of the Kingdom? Is it true?

Ram : Mother, it is true.

Kaushalya : Am I to believe it? You are righteous, and she

love you more than herself. She is the daughter of a King, and Queen of a King. Due to her ill-fate she got no peace and happiness in this house; and you are also neglecting her? Listen, my dear Son, Ram.

Ram : Mother — you also!

Kaushalya : Ram, hear me, My dear, keep my word. You are not inconsiderate, you are not unsympathetic; give up this idea and accept my advice.

Ram : Mother, mother — please don't request me — I will not be able to abide by your request.

Kaushalya : God is witness — I will not let it happen so long alive.

Ram : Alas! What a unmanageable circumstances!

Kaushalya : You are righteous — you are a religious man.

Ram : Mother, mother, you know — it is the order of Moharshi Bashista.

Kaushalya : Let it be an order of Bashista. It will be nothing of religious act by obeying his order. It is no good. I will not allow you to do such injustice.

Ram : Mother, I have promised.

Kaushalya : I have also determined not to allow you to do such self-killing act of a mad.

Ram : Mother, mother — be pationate, please do consider.

Kaushalya : I have settled — I will not allow it to happen. Is the order of your Guru is greater than the desire of your mother? Who sheltered you in the bally — I ask you — your Guru or I? Who taught you the first word in this world — nursing you day and night who has made you adult — your Guru or mother? So, it is only once, you are to regard my order. I beg it for the first and last time to you. Do you still on belief that the order of your Guru is greater? See, I am your mother — begging for Sita — will you refuse me?

Ram : Mother, mother — what you have done to-day. You are on the ground and I am on throne! I have lost all senses! You are begging with tearful eyes and I will say — “no”! Let your wish be fulfilled — oh, respected mother, let my promise be violated, let Ram be burn to ashes. Let your desire be fulfilled.

Kaushalya : Live long — my dear. I have nothing more to tell you. I bless you — keep this precious thing in your heart life long.

Santa : I am going to announce this good news in the palace. Fright of all is over.

Ram : Desire of you is fulfilled. Now leave me alone.

(all left)

Let me think — what I have done. I could not keep my word. Ah, what I have done! The world will criticize through out endless future that Ram broke his promise. Up to the long far the children of this dynasty will know it. They will abuse Ram. Dasarath gave life for the sake of truth, where, taking birth in the same Surya-dynesty Ram failed to keep his word. When the Gods will keep it in view, will they not turn their faces for the shameful fact of mine? Oh, Gods of heaven, please save ill-fated Ram, who is bereft of truth.

(Bending knee prayed)

Sita : Lord of my heart!

Ram : Dear Sita.

Sita : What has happened? Dear, you are on the ground — trembling. Rise up.

Ram : Sita! Please don't touch me — you are pious — I am sinful. There is no end of this sin. I have brought black-spot in the Ikshaku-dynesty.

Sita : I have listened everything — my dear. You are my all in all. Is it possible that you will gain pain for me? Rise up, your fame and your name will remain intact — you will not

be debarred from truth. Lord, you have fulfilled the promise of your father; now I will fulfil your promise. The flame of your glory will not be diminished for Sita — never it can be. Get up, oh pious Lord — loughingly I lay down my breast — you go through and reach the temple of pride and appease your soul. How Sita can like to see you thoughtful? Sita can never be an obstacle in the path of your contentment. Get relieve from anxiety. I will leave Ayodhya.

Ram : I am alive yet! What a nuisance — how cruel I am!

Sita : Dear, come back to life. Let me see your smiling face at the time of departure — this is my only desire.

Ram : What a destructive storm! What a deep dark I am confronting. Darkness in front of eyes and roar of ocean in my heart! Sita — Sita where you are — Sita.

Sita : My Lord (embressed Ram).

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## PROGRAMME OF CEREMONY

From January, 1995 to April, 1995

1. Paush Sankranti — 14th January, 1995, 29th Paush, Saturday
  2. Saraswati Puja — 4th February, 1995, 21st Magh, Saturday
  3. Shiva Puja — 27th February, 1995, 14th Falgun, Monday
  4. Dol Purnima — 17th March, 1995, 2nd Chaitra, Friday
  5. Basanti Puja — 7th April, 1995, 26th Chaitra, Friday
  6. Ram Nabami — 9th April, 1995, 25th Chaitra, Sunday
  7. Samyam Utsab (Reunion Day Festival of Giriji) — 19th April, 1995, 30th Chaitra, Friday
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# Divine words are words, others are vain and pain

Swami Bhumananda Giri

No other, where do you carry me and how far it is;  
Gloom unfathomable and I pass through rubbish.  
I have fallen in a whirlpool, my sense benumbed,  
what I say or do counts futile, I find no way out;  
I do not see you Mother, I feel the current beneath.  
In the ocean of sorrow and misery a sense of ease  
And comfort I bear, I have a self-complacence.  
Utterings of mine are nothing but a sort of pantomime,  
I pass on, I wander about, I know not the weight of time.  
My pilgrimage is endless, I take rest, I have a pause  
And a gain I continue my cycle, I have no stop no house.  
The only thing I know I have a motion, I have to go on,  
I know not what to do I grope about, a streak aray of Sun,  
Enters sometimes into the shell of gloom and then disappears,  
I shudder I cannot catch it, I fall in slumber and ease.  
Vagrant I am, I sing and sing to myself the happenings,  
what I find on my way, my words and doings all vanished  
In the air, time flows on years and ages let it be finished.  
Once I have felt something holding me, the lap of the Mother  
I find something in the bosom emptiness light sombre.

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# The Importance of Spiritual Life

Dr. K.M.P. Mohamed Cassim, Ph. D.

Spirituality is not a blind belief but it is based on the realization and manifestation of divinity in man. When a man realizes his divinity, he attains peace and blessedness and transcends sorrow and suffering. The greatest tragedy of modern man is to divorce spirituality from daily life. Spirituality is a practical science that one has to find out the Truth in the depths of one's own being and not in the outside world. Spiritual experience is not a matter for post-mortem analysis, it is not a flight from Reality as an escape mechanism, but it is an inner freedom from the life of bondage and sorrow. It directs all our energies and faculties towards the discovery of Truth which brings equanimity in pleasure and pain. The importance of spiritual life consists in shedding the mind's obscuring attachment by looking deep within. Thus the livingness of spirituality can be experienced in the present moment here and now. This divine energy is always throbbing with life and it is intensely dynamic and not something inert.

Life without spiritual understanding is a major cause for fury, fear and frustration. The development of spiritual side of man cannot be ignored because it is our constitutional necessity since man has a body, sense organs, a mind and a soul. Generally, the body is maintained by food, the sense organs are gratified by sound, touch, taste, smell and form. The mind is nourished by art, literature philosophy and science. But the soul is satisfied only by communion with that Absolute Reality as man has an eternal relationship with that Infinite which alone exists. It has to be awakened and rediscovered through silent meditation. Spiritual transformation takes place on every level from the subtle to the gross.

If we are afraid, if we feel insecure, if we do not have self-

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confidence and courage then we can never undertake the arduous journey of self-discovery. It is an observable fact that every moment of the day, psychological memory is pulling out the old established pattern of thought of which we are mostly unaware. Memory is the storehouse of the past and we instead of living in the present spend our lives drawing from old memory which dictates in the form of likes and dislikes. Thereby man lives by the symbol of the words rather than by real experience. Normally, we carry an unnecessary burden in our psyche. As our consciousness begins to function at a higher and purer levels of awareness the burden wears off automatically. This awareness grows as we live, day after day a life of purity and holy endeavour through self study and selfless service. Spirituality does not mean ignoring or neglecting our physical, emotional and mental comforts. Further, the worldly responsibilities are not a hindrance on the spiritual path but how we look at them that really matters as the liberation lies in understanding the grief-causing illusions of the mind.

The problem of mind's craving can be tackled only by unfolding the process of mind's modification. A narrow, rigid, closed mind is obviously not a controlled mind. It may sound paradoxical, but a controlled mind is really a free mind. So long as the mind has its own commitments and entanglements it is not free. A balanced mind cannot have any vested interest, it is a perfect instrument, a flawless channel. Mind must be utterly empty and no leakages. It is only when the mind is still that in it a clear reflection of the Truth can be perceived. Mind is not only a bundle of thoughts, but it also consists of images, sensations, feelings, desires, fears, hopes, reactions, judgements, emotions, pains and pleasures. One becomes conditioned by his mind which prevents him to observe the events as they are actually free from the prejudices of the old

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psychological memories. The mystery of life can be found only when the habit of identifying one's mental mechanism is negated through meditation, then what remains when the false ego is no more is real wisdom which will guide to reach the ultimate Absolute Truth.

There are two aspects in life, motion and motionlessness. Motion is an activity and is the area in which we use our conditioned faculties of the mind. Thus motion refers to the gathering of knowledge that helps us to write, to calculate and to work with technical ability. The motionless part of our lives is the non-action of the mind where we experience similar to deep, dreamless, restful sleep state but with full awareness. This profound inner solitude is really a blissful aloneness. One can be in the thick of the world and yet it is possible to maintain and experience inner silence simultaneously. The greatest need of our time is to focus our attention towards the cosmic level of our being and this experience of extra ordinary state of motionless part of consciousness will bring us not only inner freedom, but also integration and unification. In the state of motionlessness there is no such thing as ego and this ego is only the endless flux of sensations, thoughts and feelings that we have falsely identified as ourselves. In meditative awareness there is no unhappiness, but real Self remains. In order to realize the ever-present beatitude of the Divinity we must reach the abode of mindlessness through meditation and that Silence alone carries oneself into living experience of Reality. Enrichment of life and the answer to human paradox can bloom through a transcendence of the conditioned mind. This is not an intellectual activity, but a timeless state of meditation and in which state there is no scope for conflict, confusion and contradiction. It is a beautiful state of non-reactional attentiveness. When this art of choiceless awareness is sustained then only there is freedom and intelligence.



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To understand anything, any human problems, one requires a quiet and silent mind. One should not cling to emotion desperately as such attachment confuses one's mental equipoise. It would be useless to expect any progress in spiritual life without achieving some measure of dispassion and the purity of heart. The reward of self-knowledge is freedom from the limitation of the psychological complications. Needless to say, that the death of the ego is the birth of enlightenment, which lies above the domain of sensory perception. This profound state of Eternity can be experienced when one raises to that realm of supramental consciousness. Wherever we are we can be a center of peace and harmony through the practice of meditation. The most important yard stick for real spiritual growth is the ability to penetrate into the contents of the psyche and thus get exposed. Then only one is capable of experiencing the vast ocean of energy untouched by the mind. The images and thought which arise in the mind are buried in the past. Memory is only a kind of shadow because the past is finished and that which really exists is the Eternal Present. To live fully in the present means to have the unrestricted awareness. This brings the flow of life energy freely and manifests itself in clarity. In meditation all images of the past are wiped out and cleanses one's consciousness and thereby opens the door to an intuitive awareness which cannot be comprehended through the analytical process of the mind. In the highest state of meditation one is in harmony with everyone and everything. It is possible for one to attend to all duties and material affairs and yet mentally detached from the world. This is true renunciation.

It is to be realized that eternal vigilance is the price of winning freedom from the bondage of the mind. Meditation is possible only when all struggles for cravings have ceased. It is a relaxed condition of the mind. It represents attention

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without distractions. In meditation there is not even a flicker of thought and in that state the duality of subject and object vanishes. Self knowledge is the starting point of right action. Meditation is a totally different state of consciousness compared to our ordinary state of conflict, tension and dissatisfaction. Actually, it is a state of joy, fullness and tranquillity.

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*Keep on repeating the Name of the Lord, Pray :  
"Lord be pleased to manifest in the form of diksa."  
Endeavour at all times to remain merged, plunged  
in the Name. Solely for the sake of God must His  
Name be repeated—remember this.*

**Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi**

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**Annual Naam Kirtan at "Matri Mandir"**  
**Shree Shree Anandamayee Charitable Society**  
**CALCUTTA ZONAL OFFICE**  
**"Matri-Mandir"**  
57/1, Ballygunge Circular Road,  
Calcutta-700 019  
Phone : 74-8504

Dear Brother/Sister,

We have great pleasure in informing you that we have organised a **NAM-YAGNA ADHIBAS** on the auspicious day of 11th March, 1995 Saturday (Bengali 5th Chaitra, 1401) at 6.30 p.m. sharp and a **DAWNTO DUSK NAM SANKIRTAN** on the following day i.e. on the 12th March, 1995 with special Pujas of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee, Shree Shree Narayanji & Shree Shree Onkarnathji from 9 a.m. onwards in **MATRI-MANDIR** here. After the Purnahuti the assembled devotees will be entertained with prasads.

We look forward to your active participation in this auspicious programme.

Yours

In the Service of MA,  
Members

(Executive Council)

Shree Shree Anandamayee  
Charitable Society

Dated :  
The 1st January, 1995  
(16th Paus, 1401)

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# Sri Sri Muktananda Giri Maharaj\*

## Swami Bhagavatananda Giri

### Invocation :

Salutations to Sri Gurudeva—*Sri Dakshinamurti, Sankara* himself—who beholds the world within like a reflection in a mirror and the world outside projected by *maya* like the scenes in a dream, and thus visualizes the Self alone at the moment of awakening.

It is our great fortune that we are celebrating today the 26th *Sannyasa* anniversary of Gurudeva Sri Sri Muktananda Giri Maharaj by the grace of revered Mataji and the venerable Giriji Maharaj in the holy city of Kashi. The sanctity of this holy city is enhanced by the flow of the Ganges in the northern direction. The spiritual sanctity of Kashi, considered to be the oldest city in the world, has been especially mentioned from the Vedic period onwards in the *Srutis, Smritis, the Puranas* and the *Itihasa* tradition. The *Puranas* especially attach great importance and sanctity to Kashi, so much so that the *Skanda Purana* devotes one whole section to it. It is even believed that Kashi balanced on the trident of Lord Kashi Vishvanatha escapes destruction at the time of universal dissolution. Kashi is frequently referred to in all the *Upanishads* and the *Muktikopanishad* particularly states that one who dies anywhere in the holy precincts of Kashi is sure to obtain salvation. The Lord Kashi Vishvanatha himself utters the *Taraka Mantra* into the right ear of the departing *jiva*, thus absolving him from all sins and thereby leading him to Him.<sup>2</sup> It has been noticed that the right ear of all the persons who have breathed their last in Mataji's Ashrama turns upwards as if to receive the holy mantra.

The spiritual efficacy of Kashi is also evident from the fact that Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva, during his stay here,

saw the divine form of Sri Kashi Vishvanatha Himself.

Kashi, also called Varanasi, is mentioned in the *Jabalopanishad*. In answer to sage Atri's query, Rishi Yajnavalkya stated that Varanasi was the "*avimukta kshetra*", because situated between 'Varuna' and 'Nasi'. These are explained as the two forces that annihilate all sins.<sup>3</sup> In spiritual connotation Kashi or Varanasi is situated at the point above the nose and between the eyebrows at the *Ajnachakra*. It is stated :

"The juncture of the eyebrows and the nose is the point of 'sandhi'. The knower of Brahman who concentrates on this point is "*avimukta*."<sup>4</sup>

Kashi thus described as the '*avimukta kshetra*' is the spiritual centre of India. In days of yore sages and scholars who wished to have their philosophical or spiritual precepts accepted had to expound them first at Kashi. It was here that Adiguru Sri Sankaracharya wrote his well known commentary on the *Brahma Sutra*. Similarly the propounders of various sects like Sri Vallabhacharya, Sri Madhavacharya, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and others had to come to Kashi to propagate their teachings.

Kashi has been the chief centre of three religious faiths, namely Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. Beginning from Raja Harischandra, pious kings, saints and scholars, like Sri Madhusudana Saraswati, Tulasi Das and Kabir have belonged to Kashi. It is our great privilege that the 26th *sannyasa* anniversary of Sri Muktananda Giri Maharaj is being celebrated in this holy city.

I shall now try to describe in brief the salient features of the life of Sri Giriji Maharaj.

Sri Giriji was born in the Sultanpur village of Tipperah District (now in East Pakistan) in the month of *Vaisakha*, 1977. It is in this month that many great souls have assumed

their bodily forms. All the three memorable events, the birth, the enlightenment and the *nirvana* of Lord Buddha occurred on *Vaisakha Purnima*. Lord Narasinha, Sri Parasurama, Sri Adiguru Sankaracharya, Sri Ramanujacharya, Sri Sivaji and our gracious Mataji have all come to this earth in the holy month of *Vaisakha*.

The exact date of the birth of Sri Giriji is not known. She was the eighth child of her parents, Sri Ramakanta Bhattacharya of Bharadvaja Gotra and Sri Harsundari Devi. Sri Ramakantaji belonged to a family which could trace scholars, pious and virtuous members for many generations. Himself was a scholar and a very pious man. He was a *kulaguru* and had many disciples. His aunt had become a *Sati* and one of his brothers, Sri Dinakanta Bhattacharya had received the title of *Vidyasagara*.

Giriji was named Vidhumukhi Devi. She lost her father at the age of ten and her mother a year and a half later.

*Childhood* : From early childhood her disposition was extraordinarily calm, affectionate, sweet and courteous. She never had a quarrel or argument with anyone. She preferred peaceful solitude to playing with children of her own age. On being asked as to what she thought of God in her childhood, she stated that even then she believed that there was only one God. At that time she also felt that if she went in search of Him, far away, she would surely find him.

These qualities that were apparent in Sri Giriji at such an early age are referred to in the *Bhagavata Puranas* (7-13), as the attributes of a *sannyasi*. It is stated that a *sannyasi* should not argue with anyone and should be able to tolerate the censure of others.

Everyone appeared to her as her *apan jan*, her very own. From the very beginning she was indifferent to food. She would eat only if someone gave her food, otherwise she never

asked for it. She was not tempted by any delicacies. On the other hand she derived great pleasure and satisfaction from serving food to others. This trait was observed in the great saint Oriya Baba as well. He took delight in serving food to his devotees and used to say that eating was the pleasure of the *jiva*, whereas feeding others was heavenly bliss.

Giriji never took anything that did not belong to her without asking for permission first. She had great faith in religious acts and started observing various kinds of fasts from the age of seven. For four years she regularly undertook the special fasts enjoined for the months of *Kartika*, *Agrahan*, *Magh* and *Phalguna*.

*Education* : Sri Giriji started going to school at the age of seven. Her schooling was discontinued when she lost her mother. She enjoyed listening to readings from *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*; she still remembers many of the legends heard in those days. In spite of her meagre education Sri Giriji is an inspired poet. Innumerable devotional songs and verses have poured forth from her lips spontaneously. If recorded they would be of invaluable help to many devotees and *sadhakas*. The substance of one such inspired composition is given below. It was composed at Kashi on 20th, March 1965.

“The *Kundalini* dwells in a hidden spot in *Muladhara*. It rushes towards *Manipura* after piercing through its place of repose by spiritual effort. If good fortune holds, it wishes to keep awake. It stays in seclusion in *Anahata*. That subtle force listens to everything. Advancing to *Visuddha Chakra* it consumes edibles bit by bit. *Kundalini* united with all the nerves proceeds towards the *Sahasrara Chakra*. *Ajna Chakra* (absorbed in meditation) remains unaware. Piercing the *Brahmarandhra* it proceeds upwards. Taking along the lustre of the luminous it mounts to the sky. This *Kundalini* force moves within all *jivas* though they are not conscious of it. O

Mind! seek it within yourself and discover it. You are misled all the time by 'me' and 'mine'. There is only God in this Universe. You are intoxicated by worldly enjoyment and have forgotten Him. O Mind! take refuge in Him. Thus you will be freed from the cycle of birth and death and always be one with him. Oh what bliss! You will always see Sri Hari Govinda. You will be united with the Eternal Self (*atma*). Self is the real friend of Self, (on realizing this) the cycle of birth and death will cease to operate."

Giriji belonged to a highly religious-minded and pious family, in which *Durga Puja* were regular annual features. No one really knows when *Durga Puja* in the family was first started. The family also possessed a *Sri Narayana Vighraha*. Sri Giriji was herself keenly interested in all forms of worship, but she was particularly drawn towards *Narayana*. Of all the names of the Lord the name *Narayana* appealed to her most. At times she dreamt of various gods and felt as if she was being called. At bedtime she would pray to Lord Krishna 'O Guru! I offer my humble obeisance at your lotus feet', and then she would fall asleep.

*Family life* : Sri Giriji was married to Sri Bipin Bihari Bhattacharya of Vidyakut (District Tipperah now in East Pakistan) when she was twelve years and four months old. Giriji and *Dada Mashai* were an ideal couple extremely pious, truthful and religious minded. They literally followed the advice imparted by Sri Krishna to Uddhava in the *Bhagavata Purana* (22-27-42) :—

"To be born as a *Brahmin* is a rare privilege indeed. It should not be frittered away by indulging in worldly enjoyments, but it should be utilised by leading an austere life and ultimately striving for salvation."<sup>5</sup>

*Dada Mashai* by his own inclination led a detached life. It is said that once he left home to lead a life of renunciation.



He had reached a high state of spiritual evolution. He would take an *ektara*<sup>6</sup> and sing the praises of the Lord.

The family life of Sri Giriji conforms to the ideal laid down in the *Bhagavata Puranā* (22-17-52), for the life of a householder :—

“In spite of the pressing needs of his large household, a householder should not be too devoted to his family; nor should he be negligent of his religious duties. A householder who is not attached to his body or family cannot be entangled by family ties as he realizes that heavenly joys are as transient as those of this world.”<sup>7</sup>

Keeping this in mind a householder should not get entangled in family affairs. He should live in a detached manner like a guest in the house. Family ties cannot ensnare one who has conquered his ego, that is the feeling of ‘I’ and ‘mine’.<sup>8</sup>

This description of a completely detached life was fully reflected in the family life of Sri Giriji and *Dada Moshai*. Giriji used to discharge her family duties in a selfless manner without any involvement. She faced the joys and sorrows of life that came her way with great equanimity. Her financial condition in those days was far from satisfactory, but she bore all privations cheerfully and never thought of asking for help.

Sri Gopalji once appeared to her and asked her for one pice worth of *batashas* (sugarpuffs) in *bhoga*. She confessed that as she did not have even a single pice, she would borrow the money and offer *bhoga*. Ever since then offering the *bhoga* of *batashas* has become a daily routine with her.

We find that all the ten attributes of *dharma* are inherent in Sri Giriji. They are as follows : forbearance, forgiveness, self-restraint, purity, control of the sense organs, pure understanding, knowledge, truth, absence of anger, non stealing.<sup>9</sup> Let us first try to understand what *dharma* is. It is explained as :—

“That which sustains the people. According to the *Sastras*, the activity relating to this sustenance is *dharma*.”<sup>10</sup>

1. *Dhriti* : that is forbearance. To be happy and contented in whatever circumstances the Lord puts one. Not to be affected or upset by any misfortune. To be beyond joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, peace and tribulations. Sri Giriji appeared to be forbearance incarnate in the midst of the trials and tribulations of family life.
2. *Kshama* — forgiveness : Not to be moved by insult, abuse, censure or any wrong done to one. To remain calm and to forgive offenders. This is the attribute of the highest *dharma*. Hiranyakasyapa tortured Prahlada and tried to take his life but the Lord preserved him and destroyed his father. The Lord then asked Prahlada to ask for a boon. Prahlada begged the Lord to forgive his father as he had acted through ignorance. Christ did something similar. When crucified he prayed for his prosecutors : “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.” *Chaitanya Mahaprabhu* also reformed the wicked Jagai and Madhai by his grace. It was his principle that “praises of Hari should always be sung by one who is more tolerant than a tree and who respects a disrespectful person.”<sup>11</sup>

Similarly it has been noticed that Sri Giriji cheerfully put up with any abuse, censure or insult that came her way.

3. *Dama* : self-restraint is the control of the six internal adversaries; namely desire, anger, avarice, attachment, pride and envy. This self-restraint came to Sri Giriji without any conscious effort on her part.
4. *Asteya* — non-stealing : It is the opposite of *steaya*, which means to appropriate the material possessions of others and to deprive them of their rights and not merely stealing as is generally understood. *Asteya* is actually

another form of Truth. The poor and starving man who steals to appease his hunger is not as great a culprit as any of the following :—

- (a) A tyrant who usurps the political, social, religious and economic rights of his subjects.
  - (b) A greedy usurer who charges exorbitant interest and manages to usurp the belonging of the poor.
  - (c) A dishonest tradesman who makes money by adulteration.
  - (d) Corrupt judges.
  - (e) Avaricious lawyers.
  - (f) Greedy doctors and *vaidyas*. Mental peace can be obtained by the observance of *asteya*. This quality also is inherent in Sri Giriji. Since her childhood she has never taken anything belonging to others without their consent.
5. Purity — *Saucha* : It is of two types-external purity and inner purity.
- (a) External purity : To keep oneself, one's belongings and surroundings clean by the use of water and earth. External purity also means keeping the body clean and healthy by regular, pure and nourishing diet.
  - (b) Inner purity : To avoid jealousy, pride and hatred; and not to indulge in finding fault with others. To remove evil thoughts by inculcating good thoughts and to substitute evil behaviour by good deeds is purity of the mind. Mental purity is achieved by the removal of ignorance through enlightenment. Both external purity and inner purity are found in Giriji's life. Her life throughout has been completely pure and righteous. She has never been seen to dislike or envy others.

She is untouched by pride. The difference between a *Jivatma* and a *mahatma* is that the former observes his own merits and the shortcomings of others, whereas the latter is incapable of seeing anyone's shortcomings and discovers only their virtues. Giriji is a *mahatma* in the real sense. She manages to discover only virtues even in the vilest of persons approaching her, while others may see only their shortcomings. This quality is well illustrated by the following story :—

Once upon a time a *mahatma* was walking along the bank of the Ganges with his devotee. On the way they came across the rotting carcass of a donkey. The companion unable to bear the stench drew the attention of the *mahatma* to the rotting carcass. The *mahatma* ignoring it, exclaimed—  
“Look what lovely white teeth the dead donkey has.”

6. Control of senses : It is frequently mentioned in the *Bhagavata* that body, mind, intellect and the senses are bestowed to enable the *jiva* to realize God. This is amply illustrated in the life of Sri Giriji.
7. *Dhi* : Pure intellect, an essential attribute of *dharma* brings about discrimination (*viveka*), renunciation, control, tranquillity, forbearance, peace, faith and the desire for salvation. The inherent pure intellect of Sri Giriji has automatically brought about spiritual knowledge and renunciation.
8. *Vidya* : The knowledge which enables man to attain salvation is *Brahma Vidya*. There is a legend in the Upanishads that once Naradaji went to Sri Sanakaji and other sages and placed his problem before them, that though he had studied all the *Sastras* he had failed to

attain Self-realization. The sages replied :—

“The knowledge of Brahman is not acquired by merely reading the *Sastras*. It is essential to listen, to meditate, to reflect and to follow the instructions of the Guru.” That the knowledge of Brahman does not depend on the study of the *Sastras* but is self-illuminating is illustrated by the lives of great sages and saints. Giriji though not educated in the worldly sense is fully versed in Brahma Vidya.

9. *Truth* : The highest form of truth is its observance in thought, word and deed. *Sri Veda Vyasa* in his commentary on *Yoga Darsana* (II, 30), explains truth as the capacity to be accurate in thought and word. Manu too lays down :

“Speak the truth, but only that truth which is pleasing and not that which is unpleasant.”<sup>12</sup>

Without any voluntary effort this dictum has become a part of Sri Giriji's life. She cannot help uttering anything but truth.

10. *Akrodha* : absence of anger : No one can obtain peace unless he is free from anger. The derivative meaning of *Krodha* is that which obstructs the path of eternal bliss.<sup>13</sup> The Gita also says : “From desire anger cometh forth, from anger proceedeth delusion, from delusion confused memory. Anger leads to destruction of reason and of discrimination.”<sup>14</sup>

Swami Vidyanarany has commented on *krodha* (anger) in '*Jivanmukti-viveka*'. According to him anger is of two types. Firstly anger which is directed towards another and secondly anger of others which is directed towards oneself. The remedy suggested by Yajnavalkya for the former is to direct one's anger towards 'anger' itself as it is the chief impediment in the attainment of the

four purposes of life, namely *dharma*, *artha*, *kama*, and *moksha*. If others are annoyed with oneself, one should never think that others are unnecessarily angry since one is not at fault. On the other hand one should realize that one's greatest fault lies in not attaining salvation from the cycle of birth and death. The sage Yajnavalkya addresses anger thus : "Hail to thee! you torment and oppress him who takes refuge in thee. If one is the object of another's anger, one becomes conscious of one's own shortcomings and is thus led to detachment, So I bow to thee."<sup>15</sup>

It is remarkable that whatever the provocation, Sri Giriji is never annoyed or irritated; on the other hand she sometimes responds with a laugh.

Sri Giriji, who thus has all the ten attributes of *dharma* inherent in her, led the life of an ideal householder with *Dada mahasaya*.

1. Their first child, a beautiful little daughter was born to them in 1893. She was named Sarvamangala. She had a very short span of life, surviving for nine months only.
2. The coming of Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi : As in the days gone by, Devaki and Vasudeva were blessed with Lord Krishna and Devahuti and sage Kardama with Sri Kapilaji the Samkhya incarnation, as the fruit of their penances, similarly our *Didima* and *Dada Mahasaya* as a result of their penances in previous births, were graced by the all compassionate Mataji—the mother of the universe and Brahman incarnate. Mataji has been perfection personified from the time she assumed this earthly form on the of 30th April, 1896. Mahamahopadhyaya Sri Gopinath Kaviraj writes in the introduction of 'Ma Anandamayi' by Sri Gurupriya Devi : "Ma is inscrutable. She transcends the range of

thought, though all thoughts and ideas in infinite forms and in infinite ways live and move and have their being in her. It is difficult to grasp the infinite for those who breathe in the finite. One who desires to understand Mataji will have to become one with her through complete self-surrender. This self-surrender that is the extinction of the ego can only be attained by the grace of Mataji herself. 'Mother what are you in fact?' was the question once put to Mataji by someone, to which she answered : "I am what you consider me to be."

The coming of MA is a great blessing. Mataji is compassion as it were. Every glance, every sentence and every action is a showering of grace and benevolence. She is beyond time and space. Mataji is a unique blend of the one and the many, of the part and the whole. The dynamic and the static mode of *Brahman* have merged in Ma. Mataji is the quintessence of Truth. She is the greatest friend of all who aspire to Truth—may they belong to any country or creed.

3. Sri Kali Prasanna was born three years later. He lived to be seven and was conscious till the very last moment. Uttering the words—"Ma I am leaving", he breathed his last.
4. Almost three years later Sri Durga Prasanna was born. He died at the age of about four and a half.
5. Sri Hari Prasanna, the next child, lived for only one month and a half. Surprisingly all these three brothers passed away within six months.
6. Then followed Sri Surabala. She is reported to have stated that she had come from the same place as her elder sister (Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi). She departed from this earth when she was seventeen. It is said that Mataji had thrice repeated the injunction to go before Sri

Surabala's death. At first she refused to go, but when Mataji said that she would have to go, Surabala acquiesced. When Mataji asked her where she was going, she replied : "I shall merge myself in your lotus feet." With these words she departed from this world. After her death Mataji said that Surabala had gone to the *Urdhva-loka* that is the *Devi-loka*. Mataji added "In one sphere this body put a barrier round her but she broke through the barrier and went higher to the *Urdhva-loka*."

7. Sri Hemangini Devi was the next child. She was married and has been survived by her children. Sri Giriji herself initiated her into *sannyasa* before she passed away at Kashi after a serious illness.
8. Sri Jadunath Bhattacharya is Didima's last child. He is known as Makhan or 'Mamu'. Mamu has constructed a house near Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi Ashrama, Kashi, and has installed *Sri Vipinesvara Mahadeva* therein. Mamu lived as a householder but now he observes the rules of *Vanaprastha*. He devotes his services to the Ashrama.

Giriji first received her initiation and a *mantra* in a dream. She used this *mantra* for her *japa* for many years. Later on in 1905, Giriji and Dada *Mahasaya* received initiation and *mantra* from their family Guru Sri Kali Krishna Vidyavinoda—a resident of Krishnapura-Sonargaon. Sri Giriji always keeps with her the photographs of both her *kulaguru* and the *sannyasa* Gurus.

(To be continued)

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\* (A discourse delivered by Sri Bhagvatananda Giri on 13th April 1965 on the occasion of the 26th, Sannyasa anniversary of the Revered Gurudeva Sri Sri Muktananda Giri Maharaj.)

1. visvam darpaua-drisymana-nagari-tulyam-nijantargatam  
pasyannatmani mayaya bahirivodbhutam yatha nidraya.



- yah sakshat kurutu prabodh samaye svatmanamevadvayam  
tasmai sri-guru-murtaye nama idam sri-dakshinamurtaye.
2. punaravritti-rahitam muktim prapnoti manavah  
yatra kutrapi va Kasyam marane sa mahesvarah. (20)  
janitor-dakshina-karne tu mantaram samupadiset  
nirdhutasesha-papaugho matsarupyam bhajatyayam. (21)
  3. sarvan indriya-krita-doshan varayatiti tena Varuna bhavati.  
sarvan indriya-kritan papan-nasayatiti tena Nasi bhavatiti.
  4. bhruvor-ghranasya cha cah samdhih sa esha sandhir-bhavatiti  
ctad-vai sandoim sandyam brahmaivid upasata sosvimukta upasya iti.
  5. brahmanasya hi dehosyam kshudrakamaya neshyate.  
kricchraya tapase cheha pretyananta-sukhaya cha.
  6. Musical instrument with one string.
  7. Kutumbeshu na sajjeta na pramadyet kutumbpapi, vipaschin-nasvarm  
pasyed-adrishtam api drishtavat.
  8. ittham partimrisan mukto griheshvatithivad vasan. na  
griheshvanubadhyeta nirmamo nirahamritah.
  9. dhritih kshama damos steyam sauchamindriya-nigrahah.  
dhir-vidya satyam akrodho dasakm dharma-lakshanam.
  10. dharanad dharmamityahuh dharmam dharayate drajah  
yassyad dharana samyuktan sa dharma iti nischayah.
  11. trinadapi sunischaiva tarorapi sahishnuna.  
amanino manadena kirtaniyah sada harih.
  12. satyam bruyat priyam bruyat na bruyat satyamapriyam.
  13. kam-sukham rodhayati.
  14. kamat krodhos bhijayate krodhad bhavati sammohah. sammohad buddhi-  
vibhramah.
  15. apakarini kopaschet kope kopah katham na te.  
dharmartha-kama-mokshanam prasahya paripanthini.  
Yajnavalkopanisad, 20.
- (b) na mesparadhah kimakarane nrinam madabhyasuetya Pi naiva  
cintayet.  
na yat krito prag-bhava-bandha. nihsritis-tatos paradhah paramo na  
chintyatam.
- (c) namos stu kopa-devaya svasraya-jvaline bhrisam.  
kopasya mama vairagya-dayine dosha-bodhine.

# Ever Changing Globe

Nihar Ranjan Chakraborty

Year after year time is stepping towards the infinite future. Within it how much construction and destruction has occurred, very little of it, very few of us know; although much of the past has come to the knowledge of the present. How much change nature has done and how much change mankind has brought about, let us assess that.

First we presume, then we start to search, re-search, invention, innovation, discovery and lastly a new thought grows.

All the structural change of the earth, both external and internal is being done by nature slowly and re-constructing the globe continuously. This is very surprising!

Rain, flood and wind—they are all engaged throughout the seasons to shift sand either from mountain to sea or from desert to oasis. Observe that men are also carrying coals, stones, soil and all other things from place to place. Shifting things here to there and continuously carrying on. Stones of the mountains are being shifted for building construction work on big big projects. Lime, cement, iron and all other minerals are being shifted for useful purposes. Although an account of it can not be assessed, despite of weight of the earth has been calculated; but it is sure that in several centuries much external changes have been made by mankind also. This non-stop efforts will go on.

Take it also as not accountable to the bulky body of the earth.

The internal shrinking and squeezing of the earth is elevating and lowering some places says the history. The nature has kept significance of those in the mountains and under the planes. There are proves that some mountains were

once much higher and due to un-resistable structural deformation of the earth, although it cannot be observed in a decade of generation; but the same after few centuries becomes considerable.

As the force of Globe's gravitation is concerned with the centre of the earth and centre of the things it attracts, so it is obvious that due to deformation of the Globe in thousand years, the centre of gravitation has been shifted.

Suppose 'A' was the centre of gravity in the past and 'B' is the centre of gravity at present which is a bit far from 'A'. Now it will attract things towards 'B' as the earth attracts all things towards it's centre.

Now it stands like thus : all things which fall from the sky to earth's surface, will change their way and fall towards the new gravity centre. The two places on the surface of the which are situated in one line with the past and new gravity centre will have higher or lesser attraction although the falling path of an object on earth will remain same.

Think about the earth's daily rotating and solar revolving function! The solar attraction occurs basically relating to the centre of planets. So, will not the solar attraction function in a different way from that of the past?

With the assistance of geological survey more profound and authentic information we can achieve to state that the ever changing globe is shifting her gravity centre slowly from the one imagined long ago.

*(This article was originally written by me in Bengali and was published in 'SIVAM' Shravan, 1385 Beng—a monthly relegious magazine of Bholagiri Ashram)*

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## Mother as Seen by a Westerner

Arnaud Desjardins (Paris)\*

Flow on, Ganga, holy river, from the mountains to the gigantic plains, from Rishikesh to Benares, called Kashi or Varanasi by its children. I now intend to return to the sacred city.

At last I shall see face to face the sage whose two pictures, at an interval of several years, stirred me so profoundly that I could never forget them. When I had only just completed my studies, lost among the various problems that confront a young man hardly prepared for life, I one day, at a library, glanced casually through the pages of "*Autobiography of a Yogi* by *Paramahansa Yogananda*, the founder of the well known *Self-Realization Fellowship*. Among all the photos of austere sages and venerable old men that illustrate the work, the picture of a very young woman with closed eyes struck me like a shock. She seemed extraordinarily beautiful and I thought : this is the Woman, the Mother, the Virgin.

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\* The following is not an article written for *Ananda Varta*. Short extracts from *Arnaud Desjardins*' book in French "*Ashrams, Les Yogis et les Sages*" published by *La Palatine*, Paris-Geneva, have been translated into English and in this way made available to our readers. The book describes the writer's journey in India and his impressions and experiences in four well-known Ashrams. We have obtained permission to publish in the pages of this magazine some portions of the two chapters devoted to Mataji. The book also deals with Yoga, Vedanta and Hinduism at large. It is interesting to note how powerfully Mataji has influenced the life of a Westerner, who is a Christian, does not understand either Hindi or Bengali, and has been with Mataji only three times, for several weeks on each occasion. Our readers will be interested to learn that Mr. and Mrs. Desjardins and their little daughter have come to India for the fourth time and are with Mataji at the moment.

- The Managing Editor

Eight years later someone presented to me the beautiful book "*India*" by the English photographer and writer *Richard Lannoy*. As I turn its pages, the face of an elderly woman with a look unlike any other, touches me to the quick. I am reminded of the meaning of the name *Krishna* : "he who steals the hearts." I do not even skim through the rest of the book: it has remained open on that page and never been closed again.

And a few months ago, when in my own car I started on my first trip to India, I made my first halt in a small Swiss village, at a distance of several thousand miles from my destination. Two courageous women spend every summer in that village. They both have lived a number of eventful years in the country that I am about to explore. To my question : "If I were to meet only one person in India, who should it be?" one of them replied very softly : "Ma Anandamayi."

When I mentioned her to Swami Sivananda, he said : "She is the most perfect flower the Indian soil has produced."

Today I only think : "It can hardly be that I am not deceived." And I am not even sure that I wish to meet her.



Benares is the touchstone for the love or the horror of India for Europeans. I have perhaps never been so perfectly happy as during the weeks that I spent in that city, and thanks to my friends *Bhattacharya* who made me discover the heart of their city, I lived like in the Kingdom of Heaven. But I know a number of travellers for whom it remains the memory of a veritable night-mare. I am sure that one could spend one's whole life in Benares, without exhausting its riches. But one of the spiritual seekers whom I esteem highly, was actually obliged to flee after a few hours.

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At the very end of one of the narrow lanes that all resemble one another, and where it is easy to lose one's way, right at the bank of the Ganges, in the mohulla of Bhadaini is situated the main Ashram of the great Bengali saint and sage Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi. I arrived there for the first time one evening during the Durga Puja festival. I shall always remember it.

Having started at sunrise and succeeded in reaching Varanasi by nightfall, I am fairly exhausted. To locate Bhadaini is yet an event. At last I park my car in a road broad enough for carriages and, led by a few children, proceed on foot through the lane that seems even more mysterious and unreal in the dark of night.

What I see at the end of the lane is fantastic.



A swarming multitude enters, emerges and watches those who enter and emerge. One might think the bustle on the footpath due to a special performance at the Opera-house or to a ball in some large hotel, of which the guests have been miraculously undressed and deprived of their shoes.

The narrow entrance, giving way under the streamers, is blocked by flower and garland-sellers and by a heap of shoes and sandals scattered all over the pavement.

Inside, the crush is indescribable : tanned backs, *dhotis* shining white in the night, a rainbow of *saris*. A guide whose dark features I am unable to distinguish catches hold of me, and not without difficulty tracing out a passage for us, walks ahead of me up a narrow staircase.

The noise, the chanting, the music are deafening. But as we enter a terrace where the crowd becomes, if possible, even more dense, the threefold rhythm beaten on gongs, bells and

cymbals bursts forth abruptly. Those who know it, will guess at once. Those who have never heard it, cannot imagine it. Thundering, sublime, piercing, overwhelming, shaking the whole body with its ever repeated three beats, capturing emotion, imposing silence on the mind, it raises in that wonderful autumn night the cry of the planet towards the sparkling sky. Across the white of a portico, amidst the black infinity of the plain far below, I distinguish the broad band of the eternal Ganga. In that frame, which opens out from a small outer staircase rising from the river, I see the most beautiful face of a man I have ever seen. Some wandering *sadhu* for whom this evening is but a halt on the road without end. The serene and silent peace that emanates from him, his ineffable smile and the light in his eyes give their meaning to the clangour of the brass under the blows of the clappers. Then he vanishes.

Instantaneously, abruptly there is silence, total, absolute, nourished by thousand individual silences.

I do not know for how long.

And suddenly I am pushed through the once again moving and noisy crowd, towards Her whom I had almost forgotten. "Mother, Mother", says a voice close to my ear. A woman who seems at the most forty years old, with long black hair falling loosely over her shoulders, dressed in a spotlessly white *sari*, more beautiful than I ever dreamt, smiles at me.

There is no question of my prostrating and putting my forehead on the ground : I cannot tear away my gaze from hers. I place one knee on the floor. I do not know how long this lasts. Then she turns round and walks away. I have had my first *darsana* of Mataji.

★ ★ ★

With the exception of two disciples of long standing,

namely a French doctor of medicine and an Austrian musician who have settled in India, but like many other disciples of Mataji pursue their individual *sadhanas* in two of her Ashrams, rather than travelling much with Mataji, and two others who after long years of spiritual practice have returned to their countries, Ma Anandamayi receives even to this day few European visitors who remain with her for longer periods. Many stay for a few weeks, days for hours only.

This is no doubt due to the fact that her fame has in the west not yet spread like that of Sri Ramana Maharshi. However, I must also say that her incessant and unpredictable changes of residence do not make her easy of access. One must really be determined to have her *darsana* in order to succeed in meeting her. Moreover she does not speak English, and the difficulty of rare conversations with the help of interpreters who are more or less acquainted with our way of thinking and putting questions, will never satisfy those who cannot search after Truth without resorting to questions and answers.

In short, after the enchantment of the first days is over, in which one is aware only of her extraordinary countenance and the beauty of her songs, to stay in close proximity to her (and Ma Anandamayi herself admits this quite frequently) is extremely difficult from every point of view. She also wields the sword more often than she bestows contentment.

Among those difficulties, a particular one may no doubt seem less easily acceptable to Europeans than to sleep on the floor or to be devoured by mosquitoes. For it is also true, as a matter of comfort, that Mataji's children know how to receive you as brothers and sisters who have come to the same Mother from a great distance, and they open to you their homes and their hearts. The difficulty I have in mind is the observance of caste rules in all the Ashrams, in which Ma



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Anandamayi herself considers herself but a guest.

The division into castes of Indian society has always seemed revolting to the west and to Christians. The recognition of that division in the surroundings of a Master who is regarded as the Mother of all and who teaches the absolute unity of the universe seems even more incomprehensible and unacceptable. For among the casteless are the foreigners. Those rules apply particularly to food. If I had entered the kitchen where the rice for the Ashramites was being prepared, that enormous quantity of food would have been lost for the orthodox Hindus, as if my impurity had positively defiled it. Foreign visitors are served separately, apart from the children of Bharat, and they are not allowed to enter certain places at the Ashram. Of course, in Christian monasteries also, outsiders are forbidden to enter the dining-room of the monks.

I have at times suffered deeply because of these restrictions, just as all those who feel Ma's call and who may perhaps sacrifice a great deal in order to respond to that call, will suffer, and this is why I speak about it at the beginning of my narrative.

However, I wish to make certain comments. First of all, it is like this. We are free to refuse the pearls and precious stones offered, merely because the casket that encloses them appears defective to us.

Furthermore, the caste system is greatly misunderstood by the west that has seen only its misuses, which are unfortunately only too real. Far from being purely unjust, it represents serious advantages since it avoids the unbridling of ambitions, the anguish of the social ladder, the ruthless competition of the struggle for life. Everyone has his place, and everyone has at all times had the possibility to transcend that organisation by raising himself on the spiritual ladder, for the *sannyasi*, even though a beggar and in tatters, is greater than the purest

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Brahmin. Moreover, caste imposes many more duties than it confers privileges.

For the orthodox Brahmin, to maintain what Europeans call 'caste prejudices' is not a matter of pride, but rather due to the fear of being subjected to undesirable influences.

But, whatever may be the discomfort that these caste rules cause to foreign visitors, I feel convinced that the circumstances, although at times difficult, irksome and provoking revolt and even rejection, can be much more congenial to an awakening and to the development of understanding than an atmosphere of superficial sweetness and kindness that leaves one exactly as foolish as one was before. One must not forget for what purpose one has come and what one is actually doing at the Ashram.

Finally, and above all, the position of Ma Anandamayi herself leaves no doubt. She does not prevent those who surround her to follow the rules of their orthodoxy, but they are not her own rules. A non-Brahmin disciple, who although still young has spent eighteen years near her, related to me examples of how she on many occasions violated in a very drastic manner those rules of orthodoxy.

Thus, it is not easy for a foreigner to stay in an Ashram, even while Ma Anandamayi is present. He has no place in the traditional Hindu society that surrounds him, and obstacles arise that often make it difficult for him to have access to her room. Then also, since he probably does not know either Hindi or Bengali except for a few words such as rice, water, milk, etc., he is condemned to never understanding anything of the questions put to Ma Anandamayi, neither her replies, neither what is sung or read, nor the commentaries to what has been read. What on earth are we then doing in that dreary place and why have I returned to her three times at intervals of eighteen months and for a sojourn of several weeks each

time?

The reply I have known ever since that first evening at Benares, and have never denied it in spite of a personality that does not want to die willingly and always finds an excuse for judging and criticizing in the hope of saving its life and maintaining its tyranny.

It is the answer to the question I put to myself before setting out on my journey : "And if it were true?"

A reply that lives among us at this very hour, is 65\* years old, and may be approached by anyone who will take a little trouble over it.



Mother is here.

Devotees and visitors are sitting around her in a cluster in order to have her *darsana*, her blessed sight, and she enlivens by her supernatural presence and her silent radiance the singing of the hymns.

Close by her, dressed all in white, the young girls who have dedicated their lives to her.

By her side a woman of hoary age, very thin, very frail, a *sannyasini* with shaven head, clad in the orange robe. It is Didima, Mother's mother, the mother of Ma Anandamayi.

And I marvel at the extraordinary destiny of that humble woman of the village, who lost several children at a tender age, and whose baffling little girl, more serious, more gentle and more joyous than all the others, the little girl who did not cry after she was born and who never wept except once during her childhood, has become the epitome of the Mother for millions of men and women. While Didima's life was confined

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\*This book was written over a year ago. Mataji is now nearly 67 years old.

to her modest home, how could she have thought that she would one day travel all over India and that the crowd of the small and the splendour of the great would come and bow at her feet, and that very untouchable foreigners would beg of her to touch their heads in token of benediction?

Three young women share the honour of fanning Mataji, and their movements seem in rhythm with the music.

To the accompaniment of his little harmonium, a *brahmachari* sings. Six or seven years ago he was a well-known radio star. He has renounced everything for the search after God. Nowadays his singing has attained to such an abandon, to such an impersonality that he really seems to transmit something divine. Then two of the young girls, dressed all in white, sing some songs and this is perhaps even more perfect, even purer.

Among the crowd are many children. Some play quietly in their corner. Others, curled up, sleep without the slightest movement. A few gaze at Mataji, unwearied.

Without a pause, newcomers worm their way to Ma, prostrate and offer a few fruits, flowers or a garland.

Indifferent to all this veneration, Ma Anandamayi is basking in peace and bliss.

Off and on her eyes gaze into the far distance and her expression takes on a beauty that is truly divine and beyond all description. What does she see at such moments? With which world is she in touch? What is the significance of a being in our midst so totally different? She has eyes like ourselves and yet so entirely unlike. She sees us and sees much more than us. Why have we no access to her vision? Why are we thus banished from the world of which she is a living proof? The more I look at her, the more fascinated, the more amazed am I.

Sometimes she smiles at a newcomer. Sometimes sud-

denly, her gaze fastens on one or the other with such intensity that it is almost unbearable even for those who only witness it. This lasts for a few seconds that seem an eternity.

The hymns follow one another, but now it is Ma who sings, and the crowd repeats in chorus : "*Hari bol, Hari bol, Hari bol, Hu, i bol.*" Her singing has such force, such vigour that we are shaken in our entire being. This surpasses by far everything of that order that I have had the chance to experience. Something immense that every nearly causes giddiness makes its presence felt among us. We want even more of it. But we feel that we should be unable to bear it.

Her face is so powerful that I cannot disengage myself from it. Lost in a crowd I have never before known a similar impression of intensity and fulness. At last something has actually happened in my life. And this certainly remains with me day after day for weeks, together with the one, not less forceful, that everything is possible for Mataji.

A sentence comes to my mind : "I am not worthy that you enter my house, but say only one word and my child will be saved."

Perhaps I have been capable of really knowing this, for at this very moment Ma Anandamayi slowly turns her face in my direction and looks at me. Of that instant I will not speak. Now she talks. She speaks with animation and gaiety. She laughs a great deal. 'Anandamayi'—does it not signify 'permeated by joy'? Everyone seems highly amused. Questions are asked in quick succession.

The atmosphere is completely free, intimate, spontaneous, relaxed. I do not understand anything, for sure. But what does it matter? The French disciple to whom someone remarked : "You don't understand anything of what Ma says?" only replied : "But who does?"

This reply is correct. The teaching of Ma Anandamayi is

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absolutely beyond words, just like that of Ramana Maharshi. And when she speaks, she still remains beyond her words and beyond the comprehension of her listeners. Nevertheless, a teaching of Ma Anandamayi, formulated in words, certainly does exist. One has often been surprised and dumbfounded by the way this unlettered woman replies, without ever a moment's reflection, to the most difficult and perilous questions that are put to her by very learned men. Her words have for years been recorded by her disciples, especially by a quite astonishing and indefatigable woman, Sri Gurupriya Devi, and by Brahmachari Kamalda, and some have been translated into English. They are extraordinarily interesting and striking and represent one of the monuments of metaphysical thought and a prodigious commentary on all *sadhanas* known to us.

I myself have, assisted by the Swami who served me as an interpreter, prepared in minute detail several conversations with her. Certain sayings, certain utterances have impressed me profoundly.

But this was never the most essential point.

*(To be continued)*

## Ashram News

### KANKHAL

Like earlier years, this year too, Shri Shri Durga Puja, Shri Shri Laxmi Puja, Shri Shri Shyama Puja and Annakut were celebrated with proper devotion and gaiety. From 10th November to 18th November, 1994, 45th Samyam Saptaha was celebrated. On this occasion a large number of devotees from different places gathered in the Ashram complex.

Mahatmas delivered courses on Upanishad, Puran and other scriptures to the devotees assembled. On the concluding day of the week Mahanam Yagna was performed.

### RANCHI

From 11th to 14th October, 1994 Shri Shri Durga Puja was celebrated with due devotion and gaiety. During the entire period the whole Ashram complex was filled with pleasing sounds of Sanskrit hymns and charming devotional songs. A large number of devotees assembled everyday during the period to offer floral tributes to Sri Sri Ma Durga. On the day of Maha Ashram, after puja prasadam was distributed, Laxmi Puja was also performed with due devotion. On 2nd November, 1994, Shri Shri Kali Puja was celebrated in a grand manner. During this occasion a large number of devotees assembled in the Ashram complex. After the puja, prasadam was distributed among the devotees.

On 11th November, 1994, Shri Jagaddhatri Puja were performed in the Ashram.

### AGARPARA (CALCUTTA)

Like earlier years Shri Shri Durga Puja, Shri Shri Laxmi Puja, Shri Shri Kali Puja and Annakut were performed in the Agarpara Ashram with deep devotion and gaiety. On this

occasions many devotees assembled in the Ashram complex. After the pujas prasadam were distributed among the devotees present.

### **VRINDABAN**

From 10th to 14th October, 1994, Shri Shri Durga Puja was celebrated with due devotion and gaiety. During the entire period the whole Ashram Complex was filled with pleasing sounds of Sanskrit hymns and charming devotional songs.

On 18th October, 1995, Shri Shri Laxmi Puja was also performed with due devotion.

### **JAGADDHATRI PUJA AT MATRI MANDIR**

Like last year this year too, Shree Shree Jagaddhatri Puja was celebrated here at Matri-Mandir, 57/1, Ballygunge Circular Road, Calcutta-700 019.

The Achibash was observed on the evening of Thursday, the 19th November, 1994 and the functions begun. Next day i.e. on Friday the 11th November, 1994 from very dawn singing of holy songs. Simultaneously the performance puja of Shree Shree MA, Shree Shree Onkamathji and Shree Shree Jagaddhatri also begun. The pujas continued till 8 p.m. in the evening.

At noon prasadam was distributed among almost 1500 devotees who participated in the puja.

Next day i.e. Saturday — the 12th November, 1994 in the morning Vijaya Dashami was celebrated at 2.30 p.m. in the afternoon, the image of Shree Shree Jagaddhatri was taken on a decorated truck for immersion.



## Obituary

Dulal Chandra Banerjee, brother of Kumari Chhabi Banerjee and an ardent devotee of Shree Shree MA Anandamayee left his mortal coil on 1st October, 1994 at Calcutta.

May his soul rest in peace eternally at the Lotus feet of MA grant enough peace and strength to the members of the bereaved family to bear up his absence.

On the Sunday, the 2nd October, 1994 at early morning, Subodh Bandyopadhyaya — the brother of Brahmachari Sivananda and Nirvananandaji passed away with the name of MA. Everybody identified as an ardent devotee. We pray for further devotion of his soul and peace in the mind of his family members.

On Friday, the 21st October, 1994, Ramesh Chandra Bhattacharyya a true priest of Agarpara Ashram left his body at his own house to take final rest in the lap of Shree Shree MA.

May Ma grant peace and strength to the members of his family to stand the bereavement.

Ganganandaji (Gangadi) — an ardent devotee of MA breathed her last on the monday — the 5th December, 1994 (6 p.m.) at Varanasi Ashram. She took Dihsha from MA Anandamayee and Didima. She took Sanyas Dharma from Mahantji at Nirvani Akhra. She associated with Kanyapeeth in the year of 1941 (October) when she was only 9 years. She served MA for a long time with full devotion. We all send our deepest condolence to the bereaved family and pray to MA for her eternal peace in the bossom of Shri Shri MA.

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