

# ANANDA VARTA

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

Vol. XXXXIII

OCTOBER, 1996

No. 4

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अक्टूबर, १९९६

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God is the one and only friend of the Pilgrim to ultimate. Act in this spirit so that you may come to accept Him as your all in all. Unless one is Single Minded there will be obstacles at every step.

Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

There is no sin born out of any deed, word or thought which is not destroyed by the Power of Nama.

Shree Shree Sitaramdas Onkarnath

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*To Invoke THAT to be constantly intent on realizing it, is Man's duty. At all times in her arms, in Her embrace — within the Mother. On finding the Mother, everything is found.*

**Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee**

*For the vaishnavas, the final result, the Param Dham is Nama, so always remember and sing Nama.*

*Jai Nama, Jai Nama, Jai Jai Nama,  
Jai Nama, Jai Nama, Jai Jai Nama*

**Sri Sri Sitaramdas Onkarnath**

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# Matri - Vani

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 at all times.



Man must aim at the Superman, at real greatness. The traveller on the Supreme path may hope to attain to the ultimate goal. This is man's main duty.



Only by taking refuge in Him can sorrow be removed. The troubles and difficulties one encounters as the fruit of one's own actions are but the grace of God. If one can accept them as such, one will progress towards one's real welfare.



In this world of birth and death the pain of separation is unavoidable. Bear it, taking refuge in patience and obey the directions of your parents as much as you can. At all times keep your mind immersed in the thought of the lord so that there may be no possibility of straying into a path that leads to misery.



It lies in God's very nature to keep the door to Himself ever open. If the amount of energy and time spent in worldly pursuits is given to the search for Him, the path of self-knowledge will of a certainty open out of itself.



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God is complete. This, for full revelation one has to come to Him only because of the notion of God's absence is there sorrow in the world where God is revealed there are no "two" — sorrow has no place.



If you turn to God in order to be liberated from your desires for sense objects, your inner strength will grow. Take to some spiritual practice, keep yourself bound to meditation on God — whether you are able to concentrate or not. There is hope that some time or other you will get interested and also remain absorbed in it.



Without God, where are you? That glimpse does occur in some form as some sort of intuition.



In very truth, everything without exception is possible for God. The impossible becomes possible and the possible impossible.



# Amar Vani

**Question :** How am I to grasp this?

**Mataji :-** It is for the Guru to point out the method : he will show you the way to understanding and instruct you as to your sadhana. It is for you to keep on practising it faithfully; but the fruit comes spontaneously in the form of Self-revelation. The power to make you grasp the Ungraspable duly manifests through the Guru. Where the question : "How am I to proceed ?" Arises, fulfilment has obviously not yet been reached. Therefore never relax your efforts until there is Enlightenment : let no gaps interrupt your attempt, for a gap will produce an eddy, whereas your striving must be continuous like the flowing of oil — it must be sustained, constant, and unbroken stream.

That you have no control over the body's need of food and sleep does not matter, your aim should be not to allow any interval in the performance of your sadhana. Do you not how, whatever you require in the way of food and sleep, each at its own appointed hour, is without exception an ever recurring need ? In exactly the same manner must you aspire at uninterruptedness where the search after Truth is concerned. Once the mind in the course of its movement has felt the touch of the Indivisible — if only you can grasp that moment — in that Supreme — Instant all moments are contained and when you have captured it, all moments will be yours.

Take for example the moments of confluence (Sandhiksana) at dawn, midday and dusk, in which the power inherent in the contact point where coming and going meet, becomes revealed. What you call electric light or electricity in general is nothing but the union of two opposites : thus does Supreme Being flash forth at the moment of conjunction. Actually IT is present at every

single moment, but you miss it all the time. Yet this is what you have to seize — it can be done at the point of juncture where the opposites melt into one. Nobody is able to predict when for any particular individual this fateful Moment will reveal itself; therefore keep on striving ceaselessly.

Which exactly is that great Moment depends for each one upon his particular line of approach. Does not the moment at which you are born determine the rule and the course of your whole life? Similarly what is important is the Moment at which you enter the current which is the movement of your true being, the Going Forth, in other words the Great Pilgrimage. Unless this happens perfection cannot be attained. This is why for some disciples the Guru fixes special times for sadhana, such as dawn, dusk, midday and midnight; these are the four periods usually prescribed. It is the duty of the disciple conscientiously to carry out the Guru's orders, which vary according to the temperament and predisposition of the aspirant. The same method does not suit everyone. The average person can have no knowledge of the particular combination of factors necessary to bring to completion the hitherto neglected facets of his being; for this reason it is essential to obey the Guru's instructions. That decisive Moment is bound to manifest as soon as by your attitude as well as your actions you are ready for it. Therefore try to follow closely the path indicated by the Guru and you will see how everything just happens spontaneously.

Within the twenty-four hours of the day some time must be definitely dedicated to God. Resolve if possible, to engage regularly in Japa of a particular Name or Mantra while sitting in a special posture and gradually add to the time or the number of repetitions. There is no need for a daily augmentation. Fix the rate and the interval at which you will increase, say weekly or fortnightly. In this way try to bind yourself to the Quest of God; wherever you



may be, take refuge in Him, let Him be your goal. When by virtue of this endeavour you become deeply immersed in that "current" and devote ever more time to it, you will be transformed and your appetite for sense enjoyment will grow feeble; thus you are reaping the fruits of your accumulated efforts. In this connection you may also come to feel that the body is liable to depart at any time, that death may arrive at any moment.

Just as there is ever new creation in the universe, so also does your mental and psychological reaction to it undergo constant change. If you proceed in the manner indicated you will observe that as a result your outer interests will gradually fall away and your vision turn inward. The more ardent your pursuit, the vaster the possibilities that will open out for you, and in proportion to your advance suffering will diminish and not increase again. It is also said, is it not, that Karma is extinguished by Karma — that is to say the efforts of past actions are neutralised by counter actions. Indeed, if it be anyone's destiny this may be achieved in a very short time.

Look, even when the body is not given food, it does not stop the assimilation of nourishment; we are told that in such cases it starts consuming its own flesh. Therefore just as you keep your body well-nourished, so must you take equally good care where your spiritual well-being is concerned and then only will you flourish in that respect. Who can tell at what moment the flame of illumination will be set ablaze? For this reason continue your efforts steadily without flagging. Gradually you will get more and more deeply absorbed in Him — He and He alone will take possession of your thinking and feeling: for the mind ever seeks that which gives it proper sustenance and this cannot be provided by anything save the Supreme Being Himself. Then you will be carried away by the current that leads to your Self. You will discover that the more you delight in the inner life, the less you feel drawn to

external things. In consequence the mind becomes so well nourished with the right kind of food, that any moment the realisation of its identity with the SELF may occur.

As regards Laya (the dissolution of the mind), if you mean its dissolution into THAT, then what you said was correct. Jada Samadhi, which is like a trance, where the mind is in a kind of stupor, is not what is wanted. On the contrary, you have to realize what the mind is, who it is. The mind subsides into THAT — is this what you intended to express? Laya may signify either that the mind has nowhere to go to, in other words can no longer find its way and hence subsides into latency; or else it merges into THAT, which is Self-revelation, and consequently there can be no possibility of a separate existence of the mind. Where Self-effulgence is — how can the question as to whether the mind gets dissolved or not, arise at all?

This has been replied to from the standpoint from which you asked. You began by enquiring how meditation on a particular part can lead to meditation on the whole. Surely, the whole is contained in the part; it is in order to arrive at the realization of this truth that you have to follow the Guru's instructions which are instinct with his power. The aforesaid gives but a faint idea of only one aspect of the whole matter.

Again, look, there are instances when one loses consciousness while sitting in meditation. Some people have found themselves swooning away, as it were, intoxicated with joy, remaining in this condition for quite a long time. On emerging they claim to have experienced some sort of divine bliss. But this is certainly not Realization. A stage exists in meditation, where intense joy is felt, one is as if submerged in it. But who is it that gets submerged? The mind of course. At a certain level and under certain circumstances this experience may prove an obstacle. If repeated time and again one may stagnate at its particular level, and thereby be prevented from getting a taste of the Essence of Things.

Once genuine contemplation (*Dhyana*) has been established, worldly attractions lose all their appeal. In the event of an experience of anything pertaining to Supreme Reality or to the Self, one does not say, "Where have I been? I did not know anything for the time being"; there can be no such thing as "not knowing". If it is possible to describe in words the bliss one has experienced, it is still enjoyment and therefore a hindrance. One must be fully conscious, wide awake. To fall into a stupor or into yogic sleep will not take one anywhere.

After real meditation worldly pleasures become unalluring, dull, entirely savourless. What does detachment (*vairagya*) signify? When every single object of the world kindles as it were the fire of renunciation, so as to make one recoil as from a shock. Then there is inward and outward awakening. This however does not mean that detachment implies aversion or contempt for anything of the world — it simply is unacceptable, the body refuses it. Neither dislike nor anger will arise. When dispassion becomes a living inspiration, one begins to discriminate as to the true substance of the world, until finally the knowledge of its illusoriness arises with the glowing certainty of direct perception. Each and everything belonging to the world seems to burn — one cannot touch it. This also is a state that may ensue at a particular time.

At present what you enjoy does not impress you as being short-lived, rather does it appear to make you happy. But to the extent that the spirit of detachment is roused, the relish of such pleasures will die down, for are they not fleeting? In other words death will be recognized as death. Now that you are advancing towards that which is beyond time, the semblance of happiness brought about by mundane things is being consumed. As a result the question : "What actually is this world?" Will arise. So long as the world seems enjoyable to you, such a problem will not present itself. Since you are progressing towards

that which transcends time, all that belongs to time will begin to appear to you in its true light.

If after coming down from the state of contemplation you are capable of behaving as before, you have not been transformed. When there is real meditation, which evokes indifference to the world, you will begin to pine keenly for the Divine, you will hunger for it and realize that nothing transient can appease this hunger or satisfy you.

How am I to make it clear to you, father? People come to this body and tell of their sons and daughters having got into a car and driven away without even looking up to see whether their father and mother were weeping at the parting. They are quite unmoved by their parents' grief. You see, this is precisely what it is like at a certain stage on the Path; worldly enjoyment cannot possibly touch you. You feel: "Those whom I had believed to be my very own are merely related to me by flesh and blood, what is that to me?" Nobody deliberately puts his hand into fire or treads on a snake; in exactly the same manner you just glance at the objects of sense and turn away. Then you will get into the current that takes you in the opposite direction, and later when have become detached even from detachment, there is no more problem of detachment of non-detachment what is, is THAT. Some say, by sustained effort one may attain to Enlightenment. But is it true that effort can bring about Enlightenment? Is illumination dependant on action? The veil is destroyed and when this has been accomplished THAT which IS stands revealed. What is known as the fruit of effort is nothing but the illumination of the particular aspect towards which the effort was directed. **UNVEILED LIGHT** (Niravaran Prakash) is He Himself, the Eternal — The Guru knows which is the right line of approach for any individual.

**Question :** At times we feel that sense objects really exist, at other times that they are merely ideas. Why does

one and the same thing appear so different on different questions ?

**Mataji :** Because you are in the grip of time. You have not yet reached the state where everything is perceived as the Self alone, have you ? Herein lies the solution of the whole problem. "To feel" is excellent, provided you feeling gives impetus to the Supreme Quest; for nothing is ever wasted. What you have realized even for a second will at some time or other bear fruit. In this wise what water, air, the sky, etc. are and hence what creation is, the knowledge of the real character of each element flashes into your consciousness one by one just like buds bursting open. Flowers and fruits come into existence only because they are potentially contained in the tree. Therefore, you should aim at realizing the One Supreme ELEMENT (Tattwa) which will throw light on all elements.

You asked about sense objects: an object of sense (vishaya) is that which contains poison, is full of harm and drags man towards death. Whereas freedom from the world of sense objects, (Nirvishaya) where no trace of poison remains, means immortality.

**Question :** But something of the burning pain of renunciation is still left over ?

**Mataji :** What is it that produces the sensation of burning ? A sore surely! Because of it there is inflammation; but whose sore is it ? Unless there is a sore there can be no smarting. Therein lies the deception : so long as Reality is not revealed the sore will persist. If the inflammation is a healing process, it is of course beneficent. A patient who becomes unconscious is not aware of his agony — you can see how man is drowned in pleasure, loss and affliction this surely is not what is wanted! This is the way of the world with its never-ending conflicts. Can you tell why one feels anguish ?

**Mataji :** You have a desire to give up, but you cannot let go, such is your problem. Let the desire awaken in your heart, its stirring is a promise that the time is coming when you will be able to give up.

You obtain a coveted object, but still you are dissatisfied, and if you fail to get it you are also disappointed. The disillusionment you experience at the fulfilment of your wish is wholesome; but the torment of the unfulfilled hankering after the things you could not secure drives you towards that which is of death, towards misery.

**Question :** The human of the senses can never be appeased, the more one gets, the more one wants. The fulfilment of worldly desire only begets greater longing.

**Mataji :** This world is itself but an embodiment of want and hence the heartache due to the absence of fulfilment must needs endure. This is why it is said that there are two kinds of currents in human life ; the one pertaining to the world in which want follows upon want, the other of one's true being. It is the very nature of the former that it can never end in fulfilment, on the contrary the sense of want is perpetually stimulated anew. Whereas the latter aims at bringing to completion the activities of one's true being, at establishing man in his divine nature. Thus if he endeavours to fulfil himself by entering the current of his true being, this current will eventually lead him to the perfect poise of his own true being.

**Question :** And the anguish of not having found, the anguish of the absence of God ? I have no wish for sense pleasures, but they come to me. I am compelled to experience them.

**Mataji :** Ah, but the anguish of not having found God is salutary. What you have eaten will leave a taste in your mouth. You wear ornaments because you wish to and so

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you have to bear to bear their weight. Yet this weight is fated to fall off, for it is something that cannot last, can it ?

**Question :** Are there instances when an Enlightened person may be in ignorance ?

**Mataji :** You call a person enlightened and in the same breath say he may be subject to ignorance ? Such a thing, father, is quite impossible. There is however a state of attainment which is not maintained at all times, where what you suggest may apply, but never in a case of final Realization. In whatever way you may perceive an Enlightened Being, He remains what He is. How can there be a possibility of ignorance in what is termed knowledge Supreme ? When you speak of ignorance with reference to a Realized man it is an example of Supreme Knowledge being mistaken for ignorance. Therefore you also talk of ascent and descent. Since there is no question of a body for one who is liberated, how can there be rising up and coming down ? Nevertheless there is a state of achievement in which ascent and descent do exist, really and truly.

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*“As some massive rock stands unmoved by the storm wind, so the wise stand unmoved by praise or blame.”*

—Buddha

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# Diary Leaves

Atmananda

“Never let your mouth be empty, keep misri (sugar candy) in it at all times — namely the misri of God’s name. No bitterness will then have a chance of accumulating.” This is one of Mataji’s ever-recurring sayings.

Once She visited a town after an absence of two or three years. She noticed that one of Her bhaktas kept a dainty little silver box with him, which he opened occasionally to take something out and put into his mouth. “What do you keep in this box?” asked Mataji. “When you came here last,” was the reply, “you told me to keep misri in my mouth at all times. I have religiously been carrying out your advice; this is why I got this little silver box.” Mataji laughed: “Oh, is that it? You see real sweetness can be got from God’s name only. What I meant was that you should never remain without the remembrance of God. Nevertheless”. She added, becoming quite serious, “you have done well to practise faithfully what you understood, for thereby you have learnt a great lesson, which is to keep one thing in mind at all times. It will come in useful when you change over to the misri I meant.”

When the Satsang was over an old man was taking leave. “It is getting late,” he said, “I must be going home.” “Late indeed,” agreed Mataji, “there you are right; but go to your real home, not to the Dharmasala.” The gentleman had no inkling of what Mataji was driving at. “I am not staying in any Dharmasala, I have my own house here.” Mataji shook Her head and smiled: “Do you call this home? You won’t be able to stay there for ever. Your days are counted and when your time is over you have to leave. I call it Dharmasala. There are rules and regulations, you may remain for a regulations, you may remain for a while and then you have to quit. But this body tells



you to find your real home from which nobody can drive you out, which is not of this world. Dive deep and unearth your real wealth, find your real home in God who is your own Self."

"Mataji what is the use of doing sadhana, japa, meditation, ceremonies and all the rest? We go on practising for years; but whether we get anywhere by all this exertion and self-denial we do not know. Does it bring us nearer to Reality?" This is a very common question and I have heard Mataji reply something like this :

"When you wash your clothes you have to apply soap. It is ofcourse true that the clothes will not be clean unless the soap is rinsed off again. But can dirt be removed without soap? The thought of God is the soap that in the end has to be washed away by the purifying waters of the Ganges of Supreme Knowledge (*jnana ganga*). Don't worry about results. In business you give and you get something in return. This is called a bargain, but it is no real gain. If you adopt this sort of mercenary attitude you will not get anywhere. Never leave off your practice until there is illumination. You must be adamant in your pursuit. The remembrance of God is like a flame. In whichever direction it is blown, there it will burn up whatever gets into its way. According to your actions you will reap the fruits. No effort is ever wasted. Good works and bad works will yield their harvest in great abundance — for He is extremely generous. Perhaps you will argue: 'I want to be a king, but my wish is not granted.' You get exactly what is due to you — nothing less and nothing more. When a pitcher full of water has a hole, however small, all the water will leak away. This is how it is with you : your concentration is never complete, there is a break in it, you do not want anything — with your whole being.

"A dogs of poison kills a man. But the objects of the senses act like slow poison, gradually they push you

towards death. So long as you are worldly-mined you get a 'return-ticket', you remain bound to the round of birth and re-birth, repeating the same kind of experience over and over again.

"God is immortal. If you aspire to find Him you become a pilgrim on the path to immortality. Try to keep company with the pilgrims of this path and you will realize your Self as the Immortal."

A great number of people approach Mataji with the following question : "I do not know how to meditate, neither do I feel inclined to do so. I cannot find much interest in spiritual things, but the hum-drum of daily existence has also little charm. What is the solution ?"

"What this little child would recommend for you", replies Mataji, "is to sit under a tree." (Mataji always speaks of Herself as a little child). "But there are no trees where I live," a lady once retorted and on another occasion someone said : "Under a tree? What kind of tree? A peepal tree?" "Yes, a peepal tree," said Mataji. "By tree I mean a real saint. A saint is like a tree. He does not call anyone, neither does he send anyone away. He gives shelter to whoever cares to come, be it a man, woman, child or an animal. If you sit under a tree it will protect you from the inclemencies of the weather, from the scorching sun as well as from pouring rain, and it will give you flowers and fruit. Whether a human being enjoys them or a bird tastes of them matters little to the tree; its produce is there for anyone who comes and takes it. And last but not least it gives itself. How itself? The fruit contains the seeds for new trees of a similar kind. So by sitting under a tree you will get shelter, shade, flowers, fruit and in due course you will come to know your Self. This is why I say, keep Satsang, take refuge at the feet of the Holy and Wise, keep close to them and you will find all you need."

"It is not so easy to get Satsang" people often contradict, "there is no great saint in my town or village." "If you

can't get the company of living Sages," is Mataji's counsel, "read books about them or written by them, that is to say study sacred texts and above all try to remain in the Presence of God by the constant remembrance of one of His Names. If you do this you are sure to find a living Guru who will guide you."

When Mataji visited Meerut on Nov. 6th, 1954, the following conversation took place :

A Sannyasini : How is it that diversity has developed out of oneness ?

Mataji : Developed ? It is there.

The Sannyasini : Is it then nothing more than an appearance ?

Mataji : your question itself contains the answer.

Question : How can we get self-realization ?

Mataji : Not by anything. 'Something' means a little. By doing something you will get something which is not worth anything. God is Wholeness, Totality. When the clouds fade away he stands revealed. In very truth there is One Self. Duality has no real existence. Durbuddhi, evil-mindedness and stupidity arise from the conception of duality — mine and thine. As a result there is durgati, hardship and misery and durbodh, difficulty in understanding. The two, the pairs of opposites, (dvandva) are nothing but blindness (andha).

Here are two questions and answers from Bombay, during the Samyam Vrata.

Question : God has giving 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 He claps His own hands and hears Himself the sound — just the one SELF.

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

"By 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 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 ?"

"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 ?"

"Do you really want Self-realization ?"

"Ofcourse, I do !"

"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." "Then you must do exactly as He instructs you," said Mataji, "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 and three times the response had been the same. Mataji became very serious. She spoke: "If this be 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."

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## PROGRAMME OF CEREMONY

### OCTOBER 1996 TO NOVEMBER 1996

1. Mahalaya - 12th October, Saturday
  2. Shree Shree Durga Puja - 17th October, Thursday to 21st October, Monday
  3. Shree Shree Laxmi Puja - 26th October, Saturday
  4. Shree Shree Kali Puja - 10th November, Sunday
  5. Shree Shree Jagaddhatri Puja - 19th November, Tuesday
  6. Shree Shree Annakut - 11th November, Monday
  7. Samyam Saptaha - 18th November, Monday to 25th November, Monday
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# Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Vol. VI

Translated by Tarakini

(Continued from Previous issue)

## April 25 Monday

When Ma awoke this morning her face was washed and She was made to drink milk. Just then Baba Bholanath, Akhandananda Swamiji, Turiyananda Swami, Shanti and others returned from Haridwar. Shri Kunja Mohan Mukhopadhyaya had been initiated into *sannyasa* yesterday. Bholanath has returned very sick; he is suffering from a stomach ache and fever.

Shri Amulya Chandra Datta Gupta has published a book about Ma entitled, "Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi Prasanga". Today a copy of the book arrived by post. In the afternoon I read out from the book to Ma. The book is very well written. Every time Amulya Dada meets Ma he questions her on some topic and elicits answers from her. Ma, in her turn, enjoys listening to him as he is serious and grave by nature and does not speak uselessly. In his presence only good topics come up for discussion. I read out to Ma from the book that he had written. Some errors are present at a few places, but it is no fault of his for it is natural that mistakes will occur when anyone attempts to write about Ma's life because one's own interpretations and language are bound to come up even if one does not desire it.

At one place the book reads — 'Ma said, "I was possessed by a *bhava*."' But Ma never says that. She generally says, "The body behaved very strangely."

I laughed and told Ma, "Ma, that has become our language." Ma said, "That kind of language does not come from me. If you call it 'being possessed by a *bhava*' then all the time some kind of *bhava* is prevalent in my body. Like when I speak to you all as if I were just like one of

you — that is one kind of *bhava*. Whichever be the *bhava* you present before this body, this body responds by entering into the same *bhava* at that time. Be it concerned with *bhakti yoga* (the *yoga* of devotion), *karma yoga* (the *yoga* of action), *jnana yoga* (the *yoga* of knowledge) or be it related to some wordly matter, this body cooperates with that *bhava*. The bodily posture and conversation that occur reflect the same *bhava*, therefore you will observe Ma has a different *bhava* at different times. Actually you only see this body assuming whichever *bhava* you put before it. Therefore all are possessed by *bhava*.”

In another place the book reads — ‘Ma says, “I myself did not know that.”’ Ma never says that either. Referring to the words “I did not know”, Ma now explained, “Do you know why I say that ? Perhaps it was not appropriate to reveal something to you. Therefore I say, ‘You people have not made me say it ‘or’ I cannot say it ‘meaning’ it cannot be stated or revealed’. Never has it been said, “I did not know’. Whatever could not be uttered has just been pushed aside, that’s all.” Saying this Ma laughed very softly. Actually we have often received proof of what Ma just explained. Whenever some thing is not to be mentioned Ma says ‘Enough’ and drops the subject. Whatever interpretation we make in our language is not known even to Ma. Her character is very difficult to understand.

The history of *Kali puja* has been described in the book. While listening to it Ma said, “In reality I saw that just as a little child jumps into its mother’s lap so did the figure of Kali jump into my lap. I also kissed it the way one fondles a child. Alright, tell me what is this all about? This is but a human body and what does it do? It takes the personification of *Brahman*, Kali, in its lap and consoles it.” The ever smiling Ma then looked at me like a little child and continued, “See, I saw a moving figure

of Kali but Shiva was not present. Do you know what that implies ? She is the Primordial Power. I had asked many people as to the instances when Shiva is not present beneath Kali, but no one could answer. Do you know why I saw such a figure ? I have already said — “whichever *bhava* you people present, this body responds to and speaks accordingly. It is as if those *bhavas* are fully illuminated within this body. During Diwali you people began praying to this body for the performance of Kali *puja*. Therefore the form of the Primordial Power appeared in the figure of *Kali*.” There is no decision or indecision in Ma’s mind. Therefore she says, “The *bhava* that you bring before this body is the one that sports within this body.” Sometimes it has been observed that when a great person emerges from a state of *samadhi* the worldly thoughts that were strongest in his mind prior to entering *samadhi* surface and he speaks accordingly. But nothing of this kind can be observed in Ma.\* The temperature rises to 107°, visibility decreases, hearing becomes weak, a veritable train engine thunders inside her head, but externally no *bhava* is stronger than the other. Because of this, although she may speak for a few moments about the present condition of her body, only while in that state, she does not otherwise say anything. No alteration in her *bhava* is perceptible.

### April 26 Tuesday

Bholanath continues to be unwell today. Ma had declared yesterday, “Leave me alone in the room in the morning and shut the door. I shall get up when I feel like it.” We did accordingly and at dawn the doors of Ma’s room were closed.

Around nine a.m. Ma got up, had a wash and strolled

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\*When all kinds of *bhava* manifest within Ma then why not the *bhava* of illness ? When such a *bhava* does appear it manifests itself in complete measure.



for awhile. Gradually people collected around her. At ten a.m. Ma was offered *bhoga* and at twelve noon the doors of her room were shut again.

I continued to read Amulya Dada's book to Ma. She listened to the incident about the snake. She did not seem to pay attention all the time. Suddenly she interrupted, "What are you reading out? I did not hear it at all." And she laughed. I was reading out the incident about Ma's encounter with a snake in the boat that she travelled in while returning from Vidyakut. In the narration Ma says, "Really, how wonderful it was! Did you not see the boat was sailing but the snake kept at exactly ten arms' length and swam; neither farther nor nearer, neither here nor there, but exactly ten arms' length away from me, I followed the boat. It kept its speed exactly equal to the fast moving boat. It had appeared before me just as sunset drew on." After that when Biren Dada repeatedly questioned, "Who was that snake Ma?" She had replied, "I could see, ten arms' length above me, a *sadhu* and his disciple."

While reading this out today I asked Ma, "Ma you often say — 'You people make me lie down to rest and you see that this body is lying down, but it is not so. Often departed souls come in their subtle bodies and just as I converse with you people, I converse in exactly the same way with them. There is not the slightest difference. That is why 'rest' as you people understand it does not exist in my case. Then again just like you all those people are also not restless all the time so then I lie down quietly. "Ma, I want to ask you, what is the form of those people? Do they have limbs like us? Or is their arrival heralded like fragrance wafting in the breeze?" Ma said, "There are all kinds. There are some exactly like you with limbs, while some are like the fragrance in air as you just described. Again sometimes only their voices are heard, nothing more. Sometimes there may be no speech at all, their presence is just an experience — there are several such

forms. You people may say that when we cannot perceive what is the use of your saying all this ? Many people ask questions of this kind. The answer is that if you people could have perceived you would also have been at the same level. Being in the present level how can you see them? Just as there are so many creatures in water and in air that you cannot see with your eyes, but doctors can see them with suitable instruments. Do you disbelieve their existence just because you cannot see them ? Doctors have toiled for years to be able to see them and therefore they have knowledge about them. They know that those instruments with microscopic sight can spot these subtle creatures in water and air. Everything becomes visible with practice (*sadhana*). How will visibility open up without practice ?" Many such topics were discussed.

At five p.m. many people came for Ma's *darshan*. Ma was seated on her bedding in her room. At six thirty p.m. I said to Ma, "Ma, come out for a little walk." Ma rose and walked for some time. Bholanath has been retching continuously for the past two days. As Ma walked she entered his room and then walked outside. At ten p.m. the doors of her room were shut.

### April 27 Wednesday

Ma's state of health continues to be the same. Bholanath has been vomiting often and pox has erupted all over his body. Ma got up at nine a.m. Sanjna Devi had come and had wanted to take Ma to Tapakeshwar. She had brought her car. She took Ma, Didi Ma and Manoramadi and left. As Bholanath was ill I did not go. They all returned at ten thirty a.m. Then Ma was offered *bhoga*. Ma does not usually eat rice. She is offered vegetables and milk. Today she ate very little. After the meal she sat on her bedding and conversed with those who had come. At twelve noon the doors to her room were shut.

Ma immediately acquires the same *bhava* that we present before her. Referring to that Ma said, "Look, you people have obtained a great variety of handwritings from this hand. The reason for this is that at one time this body saw the handwriting of Kumudini Pishi (aunt) and I sat down to write with the desire of writing the same way and the tiny letters that got written were in her style. Then when the memory of Baba's handwriting arose as I wrote, the handwriting that appeared was exactly like his. Then when the *kheyal* arose to fashion my handwriting like print, beautifully formed letters appeared. Anything short of that was not approved of. When I sat down alone as a child with no thought of correct and incorrect, there occurred such attempts at writing. Now at last I understand the cleverness about reading and writing!" So saying Ma began to laugh.

Once in Narundi, people who saw the daughter-in-law's handwriting thought she was very learned. The style of handwriting, in comparison to the level of Ma's literacy, was not natural. Every action that Ma performs is thus. I have heard from those who actually witnessed it, that when it came to smearing the house with cowdung or making a fire, there was no one to beat Ma. In every job that she performed there was a speciality. Though people did observe it then, they did not quite view it in the same manner as they do now. It seems as if Ma is like a doll of *bhava*. For depending on what we people desire, different actions manifest in her body; and yet she is apparently beyond all this. All *bhava* seems to merge in one. This is the reason why when we say, "Ma, get rid of your illness" she laughs and replies, "When the *kheyal* arises it will definitely be removed, but you people are unable to make me get that *kheyal*."

Today the same topic came up for discussion. Ma and I were seated in conversation when she said, "Look, when it is said that I do nothing by my own desire, do you know

what that desire is ? The worldly desires and inclinations that you experience never arise in this body. Everything happens by the influence of that Great Will. Therefore, in short it can be said, that everything can be done as soon as the desire arises, yet nothing is done by my own will — both these view points can be stated. In this *bhava* both are true.” Saying this Ma laughed and continued, “The fact that I do nothing by my own will is again according to the dictates of the Great Will. This body has nothing called desire. You are all within the realm of desire and no desire and therefore all your thoughts and actions are conditioned by desire and no desire. What can be said that will be right, that’s all. By observing the actions that are executed do not think that some other power is making me do them. That day you people took it as being possessed by a *bhava* and said all sorts of things. Do not think this body is possessed by new kinds of *bhava*. Whatever you observe in this body is all its own nature (*svabhava*). Just as speaking, laughing and other actions are the natural functions of a human being, this is also exactly like that, what else ? Again, there is nothing called ‘*bhava*’ and ‘the lack of *bhava*’.” Saying this Ma laughed.

After lunch Ma began narrating incidents from her childhood, “Once a relative presented me with silver ornaments to be worn on the feet. Then I went to the pond for a bath I took off the ornaments and kept them on the bank. I knew the girl who was standing nearby. I left the ornaments behind and returned to the house when my mother sent me back to fetch them. When I reached the pond I found the ornaments had disappeared so I went home and told my mother, ‘Ma, someone has taken the ornaments to wear on her feet’. Hearing this my mother burst out laughing.”

I said, “Your nature has been thus since childhood.” Even now if anyone gives Ma some cloth she says, “I have

taken my own cloth. Do you think you had given me a cloth?" Again when she gives someone her cloth she says, "The person whose cloth it was has taken it to wear it" and she laughs.

In connection with some other incident Ma said, "Well look, when someone has attained *samadhi* (*samadhistha*), that is when somebody's state of *samadhi* is well established, why is it said about him, 'He has attained *samadhi*'?"

We try to write what Ma says in the best possible manner. Hearing this Ma laughs and says "What will you gain by writing all this? So many *mahatmas* have written so much. God gives you lessons in so many ways. Is that not sufficient? This will again be one more of the same kind. What new stuff will you write? Nothing is new. It is all old." Saying this she laughed like a child.

At four p.m like on all other days, Ma walked in front of the *ashram*. People were standing all around. Nobody seemed satiated with looking at Ma. At dusk she sat on the verandah. Some people had come for her *darshan*. She sat on the verandah till nine p.m. The evening's *kirtan* was performed as usual in the room reserved for *japa*. I took Ma inside to offer her *bhoga*. I fed her with one *chapati* and boiled vegetables. While seated for the meal Ma narrated one or two other incidents about her childhood. Didi Ma, Bhupati Dada, a *brahmachari* (a disciple of Swami Nigamananda who has been staying with Ma for the past few days), Jyotish Babu and family and I were seated around Ma listening to her charming laughter and speech. Ma said, "When I visited my maternal grand parents' place as a child we went out walking every morning and evening. Your Sushila Mashima would also go along." She pointed to Mashima as she said this. Laughing she continued, "I'll tell you something listen; I have the *kheyal*, so what can I do? When I went walking every morning and evening it coincided with the times the

cows were let out and herded back, though I had never noticed that. But the cows came towards me and some of them licked my body. A forest grew on one side, a pond lay on the other, the path was difficult and I could not move in any direction. Like other children I would shout, "The cows have come, the cows have come!" but I would just keep standing where I was. This one "(indicating Sushila Mashi Mashima)" would stand at a distance and laugh. She was also very young then. No adult was visible close at hand. Such were the happenings, that's all!" She laughed merrily at this.

The wife of Dr. Jyotish Babu of Jamshedpur asked, "Was it not all Krishna *leela*?" Hearing this Ma looked visibly upset and said, "Such comments should not be made. It is not good to be frivolous regarding matters connected with gods." A unique smile played on Ma's countenance.

Before retiring for the night I went to see Bholanath. Bholanath said, "Look, during that severe illness that I had in Dhaka you had soaked beaten rice and fed it to me. If you feed me that again, perhaps the fever will come down a bit." He looked at Ma in great distress. Fever, pox and vomiting had caused him great debilitation in the past four or five days. Ma said, "Alright, that shall be done." Immediately beaten rice was soaked to be fed to him the next day.

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## Sri Sri Ma

It is beyond our common intelligence to comprehend what Mother stands for and what she is in reality. Though she always says : "I am only a crazy little daughter of yours", still in all her ways of life, in her ever delightful Lila amongst us, all the powers of the Divine find expression in tangible forms.

In Mother we find a perennial fountain of joy and sweetness, though she is surrounded day and night by the noise and bustle and a thousand entreaties of all classes of people. Her calm and serene looks, her gracious, ever smiling response to all queries, her exquisite sense of humour bring satisfaction and delight to every soul. Her ways of life are so universal and all-embracing that she may be called Motherly Live incarnate.

Some say that she is the Supreme Goddess of the Universe in human form. Others again are of the opinion that she has reached perfection through spontaneous psychic evolution without any effort on her part. To us she appears to be whatever anybody may consider her to be. At the first sight of her, one becomes animated with a religious fervour, even if one happens to be almost imperious to spiritual ideas. In her presence thoughts of God and his glory flourish with all their brilliance in hearts as dry as dust and the vibrations of one universal, all-pervading life overpower one's heart, as it were, with endless surges like a vast ocean of bliss.

When at one time she was asked who her preceptor was, or from whom she had received initiation, she remarked: "In earlier years my parents were my guides; in household life, my husband; and now in every situation of life, all men and things of the world are my Guru. But one thing is certain, the one Supreme Being is the only Guide for all."

From the standpoint of worldly people Mother is an

ideal daughter, wife and mother. To an aspirant after spiritual life, her words and behaviour have deep significance, indicating various modes of spiritual culture and yogic practices, as well as the basic truths of dualism, non dualism, dualistic monism and other philosophic doctrines. The physical changes that become manifest in her body lead one to the inference that she is a confirmed Vaisnava; in the Tantric worship of Siva, Kali, Durga and other gods and goddesses or in the performance of Vedic religious sacrifice she has evoked admiration from eminent philosophers of the East and West. The only difference that we notice between Mother and the Great Masters who have reached perfection through bhakti yoga, jnana yoga or karma yoga in their special lines, lies in the fact that in Mother all the paths of sadhana have reached a wonderful synthesis. It is through this harmony of the various modes of approach to the Divine that all types of people receive inspiration from her presence.

Her genial and sweet appearance, her uncommon patience and endurance, her spirit of sacrifice and simplicity, her ever joyful humorous ways of dealing with men, women and children, her unsullied, clear vision and good will for all living beings, her love for all men irrespective of caste, creed, community and nationality, her absolute freedom from pleasure, pain and the life, make her a unique figure in modern times. One cannot say that she has attained perfection through self effort, for those who have watched her from infancy assert that she has been the same in her thoughts and actions all through her life. Nobody has yet seen her perform spiritual or religious exercises of any kind.

The natural or super-natural phenomena that became manifest in her body occurred spontaneously for the welfare to all human beings. Those manifestations did not depend upon her will nor did they function against it, nor were they the result of any devotional effort on her



part. When clarified butter with other oblations are offered into the fire on the altar, the flame flares up by a natural law, but the perfume that emanates, purifies and enlivens the whole atmosphere. After a little while no trace of the sacrificial offerings remains, but the flames keep on burning in purity and brightness. In exactly the same manner when Mother's devotees bring their offerings to her feet with the best of their love and reverence, the very touch of these gifts, cause the fountain of her heart to burst forth, like the natural flow of milk from the mother's breast at the touch of her infant's lips. So in the case of Mother, her speech, her looks, her face, all express love for her children. With a divine flame her face brightens up for a time and soon after resumes its normal composure.

There is no conflict in her, no urge to action or inaction disturbs the serenity of her will. She is completely steeped in the light of that Supreme Truth which forms the bedrock of all principles and practices of religion and of the moral codes of the world and which has been revealed to the human mind in different ages for the good of the universe. A glimpse of that Truth, a suggestion thereof shines forth in all her actions, words and songs. Her life illustrates the great fact that man, while doing his everyday duties meetly, joyfully, and maintaining social relations can yet advance on the spiritual path.

The time has arrived for us to take stock of the amount of good that is being done to our social life by the crowds of people that are swelling the number of sannyasis and sadhus. Stepping out of the boundaries of family life and the pale of civic rights and responsibilities to try to open up easy paths of spiritual uplift for family, society and nation is not a very simple matter. There are persons who have reached high levels of spiritual greatness by retiring from the world and living a life of seclusion in solitary Ashrams or mountain caves. Their individual

greatness does not pull up the general level of culture of the masses of people to any appreciable extent, nor are the standards of mass life raised higher. Through their inspiration many Ashrams are established in different parts of the country, the spires of the temples erected therein may shoot up high into the sky, the glamour of worship and the hymns and devotional music sung morning and evening induce many people from far and near to spend more and more money upon the enterprise, free distribution of prasada may attract crowds of hungry men like flies from the surrounding regions. But the influence of such institutions built up at the expense of so much labour and money hardly helps to make our social life healthier and brighter, neither by spreading knowledge and literacy nor greater life for men nor again by fostering a more ardent desire for the life Divine. Our society is getting more and more crippled through mutual jealousy, rivalry and petty squabbles over trifles. Those who are strong at heart with a spirit of social responsibility and selfless service, hardly find scope for real and efficient social work, being half paralysed by stagnant, social ideas of the class seclusion of orthodox olden times. On the other hand one meets at every step opposition to all efforts at reforms. The culture by which physical and mental health is made secure, which makes man strong and hardy through the realization of God's grace in all walks of life, which refines and transforms our narrow, selfish impulses into an unselfish spirit of service and self sacrifice irrespective of caste and creed is fast disappearing from our country and there is hardly any doubt that the scope and field of such culture is gradually shrinking amongst us.

It is time for us to enquire as to what has brought about such a state of affairs. We have fallen into the narrow grooves of time-worn cults and prejudices. The ideas and ideals of olden times and those of the present age have met face to face and have produced a slack water

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in our social and religious life. Mother stands at the parting of ways.

We always find in Mother's life and in all her activities an ardent desire to secure the welfare of the world, throwing the burden of looking after her body upon others, and releasing herself completely from all cares for her own bodily comforts. She has thus made herself absolutely free to advance the cause of the helpless and oppressed, of the sick and destitute, as well as to help the rich and powerful who ever suffer from the various physical and mental maladies of their surfeited and pampered lives.

Her life is an eye opener to us all. She shows by her everyday activities how we can link every minute detail of life to the Infinite and how we can cultivate a new spirit, a new outlook in our relations with men and make this world a place of new joy and hope and peace.

From the worldly standpoint she possesses nothing to call her own. All places of the common man, temples, dharamsalas, public Ashrams and huts are now her only places of residence, places where all people from the highest to the lowest may flock freely to her without any obstruction. She has devoted herself wholly and completely to the good of the world. All living beings are her own kith and kin. As mentioned previously she says : "I find the whole world to be one vast garden, you all are flowers blooming in this garden with your individual beauty and grace. I move about from one corner of it to another. What makes you feel so sad when I leave you, only to be in the midst of your brothers over there ?"

On another occasion she said : "I have no need of doing or saying anything; there never was any need neither is there now, nor will there ever be in future. What you found manifested in me in the past, what you see now and what will be observed in the future is only for the good of you all. If you think that there is something peculiarly my own, I must tell you that the whole world is my own".

The glories of the creative activities of the Universal Mother that we find revealed every where in this world, can be noticed in all her words and actions, in her social inter-course with all classes of people everywhere. To those who are devoted to her, she is like a little child demanding tokens of their love for her; to those who are distressed owing to disease or other worldly troubles, her motherly anxiety to give them relief takes shape in various acts of redress. All these attitudes proceed from a reservoir of a mighty spiritual power always working in the background.

She shows equal regard and reverence for all religions, for all social institutions and laws, for all types of education. This illustrates the great truth that everything in this world is the embodiment of one Supreme Being. She says "All religious thoughts flow in one direction as all streams flow into one ocean; and we are all one". If anybody puts the question to her: "To what caste do you belong? Where is your home? Mother at once answers with a laugh: 'From your worldly standpoint this body belongs to East Bengal and is Brahmin by caste; but if you think apart from these artificial distinctions, you will understand that this body is a member of the one human family'".

At times she has been heard to say: "Have faith in this body. You wholehearted faith will open your eyes". She also says from time to time "I know nothing. I say what you pour into my ears". And then: "This body is but a toy-doll; just as you desire to play with it, so it goes on playing."

From these and other remarks it is evident that in her person the Power that lies behind the phenomenal world has assumed shape. Her activities emanate from one fountain head and flow back into it. She has no sense of duality. She often says either: "Only Thou art, and Thou alone" Or: "I Alone am, and all is contained in Me".

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On one occasion she said: "Is there any essential difference between myself and yourself? Only because He is, there are also I and you". If with staunch faith, strong devotion and a heart overflowing with life, anyone of you can exclaim: "Mother, come, come to me, Mother, I cannot pass my days without you, rest assured, the Universal Mother will spread out Her arms towards you and clasp you to Her bosom. Don't look up to Her only as mysterious refuge in your hour of distress. Remember always She is very, very near you, guiding all the forces of your life. With that conviction proceed; She will take the brunt of all your responsibilities from your shoulders and give you strength to bear the cross."

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*Reprinted from **The Mother as revealed to me** by Bhaiji  
(Anandamayi Ma's spiritual son)*

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*Yet that are slaves of the 'I', that toil in the service of self from morn to night, that live in constant fear of birth, old age, sickness and death, receive the good tidings that your cruel master exists not.*

—Lord Buddha

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## AN APPEAL

It is hereby requested to every members of Ananda Varta and devotees to increase the number of the subscribers for our Society and donate generously. This Publications Division will appreciate this type of gesture on your part. Otherwise it is becoming very difficult to run this publication of Ananda Varta owing to price hike annually.

Under the circumstances, it has become imperative for us to enhance the price of Ananda Varta from Rs. 30/- to Rs. 40/-. Henceforth the Membership Fee of Society has become Rs. 75/- instead of Rs. 51/- from 1st April, 1997 to our Society.

All the members of the Society are requested to contribute some amount of money as donation to overcome the present financial crisis and for the development of the Society's Projects. Your help will be highly commendable for the smooth running of our Society and Publications Division.

We are expecting from you a prompt cordial response. Hope, you will appreciate our feeling and will do the needful.

On Society's behalf, I am conveying our best wishes and Vijaya/Diwali greetings to you.

JAY MA

Yours in the Mother  
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# Saints

## Part II

*Let us study the teachings and activities of other saints.*

Swami Ramdas of Anandashram (S.I) says:

### **Divine Thought**

“This is all right. Everybody wishes to possess this hunger, this keen aspiration which will bring him or her the experience of Divinity. But the complaint is that such a state does not come even when one wishes for it. How then could this burning desire for the attainment of absolute Bliss be generated? Just as an uneducated man or a poor man would evince an ardent wish to be a literate man or a rich man when he comes in association with a learned person or a wealthy person; so also when an ignorant, bound and sorrow-stricken soul comes in contact with an illumined, liberated and all-blissful being, the former by such contact is fired with a zeal to also become like the latter. Hence the society of Saints has been held as the most important factor in the spiritual evolution of the soul. The saints not only awaken the ignorant souls and create in them a thirst for Self-realisation but also infuse into them by their blessings the needed spiritual strength to battle against the forces that confront the aspirant in his march towards this goal of Supreme Beatitude”.

### **Mother Krishnabai of the same Ashram.**

Mataji's life of selfless service began after she had attained the highest realisation of her oneness with the Eternal, Infinite and Absolute Existence of the Guru. Though this gave her everlasting inner peace and bliss, her outer life continued to be one of tireless endeavour to make all who sought her feet happy like herself. When

her expectations of the aspirants proved too high and their progress was found too slow, she was most unhappy.

Mataji suffered from various physical ailments almost continuously for the past 26 years. Every three or four years, her physical condition would turn so critical that, many a time, there was cause for great anxiety. So intense was her bodily suffering that sometimes she would say: "I had asked Beloved Papa to give me all the sufferings in the world so that others might be free of them. But, I did not pray to Him to give me strength to bear them.

Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram

(Vision)

### **Sri Ananda Mayee Yogini From Bengal**

Ma Anandamayee was born in East Bengal, in a lower middle class brahmin family on 30-4-1896. She was a charming girl and people were wondering whether this girl has peculiar Mystery surrounding her. She had no formal education. As was the custom of the day, she was married early to Sri Bhola Nath. She never disagreed for the marriage but there was no physical contact with the husband. She treated her husband as her father, brother, son and friend. Sri Bhola Nath who realised the peculiar Mystic behaviour of Ma, respected her wishes and remained like that till his death. He became an ardent disciple of her. This reminds us of the divine attachments of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Sri Sarada Devi.

From early years of her life, Ma was constantly thinking of the eternal and was different from the rest, she still carried on household duties with a smile. She a born Brahma Gyani saw action in inaction and inaction in action. "Having abandoned attachment for the fruits of action, ever content and dependent on none, though engaged in action, yet one does nothing" (BG Chapter 4-20). Ma's life is a classic example of this sloka.



Ma was speaking the truths in simple Bengali language, yet the wisdom and Gyana enshrined in Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, used to flow out of her mouth in simple, sweet and pure language. True to her name, she was distributing unsullied Ananda, whoever met her, talked to her, meditated on her and preserved her in their heart.

Ma travelled all over the country specially North India and Bengal whenever the devotees wanted her. She founded ashrams at Benaras, Haridwar, Dehradun, Calcutta, Uttar Kashi, etc. So that devotees can pray silently and realized their goal. Ma says "At all times keep your mind immersed in the thought of God so that there may be no possibility of straying into a path that leads to misery".

Ma's philosophy was pure Adwaita — yet she stressed that Gyana should be blended with selfless devotion to Lord and Nishkama Karma. Fortunately for us, her sayings and teachings were carefully recorded by her devotees, notable among them Gurupriya Devi, Sister Atmananda etc.

Ma says—

"The name of Hari in the Mind, The world's chores in the hands by this alone will Rama the Supreme Being, be realized."

One is reminded of Mahatma Gandhi's recipe for this strife torn world — "Bolo Ram Karo Kam."

Her teachings are ever relevant to this World where there is more misery than happiness. If only we follow these truths enunciated by her, certainly would our country and the world be different with peace, happiness, amity and divinity ever present.

"If you do not allow your thoughts to stray from His Lotus feet there is hope of your being saved from all manner of temptation."

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Ma brings nothing new to Hinduism. What is unique about Ma is her prescription and the effect that the medicine she dispensed had on those who sought her help.

Ma's prescription for the disease of worldliness was not, as one might expect, renunciation of the world. Although she herself was a supreme renunciant, Ma asked her devotees not to renounce the world, but to renounce their misconceptions. She asked people only to remember who they really are. She said, "God is not outside the world and the world is not outside God. You don't have to go anywhere. God is where you are." Her prescription then, called for spiritualizing the very lives that people were already living.

### **Gautama Buddha**

The Buddha continued his ministrations, going from place to place. He used the mildest means, sympathy, kindness and love, and raised the moral tone on the people he met. He worked incessantly 'for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many'.

### **Two Acharyas**

Sankara and Ramanuja are like two beaconlights, shining undimmed through the centuries. That the birthday of Ramanuja as well as of Sankara falls on the same date, Vaisakha Sukla Panchami, is perhaps significant too. They did not preach two divergent faiths but taught the same Sanatana Dharma, in two different modes. Sankara says Brahman is Sat-Chid-Ananda. Ramanuja says Brahman has the qualities of Satyam, Jnanam and Anandam, Both point to the same truth that God is the life of our life. Sankara emphasised Vairagya or dispassion, and Ramanuja, Kainkarya or service of God and man.

### **Sri Ramakrishna**

Day and night, Ramakrishna's sole occupation was to

worship, to meditate, to pray or to weep like a child (longing) for a sight of the Divine Mother. Who weeps for God? People seeing him thought perhaps he was mad. Ramakrishna used to say: "Some are mad after money, some after fame and name, some after women, some after eating and drinking, and I am mad after God. Which after all is better?"

### **Swami Vivekananda**

Narendra met Ramakrishna for the first time in November 1881 at the house of Surendranath Mitra, one of the Master's devotees. The Paramahansa was much impressed by his sincerity and devotion and he asked him to visit him at Dakshineswar.

When Narendra went to Dakshineswar, he sang a few songs at the request of Ramakrishna. His first song was:

Let us go back once more, O mind, to our proper home;  
Here in this foreign land of earth

Why should we wander aimlessly in stranger's disguise?

The Master regarded Naren as his spiritual heir. He wanted him to look after the young disciples. A short while before his passing away, Ramakrishna called Naren to his bedside and gazing intently on him passed into deep meditation. Coming back to normal consciousness, he said: "To-day, I have given you everything I possess. By this power, you will accomplish great things in the world."

On August 15, 1886, at midnight, Sri Ramakrishna entered into Mahasamadhi. He had brought with him deathless life and in passing away, released that life for the whole of humanity. Speaking of how Sri Ramakrishna trained them, Swami Vivekananda says: "I do not find a more marvellous miracle than the manner this mad Brahmin used to handle human minds like lumps of clay, breaking, moulding and remodelling them and filling them with new ideas by a mere touch."

These men, so moulded by him brought into being the Ramakrishna Order and made his name resound through the world. (SWAMI VIVEKANANDA).

Naren learned from Ramakrishna that religion is a vision which transcends all barriers of caste and race and breaks down the limitations of time and space.

He learnt of the divinity of the soul, the non-duality of Godhead, the unity of existence and the harmony of religions. Ramakrishna showed by his own example how the same God-consciousness could be reached by following the diverse disciplines of Hinduism, Christianity and Islam.

Naren, in course of time, became the idol of the young devotees of Ramakrishna. They were awed by his personality.

### HOLY MOTHER SARADA DEVI

Her last message was "If you want peace of mind, do not find fault with others. Learn to make the whole world your own."

Of her Swami Vivekananda said : "Without Sakti there is no regeneration for the world. Mother has been born to revive that wonderful Sakti in India and making her the nucleus, once more will Gargis and Maitreyis be born in the world."

Sister Nivedita, a western disciple of Swami Vivekananda, wrote in one of her letters to the Holy Mother:

"Surely, you are the most wonderful thing of God, Sri Ramakrishna's own chalice of His love for the world. Surely the wonderful things of God are all quiet, stealing unnoticed into our lives; the air and the sunlight and the seetness of the gardens and the Ganges. These are the silent things that are like you." (Saints of India by Anna)

Acharya says in his Moha-Mudgara (Bhaja Govinda)

Satsangatve Nissangatvam

Nissangatve Nirmohatvam

Nirmohatve Nischalatattvam

Nirchalatattve Jeevanmuktih

(Bhaja Govindam Bhaja Govindam..)

Though the company of the good, there arises non-attachment: through non-attachment there arises freedom from delusion; when there is freedom from delusion there is the immutable Reality: on experiencing the immutable Reality, there comes the state of liberated-in-life.'

(Seek Govind. Seek Govind...)

From all that has been said so far it is very clear that of live in the world, earning-and-saving, is not in itself a real profit. To live in attachment is, certainly, in ill rewarding programme of existence. To waste our life in lust and passions of our flesh is dissipating ourselves in all our faculties. Through pratipaksha bhaavanaa we must try to withdraw from them all, and spend the energy so conserved in seeking and serving Govind.

It is easy to appreciate the logic of this philosophy, but not always so easy to appreciate its canons and, indeed, it is almost impossible all of a sudden to live its recommended way of life. This difficulty is experienced by all students of philosophy, everywhere, at all times. All true philosophers must appreciate this logical difficulty in the student, and provide for him various practical methods by which the poor seeker, in his frail spiritual strength at this moment, may be helped to walk the 'path'. Or else, philosophy itself would become an impractical utopia.

Acharya Sankara talks directly to his devotees, at all times. His is not the style of the rishi-declarations, wherein the inspired seer, closing his eyes, roared and thundered in panting words of his Infinite Joy of the

Impossible which he has rendered possible. These frightening commandments, gushing down from the soft-flowing hearts of the peaceful masters, constitute the Upanishads. Sankara, the commentator serving as a missionary in the country, with a definite goal of cultural revival to be achieved, never seems to forget the quality and calibre of his listeners' intellect.

In the stanza under review, Sankara gives a simple ladder-of-progress, by carefully climbing which, a seeker can comfortably arrive at the highest reaches of perfection.

In spite of our appreciation of the rationale in the philosophy so far discussed, the fact still is that we are living every hour of our existence amidst temptations of life, where wealth and woman are the main enchantments. Artificially, I can build up an intellectual barrier against my passions and lusts. And thus, I may restrain them from their onward flow for some time. But the objects of fascination are so numerous and their enchantments so powerful that the mighty sorcery of the sensuous-world is too irresistible for an individual seeker to fight against.

In order to reinforce the efforts of a student in his early days of seeking and to give more courage and strength, Sankara advises him to have plenty of the 'company of the good' (Satsangh).

'Company of the good' — directly with living teachers, learned pundits, cultured men, and sincere seekers; if these are not available, then indirectly through great Books. As a result of the practice of 'pratipaksha bhaavanna', the student is, no doubt, holding the company of good thoughts within himself. This is to protect him from the rising waves of passions within. But, in order to fight against the hordes of temptations in the everyday world, he needs a fortress around him, which is drawn from his association with the good people.

The 'company' that we keep is very important. The worldly seekers are carelessly choosing their friends, and are indiscriminate in choosing their associations. The chances are that he, in spite of his knowledge and determination, will be snatched away in bad company by the powerful waves of blind passions. To be in the 'company of the good' is to be with those who are devotees of the Lord and are themselves seekers of the Highest. In such an assembly there is a power created which, in the congregation, erects a powerful fortress against the world outside.

As a result of the influence of the 'good company' the human mind develops steadily a capacity to withdraw from the sensuous fields of attraction, and thus discovers in itself the secret of detachment (nissangatvam). When the sense of attachments is sponged away from the inner bosom, delusion, (moha) and all the delusory false values that we give to the world can no more remain. It is always the mind that puts a value upon the objects, and, thereafter, the inert objects of the world become capable of enchanting that mind.

When once the mind has started seeing the things as they are because the mind has redeemed itself from its own vaasanaa encrustations — the Immutable Reality is glimpsed by the mind. When this experience becomes more and more established in one, that individual becomes a God-realized saint, 'liberated-in-life' (Jeeva-mukta). The stanza reminds us of 'the-ladder-of-fall' that the Geeta describes.'

Glancing over the contents of these two stanzas, it is evidently clear that the Geeta is showing the 'ladder of the downward fall' while Sankara is showing the 'ladder of the upward climb'. There is yet another reading of the stanza where, instead of 'Immutable Reality' (Nischalatattvam). We have 'steadfastness' (nischalitam). When the delusion of the mind is wiped away, the

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mind gains a 'steadfastness' in meditation, and with this steadfast meditation, the experience of the Highest and the consequent state of 'liberation-in-life' (Jeevanmukti) is easily attained.

*(Commentary by Swami Chinmayananda.)*

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# The Ati Rudra Mahayajna At Kankhal

**R. K. Banerjee**

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

Yajnas are an integral part of most of our religious functions: sacred thread ceremony, marriage, installation of Deities, Sakti puja, Ma's birthday puja, Chandipath, Bhagavata Saptah, etc.

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

So why was so much stress laid on carrying out this most difficult Ati Rudra Mahayajna with its eleven *Kundas* (Fire pits)? About a year ago a somewhat similar yajna on a smaller scale had been accomplished, not strictly under Sangha auspices. This time this complex task was entrusted to a small group of Ma's fully trained, dedicated, senior brahmacharinis under the capable leadership of Dr. Padma Misra as President of the Ati Rudra Mahayajna Committee, a very senior retired Professor of the B.H.U. who is the Vice-President of our Kanyapith. Brahmacharini Purnananda bore the brunt of the work as Secretary of the Committee and official *Jajman*, representing the Ashram in the yajna. What an excellent job this group of

girls, inspired by Ma, made of it !

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

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

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

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

On the 5th evening they went in procession to Ma's cottage to be introduced to Her officially. A number of them had obtained their doctorates under the guidance of Dr. Padma Misra. Later that evening Dr. Vamadeva Misra made a personal appeal to the priests during a thorough briefing in the hall, exhorting them to remem-

ber their respective roles and play their parts at the right time in the right manner, following his lead through the loudspeaker.

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

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

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

visible to some even outside the mandap. Special pujas and havans occupied the rest of the day.

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

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

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

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

The Rishis used to divide Creation into its constituents, namely earth, water, energy (*teja*), air, sky, sun, moon, lightning (totalling eight sub-elements) and the three aspects of fire — its burning, destroying and cleansing properties — making a total of eleven. In fact Rudra Deva possesses infinite attributes, but eleven is a symbolic number to facilitate ritual worship. This worship can take the form of japa, or recitation of appropriate mantras or ritual worship or *havana* (offering of *ahuti*). The simplest form of yajna involves 202 *ahutis* (obla-

tions), a more detailed version 1818 oblations, the next 19998 *ahutis*, the penultimate version or Maharudra yajna eleven times  $19998=21,9978$ , and the ultimate or Ati Maharudra Yajna eleven times  $21,9978=24,19,758$  *ahutis*.

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

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

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

Whenever the time could be spared, the Acharya or one of the pandits would speak on some aspect of the yajna. Ma graced the afternoon satsang at about 5 p.m. whenever Sri Vishmashram or Sri Narayan Goswami spoke. In connection with the Mahayajna, Kumari Puja of 108 Kumaris was celebrated one morning in the hall,

when Ma moved about them in an excellent mood.

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

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

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

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

Narayan Puri of Daksheswar Mandir, Sri Brahma Hari Maharaj of Sri Chetan Deva Avadhuta Ashram.

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Jai Rudra Deva, Jai Ma."

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# Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee and Our Society — Then and Now

**Sasanka Chandra Bhattacharyya\***

This year, in May 1996, the Birth Centenary of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee was celebrated in different places in India and abroad with due decorum and dignity. There was celebration in Calcutta in more than one place.

Ma Anandamayee was born in the month of May, 1896. Instead of calling it a birth, it could be better designated as a Divine Arrival. The Great Mother was born in a small village in the eastern-most part of East Bengal. The village was small, the village primary school was probably still smaller. In that small primary school, Ma studied for a short period. In later years this girl from the village was transformed into Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee, adored throughout the country and the world. Ma possessed unusually deep knowledge, astonishing insight and uncommon capacity of speaking. How it came, where from it originated? Well I do not know. Some devotees think that Ma is an "Incarnation"; others say She is more than that. Ma said — "Whatever you think of me I am that." It means — My dear children, stop here. Do'nt try for more. This is enough.

The present write is not going to make any immature statement regarding the identity of Ma. In April, 1996 — issue of "Anandabarta" he has written a small article about Ma. It will take only ten minutes to read through. If the devotees read it, they may have an understanding about the attitude and stability of the author. The present article is also written in the same style.

I shall discuss a little about the childhood and early married life of Ma. There will not be a word about religion

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\*This is the English translation of the corresponding article in Bengali by the author appearing in the same issue.

in it. But there will be some criticism about our society—then and now. Criticism will be hard and it should be so.

I have mentioned in my earlier article in “Anadabarta” (Bengali and English translation) that it will be desirable to have a full ‘Biography’ of Ma Anandamayee. The books written by Shree Shree Gurupriya Devi, Bhaji and other senior devotees could be used as source material. The ‘Biography’ should be a combination of devotion and detailed informations.

Ma Anandamayee may be easily considered as a suitable personality for an “Epic”. “Ramayana” describes the activities of Shree Ramchandra, “Mahabharata” that of Shree Krishna. What will be written about Ma Anandamayee? Who will be the Balmiki or Ved-Vyas for the job? May be, someone will come forward. A name which naturally comes to one’s mind is that of professor Bireswar Gangopadhyaya.

Ma Anandamayee’s father, respected Dadamahashaya (Grandfather), Shree Bipin Bihari Bhattacharyya and Ma Anandamayee’s mother, our Didima ( Grandmother), Srimati Makshada Devi, were residents of a small village. Their financial resources were limited. As was usual those days, Mokshada Devi was the mother of several children. Some of them had premature death. It was a matter of great luck for us that the second child, a girl, survived. This child in later years became Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee, adored world-over. Born in an unhealthy environment, in the hands of an uneducated Midwife 100 years ago — that she survived is astonishing.

There is a little more after that also. It appears that Ma did not cry after birth but only smiled, — it must have been only a mild smile. The devotees may feel elated and charmed but I feel alarmed. Modern physicians remain tense so long a newly born baby has not cried. Loud crying is an indication that the respiratory organs are functioning properly. Crying for a child is very important after birth. A baby who does not cry may not survive.

This newly born baby was given the name 'Nirmala'. She, on her own, was growing in her father's home and received love and affection from all.

In due course of time, Nirmala became of marriageable age. At that time Nirmala had crossed twelve and stepped into her thirteenth year. A little more and she will become unsuitable for marriage. That was the social situation in the first, second and the third decades of this century. Many such cases have been recorded in the writings of Sarat Chandra Chattapadhaya and his contemporaries. Many of us who are alive, had seen Ma Anandamayee when she was of advanced age. She was beautiful, graceful, with a pleasing motherly image. How beautiful she was in her teenage can easily be imagined. For such a girl also, it was somewhat difficult to find a suitable match. Finally, when She was about thirteen her marriage was performed with Shree Ramani Mohan Chakrabarti. In later years, Ramani Mohan became known as the respected "Baba Bholanath (Pitaji)". The name "Bholanath" was given by Ma Anandamayee herself. Subsequently, Baba Bholanath took "Initiation — Deeksha" from his wife Nirmala. Nirmala then was twenty six or twenty seven years old. This was unique, — you may say a very novel situation. In due course, this young lady Nirmala became Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee, adored world-over.

It has been stated earlier that when Nirmala was married, she was about thirteen years old. The next 15 years, She had to suffer great hardship. Husband Ramani Mohan after did not have a suitable job with steady income. His resources were very limited, not enough to maintain a family. As a result, for long periods, year after year, Nirmala had to stay as a dependent, here — there, and with so-called relatives. A short period is one thing, otherwise it is almost a "religion" in our society to harass and ill-treat a dependent, particularly a girl. There is no difference between a city and village; it was not there

before, it is not present now as well. Occasionally you may get a family or two where a dependent girl relative is treated with love and affection. But their number is small, very small, they are exceptions in the Society. Nirmala suffered from lack of food, lack of clothings. She had to tolerate harassment, ill-treatment, even physical torture. Whether she had a stick on her back is not quite known. What are the other kinds of harassments she had to face one does not know. What limitless audacity ! Can you think of anything worse ?

That Nirmala often went into a state of 'trance' was not understood by anyone. She had been treated by quacks to drive away evil spirits from her. On one occasion, even her husband Ramani Mahan tested her by putting a handful red chilli powder into her mouth. How astonishingly thoughtless ! Anandamayee Nirmala accepted everything, tolerated everything. It has been heard and known, that in later years the culprits begged forgiveness of Ma Anandamayee and she forgave them unconditionally. It must be admitted that Ma was a fine person!

The matters recorded above deserve a little more discussion. Think of the Person who was subjected to harassment and torture, astonishing indeed ! When I think of this tears come to my eyes. May be, the readers will feel the same way.

But then, has there been any change in our society during the last 100 years ? None at all. In our society a femalechild is still unwelcome. For a daughter's marriage a father has to perspire. A groom has to be purchased at the cost of material and money. There is something more after that also. In husband's and father-in-law's place there is no end of harassment. No difference between the 'gentry' and 'lowly' same everywhere. As the last resort the neat work of "Kerosene - matchbox" is there to give a finishing touch. It is difficult to say which state of India heads the list, but Bengal certainly occupies a presti-

gious, high position. Turn the pages of a morning paper any day, the truth will be revealed. This is the position day in and day out.

Again we are coming to the account of Anandamayee Nirmala. At one stage, Ramani Mohan (Baba Bholanath), got a job at "Shah Baug", the garden of the Nawab of Dacca. It was nothing very great but was adequate for food and clothings and a little more. In a short time people could realise that Nirmala was an extra-ordinary woman. Her glow and lusture spread all around. She was the personification of Divine Happiness/Joy (*Ananda*). One devotee (Bhaiji) gave Her the name "Anandamayee" — "Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee." The rest is history — all-time glorious history. I do not want to go into that.

Ma Anandamayee made her Divine Arrival and stayed for eighty six years with us. This was a great boon. What She has done for us, what She has left behind for us, — we know that. May be, we do not know the whole of it, as it is not possible to know.

That famous "Sloka" of GEETA is known to you, known to me and also others. For freeing the helpless from bondage, for spreading the message of peace and happiness. She will have to come again. We want that She may come in the form of a Mother. That presentation of Her is the most beautiful and sweet.

But where will She come, where will She make her Divine Arrival, — in a poor family? Let it be so. But She must not suffer from lack of food and clothings. As a young bride She must not be subjected to harassment and mat-treatment. That will be a matter of shame, sorrow and mental agony for all of us. Ma Anandamayee may forgive us but history will not. History did not forgive those who crucified Jesus Christ. Society should change. In this you, I and all of us have a responsibility. Do't forget the judgement of history. We have a commitment to execute.

Jai Ma.

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## **Jagaddhatri Puja 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 Jagaddhatri Puja on the auspicious day of 18th November, 1996, Monday (Bengali 2nd Agrahayan, 1403) and on the following day i.e. on the 19th Nov. 1996, Tuesday (Bengali 3rd Agrahayan, 1403) with Special Pujas of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee, Shree Shree Narayanji & Shree Shree Onkarnathji in MATRI-MANDIR. 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)**

**Dated :**

**The 31st August, 1996  
(14th Bhadra, 1403)**

**Shree Shree Anandamayee  
Charitable Society**

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