

MA ANANDAMAYEE AMRIT VARTA

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with the divine life and sayings of
Sri Anandamayi Ma

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MATRI-VANI

In god's creation the possible becomes impossible and the impossible possible at all times.

* * *

I am not going anywhere : I am always here. There is no going or coming—all is Atman.

* * *

Every body's satisfaction is my satisfaction, every body's happiness is my happiness. every body's misery is my misery.

* * *

Become drinkers of nectar - all of you- drinkers of the wine of immortality. Trade the path of immortality, where no death exists and no disease.

* * *

When you feel power within yourself, when new light dawns on you from within, the more you can keep in concealed in utter calm and stillness, the more it will grow in intensity. If the slightest opening appears, there is always the fear it will escape.

* * *

Sustained effort ends in effortless being - in other words, what has been attained by constant practice is finally transcended, and then spontaneity comes.

* * *

One must not allow oneself to be caught by the lure of super normal faculties. Suppose one has acquired the power that whatever one utters becomes true or whatever one desires is fulfilled. What of it ? This is only a stage. By using such powers to destroy or improve people one may become arrested on that level instead of progressing towards the ultimate. To get entangled on the level of these powers is a waste of energy. Having acquired them one must not lose sight of the Supreme goal of human existence, but strive unceasingly after self - realization. Failing to do so will create obstacles and may result in a fall.

* * *

ON ANCIENT SIDDHESWARI & SHAHBAG

—As personally related by Ma

(Translated from the original diary of Prof. A.K. Dutta Gupta in Bengali)

Since my meeting with Ma in Dhaka I used to visit Ma both morning and evening. In the morning I used to spend with her an hour or two after my college works. The morning visits were specially delightful as then she had few visitors. I could hear many topics from her blessed mouth. Some times she referred to events of her early life; sometimes again she would come out with her instructions. On some days while talking she seemed to have passed under a divine inspiration - her face flushed crimson, eyes bright, radiant and fixed, but not set on some earthly object. Words of high moment would be coming out of her mouth with an unlaboured ease like the gushing out of a fountain - their potency was self-evident. Her transfiguration on such occasion cannot be put into words - one must be on the spot with an eye on her to realise it.

One morning Ma passed on to the events of her life at Shahbag.

"Then we were putting up at Shahbag. During my stay there, I occasionally visualised the picture of a place while cooking. It was just the picture of Siddheswari temple of Dhaka. But I did not know it then. But as often as I saw it, I had a feeling that it represented Siddheswari-tala. Sometimes I asked Bholanath about the location of Siddheswari-tala in Dhaka, but he had no idea. One day he took me to a place, thinking it might be Siddheswari-tala, but it did not tally with my vision."

"At this time Baul Babu (Baul Chandra Basak) frequently came to Bholanath. In the evening we used to go to Ramna Kalibari to be present at the arati. Baul Babu who used to be with us, sometimes set out towards the east, as we left for home. In those days the east was a fearful woodland, but Baul Babu was a brave man, and he picked his way through the dark forest fearlessly. One day Bholanath asked him where he went through the forest so late at night. At that he said that it was to the Siddheswari's place. Hearing that I said, "Siddheswari's place—here?" He said, "Yes, it is here. I shall one day conduct you there." Then one night he took us to the Siddheswari's place. The moment I was there, I found it tallied with my vision to the minutest detail - the selfsame temple and the banyan tree. I went up to the tree and took my stand nestling against it. The visit over, we returned to Shahbag."

"One day at noon I was tucking up my belongings as if in readiness for an outing. The journey's end was not yet clear to me, but I was putting in order the things to be left in the house while the others I wanted to take with me were tied into a bundle. At this time Bholanath came up and said, "What is it now ?" I said, "Let us go to the Siddheswari's place." Bholanath made no objection. It was afternoon when we reached there, and just then I had an idea: I must live there for a week. When I disclosed it to Bholanath, he said, "How can it be ? I shall not be able to stay with you. How can you stay alone ?"

"At that time Bholanath was acting as a care-taker of the Shhabbag garden. He had to give directions to the labourers right in the morning. So it was not possible for him to stay away from the garden at night. But I said, "Why I cannot stay alone, I shall be with Ma*. What is there to fear ?" So Bholanath gave in. He would go to Shhabbag in the evening, left directions for the morning work of the labourers and slept at night in the "Bhoga room" of Siddheswari Bari. I stayed in the small room behind Ma's image in the temple. My days and nights passed in an ecstasy the nature of which was not clear to me."

"When Baul Babu heard that I was to have a week-long stay at the Siddheswari temple, he had the pre-sentiment of something supernatural going to occur there. So he posted himself at the temple gate to keep vigil like Nandi, so as to miss nothing happening there. Thus passed six days and six nights. On the seventh night it suddenly struck me that I must leave the temple. I rose and came out. The day was dawning. Strangely enough, Baul Babu, who had been keeping whole night vigil so long, was fast asleep at the moment. There had been a downpour towards the early morning and it was still raining a little. Not a soul except Bholanath was awake. I hinted at him to follow me and he did so. Coming out of the temple, I made my way through the jungle behind the temple. a little way onwards, I changed upon a clearing, I walked round it and then set upon the spot. By then the rain had stopped. Seated as I was, I began to press the ground with my right hand. The soil was firm enough, but the more I pressed it the more it yielded till my whole arm passed underground. At this Bholanath was frightened and said, "Come now, let us move away from here." Hearing this I took out my hand. At once a broad stream of water gushed out like a fountain from the dent, the pressure of my hand had made. It was not rain water, for it was warm and stained red. It reddened my conch-shell

* The idol of Kali enshrined in the Siddheswari temple. It was a very desolate place, with a five head seat (Panchmundi Asana for occult practices of Tantriks). Its celebrity as a siddhapeeth dated back to a long past.

bangles. The stain remained for about seven days. Bholanath was sole witness of the whole thing."

All Ma did then was to direct that the place should be fenced off. Sri Pran Gopal Bose (D.P.M.G. of Dhaka and a disciple of Balananda Swami of Baidyanath Dham) had paid for the fence construction. Later Sri Shashanka Mohan Mukherjee (Akhandanandaji) acquired it on lease and built there an ashram.

That was Ma's first ashram at Dhaka. I heard that even after the construction of ashram, the site of the 'depression' was left intact and Ma used to sit there frequently engrossed with divine inspiration. Later on an image of Siva was enshrined there.

The spot is wholly sequestered and favourable for religious practices. Those who are acquainted with the past history of this place, will perhaps be able to have an idea of the significance of the spot and also of the unusual behaviour of Ma on getting here. The sequence of the strange events beginning from the vision of this place flashing across Ma's mind's eye, her leaving the temple at the dead of night and resorting to the wood-land in foul weather—all would make no sense except in context of Ma's being in some way specially related to this place. These cannot be dismissed merely as just passing whims, as they clearly point to a past nexus, though it is beyond us to ascertain it definitely. As for Ma, she preferred not to be communicative.

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One morning I followed Ma to Shahbag.

Shahbag was once the luxury apartment of the Nawabs of Dhaka, located on an extensive piece of land to the west of the Ramna ground, it abounded with fruit and flower trees. It enclosed a number of brick-built structures of different sizes. The dancing hall paved with stone, was specially attractive. adjoining to it was an extensive pond, encircled by a charming garden growing both indigenous and exotic flowers. The garden was quite extensive and most of it was marred by rank growth of bushes for lack of proper maintenance. Only a small portion was being carefully tended by the people of the Nawab's lineage. It was not open to the public, but Ma had a free access to it. She was held in high esteem by all who knew her, whether Hindu or Muslim. Ma showed me around the place. When Baba Bholanath was in charge of the garden, Ma used to reside here. She pointed over to me the room she had been staying, the place where Kirtans were arranged and also the section where Kalipuja was performed.

The Shahbag had within it the tomb of a Muslim fakir. The tomb was in a room, secured by a lock from outside, but the lattice-works at intervals permitted a glimpse within.

About the fakir, Ma said, "I saw the fakir for the first time when I was at Bajitpur and saw him again when I came over to Shahbag. His appearance at Bajitpur seems to have been motivated to drag me here." The fakir had been dead long before the time Ma was speaking of; so Ma's meetings with him must have been at a non-corporeal level. Ma continued, "At the first meeting, he seemed to me to be an Arab saint, though at the time I had no idea of a country called Arabia and its location. When I said to Bholanath about my vision of an Arab saint, he was somewhat surprised and said, "You should have been visualizing Hindu deities instead; what vision is this ? It makes no sense." When later, on my coming to Shahbag I saw the tomb, I learnt on enquiry that an Arab fakir had been here for a while and then gave up the ghost. The members of the Nawab's family had high regard for him and so he was buried within the garden. On both occasions when I saw him, he was attended by a disciple. At times, scent of incense used to come out out of this bush."

Ma standing by the fakir's tomb, told me as follows:

"One day Kirtan was on in the dancing hall, when I fell into a trance and got out of the room. Finding a Muslim standing a little way off, I signed to him to follow me and he did so without a word. I came with him to the tomb. He helped me unlock the door and once I stood on the south of the tomb while he took his stand on the north. Thus positioned I lost all power of voluntary movement and my body spontaneously broke into various postures that the Muslims make when at Namaz and out of my mouth sounds streamed out... I had no knowledge what they meant. After a time, all these came to an end and I left the room. Some days after when this event got into circulation, Princess Pyaribanu's son, daughter-in-law, daughter and son-in-law came from the Nawab's palace and insisted on my showing them perform the Namaz. I told them that I did nothing voluntarily, all that happened was spontaneous. I shall not be able to repeat them. But they did not leave it at that, and accompanied me to the tomb. I fell into a trance again and the gestures and the sounds were repeated. Listening to them Pyaribanu's daughter-in-law said, "These are all Quranic texts that she is uttering."

The discussion on Shahbag ended here.

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CONVERSATION WITH WESTERN DEVOTEES

(EIGHT)

— Vijayananda

Note : In Page 8 of April, 2000 issue there remained some errors for which the Editorial Board is sincerely sorry.

The correct rendering would be as under :

Question : What is the rapport between Karma and free will ?

Vijayananda : Whatever happens to us is the result of our own Karma. But the Karma we produce is not due to the act itself, but due to the *bhava* (mental attitude) with which the act is done. And we are free as regarding the *bhava*. For example a mother may beat her child with anger or punish it through love to correct his weaknesses. But once we have launched a Karma wave, we cannot stop it. It is like when you throw a stone in a lake, you are free to throw the stone, but you cannot control the ripples produced by the stone in the water.

Yoga and vairagya (Renunciation)

Q. Isn't the seclusion of a yogi an escape from the world ?

V- In the mind of the yogi, the seclusion is always temporary : it is the time taken for attaining a certain level of consciousness. After that, he returns to the world. For him, the people of the world are really escaping. They are escaping from themselves, trying to lose themselves in activism in women, in politics. They are avoiding the main questions, like what is the origin of suffering, how can it be ended, what is the meaning of life. The yogi faces these questions and faces himself.

