

The path of renunciation is indeed the path of bliss. The man who is on the pilgrimage to God is fortunate. The path to God is alone worthy of being called a path ; all others are wrong paths, where one meets with troubles and calamities at every step.

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

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Man must ever be intent on discovering the *Mahāyoga* that will reveal his eternal union with the Divine.

# From the Diary of a European

BY MELITA MASCHMANN

( Translated from German )

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This afternoon I sat for about an hour on the veranda in front of Mataji's room. When she came out (she probably had slept) she looked old and ill. Her features were colourless, almost grey, her eyes dull and without expression. Less than five minutes later she appeared at her door, erect, with a laughing face glowing with intensity, a dynamic centre of power emitting flashes of lightning ; casting forth joy like fiery sparks. What a transformation ! What a triumph : may the flesh grow old and progress towards decay, the soul irradiates it in eternal youth.

As so often here, she walked up and down between us for a short while. I wish I could describe how she walks to say with buoyancy would be misleading, for it would not do justice to the great calm and dignity of her steps, which, only with considerable hesitation—for are not all such epithets commonplace ?—I should like to call majestic—or would it be better to say powerful ? One must quickly add that the power that is displayed here is at the same time graceful, not brutal or rigid, but elastic and lovely. Who is able to grasp this ? I am reporting what I perceive, but does it make a picture ? Even more difficult to understand : the power of her walk at certain moments seems due to the fact that Mataji has invisible companions. I know what I am talking about, and that to the European mind it must seem nonsense that cries to heaven—also to my own usual thinking. All the same, it is there as a noticeable fact, to be perceived with the eyes that in rare moments open behind our physical eyes. It moves with her, perhaps independantly of gravitation, per-

haps not? In the region of her shoulders it is most distinct but is it therefore permissible to say that at that spot it keeps itself in balance? I have no experience whatsoever in the kingdom of the invisible. ( My reason doubts unflinchingly its very existence ). Yet here a whole delegation is present, not just one but several of them. This is all I know yes indeed, I say, 'know' Mataji calls Chitra; she presses through this 'delegation' of which she obviously has no inkling.

Later Mataji is 'alone' again. She sits down on the low wooden stool on the veranda, facing towards the open door of her room. There three old men are waiting who have come from the vicinity to speak to Mataji. The oldest of them is blind. The rest of us settle down to the right and left of her. I am sitting about four meters away from Mataji, nobody is between her and me.

Mataji assumes a meditative pose. I can see only her profile. Her attitude expresses composed stillness. For a long time she remains motionless. Suddenly she turns her head in my direction. Her gaze falls on me, it is focussed on me like the beam of a search-light. The gentleman who was sitting obliquely behind me, told me later: "I looked at my watch because it never ended. It must have continued for four or five minutes." For me, what happens here is not within time, but it has an aroma which, ever since my childhood I have tasted now and again, it has a flavour of timelessness.

Without a single movement of her eyelids her gaze remains fixed on me, penetrating, luminous, like the big calm gaze of the evening sun. Its tranquillity communicates itself to me. I observe how the doors within me open of themselves. A powerful stream of pure light enters into me. While I keep still to receive it, my consciousness registers with great precision what is taking place.

Abruptly Mataji averts her gaze and during the same second makes a joke about one of the girls who with a fierce

expression is knotting at a handbag. I seem to notice again and again: the transition from the keenest spiritual intensity to the commonplace, nay trivial, proceeds with Mataji at the speed of seconds. One has to be alert not to let the precious melt away without transition into the trifling. Just as a well-known face may suddenly emerge from a crowd, only to vanish again at the next look: was it really there, one asks oneself, or have you been dreaming?

I believe I can guess why these transitions are so seamless. For us, the moments of clarity, of a touch of the spirit, are rare and priceless: they appear to our consciousness like pearls in the sand of the desert. Not a single one can ever be forgotten. Mataji lives in the medium of spirit or light. It is as natural to her as the texture of our everyday existence that she shares with us. Yet, she does not live in two worlds, that of light and that of our materiality, but in undifferentiated oneness.

Another thing that ought to be pointed out: the superpersonal quality of Mataji's gaze this afternoon. When does a human being ever look at us for such a long time and with such penetrating intensity? Between lovers somewhat similar looks may occur when they have reached the end of language. But then they express the most personal, specific, individual. Mataji's look was exactly the reverse of this. What it conveyed to me did not emanate from her human heart but from a centre of power that lies behind it and uses the heart only as a passage, as a transmitter. It there assumes a quality for which our receiving apparatus is prepared.

Of course—the process is of the greatest subtlety. The transformation of spirit into 'communicable spirit', as it takes effect in Mataji, is an achievement of love. Like her whole life altogether. What she herself receives of Light she imparts to us, adapted to our capacity of seeing; for our 'illumination' is the only thing she desires, the purpose of her life.

Precisely this was what my consciousness registered while Mataji gazed at me today: the entirely superpersonal quality of that which she imparted to me and the loving gesture of giving. One of Mataji's girls illustrated to me a similar happening in the following manner. Mataji is the mother who says: 'God has given me a barn full of rice and I have prepared it into food for you. Eat, so that you may grow strong.'

In a certain way the act of taking corresponded to that of giving.

Who does not again and again experience the two souls that live in him? The Hindus speak of the 'I' and of the 'Self'. All these generalizations are dangerous since they easily may lead to distortions, when a phenomenon cannot effortlessly be fitted into their frame. All the same I adopt it, not dogmatically, but 'pragmatically.' What Mataji doned to me by her look was bread for the Self. This Self of mine is infinitely nearer to her than to my own 'I'. It accepted what was designed for it with a personal and at the same time impersonal gratitude.

Later, after Mataji had got up, I followed her and thanked her with a wordless *pranāma*. She almost overlooked it. One who thanks, resides in the world of duality where there is giving and taking. For him who lives in oneness, such distinction is meaningless. When I looked up, her eyes seemed to ask me: Does one thank also oneself?

After a few rounds on the veranda, Mataji resumes her seat on the low stool outside of her room. The three men are waiting to be addressed by her. She at once begins to talk with great vivacity and eloquence. During an interval I succeed in asking someone what she has said last. Mataji had spoken to the oldest of the men, "How have you spent your life, Baba?" She said, "Every breath with which we do not remember God is wasted. Birth in a human body is a rare boon. If you had been born as animals or birds, what significance would your lives have? Human beings

have alone been endowed with the capacity to seek and find God." And to all the others who had gathered round her: "Ask yourselves how you are using your time. One so easily forgets that not a single hour that is gone ever returns. Days glide by without your noticing it. Suddenly you have grown old and are too tired to make a sustained effort. God is not the work for your old age when you have nothing else to do anymore, He is the task of your lives that requires your best skill. He who has not yet started, should begin today, now, immediately!" Her eyes move slowly from one to the other. Suddenly she rises and disappears in her room.

In the evening she calls us inside. The youngest of the three old men wants to demonstrate some exercises that 'lengthen life.' He says his master lived up to 118 years.

He himself seems rather self-important and narrow-minded. Everyone foresees that he will do nonsense, but it does not occur to anyone to prevent this. Mataji would not tolerate it. Ceremoniously he shows some gymnastic exercises. There is nothing remarkable about them except his complete rigidity. Mataji watches with infinite friendliness, puts questions, corrects him. He is delighted.

What this incident made clear to me is that Mataji does not practise patience with us. Patience is a bridle that we employ to keep our ego in check. With the gentleman in question for instance I have to have patience. He bores and disturbs me. Where no 'I' exists anymore, there is no element that resents boredom and disturbance.

Mataji's friendliness also is of a different order than ours even if we succeeded in feeling interest and sympathy for the gentleman and his request. I, for example, would have to say to myself: "You should take him serious. After all, he is out for something that he considers beneficent. Let others think as they please, he needs a confirmation etc." With Mataji it is entirely different. Friendliness is not an ethical claim for her, not an achievement for which

she has to struggle. She is friendly. This must be understood as a fundamental definition, just as to a certain question one would reply: She is Indian. Every human being whom she meets is her friend. This is not a polite phrase or a manner of speaking, but an exact definition.

Just as a physician (if he is what he should be) does not in his patients see rich or poor, intelligent or stupid, handsome or ugly, good or bad people, but simply ailing men and women whom he has to cure, in a similar way Mataji sees in all human beings her friends. And she meets them accordingly: with friendliness. Here probably lies the secret of her irresistible charm: she never has to exert herself in order to be friendly or to act in a friendly manner. Unfriendliness is something that would cost her an effort. In Raipur I witnessed an attempt of this kind. One of the girls had apparently repeatedly done what the others considered wrong. (I believe it was a case of overdoing asceticism). "Reprimand her," begged the other girls. "She does not listen to us. Do, please scold her!" Mataji summoned the culprit. The expression of Mataji's face was moving and funny at the same time. She obviously tried hard to look severe. But the mask of anger was only too transparent and brittle and her voice expressed the same play of hide and seek behind her pretended unfriendliness. Suddenly she turned round on her heel and laughed heartily. Still laughing, she stood before the girl like a child that has been caught. "Don't you know that I cannot be angry with anyone? How then could I scold her?"

The words 'charm' and 'charisma' (charity, love) have the same root. When looking at Mataji one understands this directly. Her charm is a religious quality. The same holds good for her indiscriminating friendliness. One can, no doubt, grasp it rightly only if one interprets it with the religious concept of the oneness of the Brahman that provides the frame for Mataji's self-knowledge: Her friendliness is an expression of Love with which God loves Himself.

# The Quintessence of the Yoga Vasistha

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## II

### Subjective Idealism

According to the *Yogavāsistha*, every individual perceives and cognizes only that which is within his own experience ; no mind perceives aught but its own ideas. The world experience of every individual has arisen individually to every one. Every mind has the power to manufacture its own world. Such a view is called subjective idealism in modern philosophy. ( III. 40. 29 ; III. 55. 61 ; Vib. 13. 4 ).

### Objective Idealism

The statement that there are countless individual minds, which is often made in the *Yogavāsistha*, implies an extra-individual reality in the form of other individuals who, of course, must likewise have their own world experience. Vasistha is alive to this implication and therefore admits a cosmic world with countless objects and individuals within it, which in its original form is a system of ideas in the Cosmic Mind called *Brahma*. *Brahma* imagines the world and all the individuals within it at the commencement of the Creation, and they continue to exist as long as the *Brahma* continues to exist.

### Reconciliation of Subjective and Objective Idealism

The experience of a common world by many individuals is thus due to the fact that over and above these individuals, there exists a Common Mind, the Cosmic Mind, in which all the common contents of the world as well as all the individuals themselves exist as ideas and are represented in every individual mind within the Cosmic Mind. The ideas imagined by the *Brahma* are the common objects of experience of us.