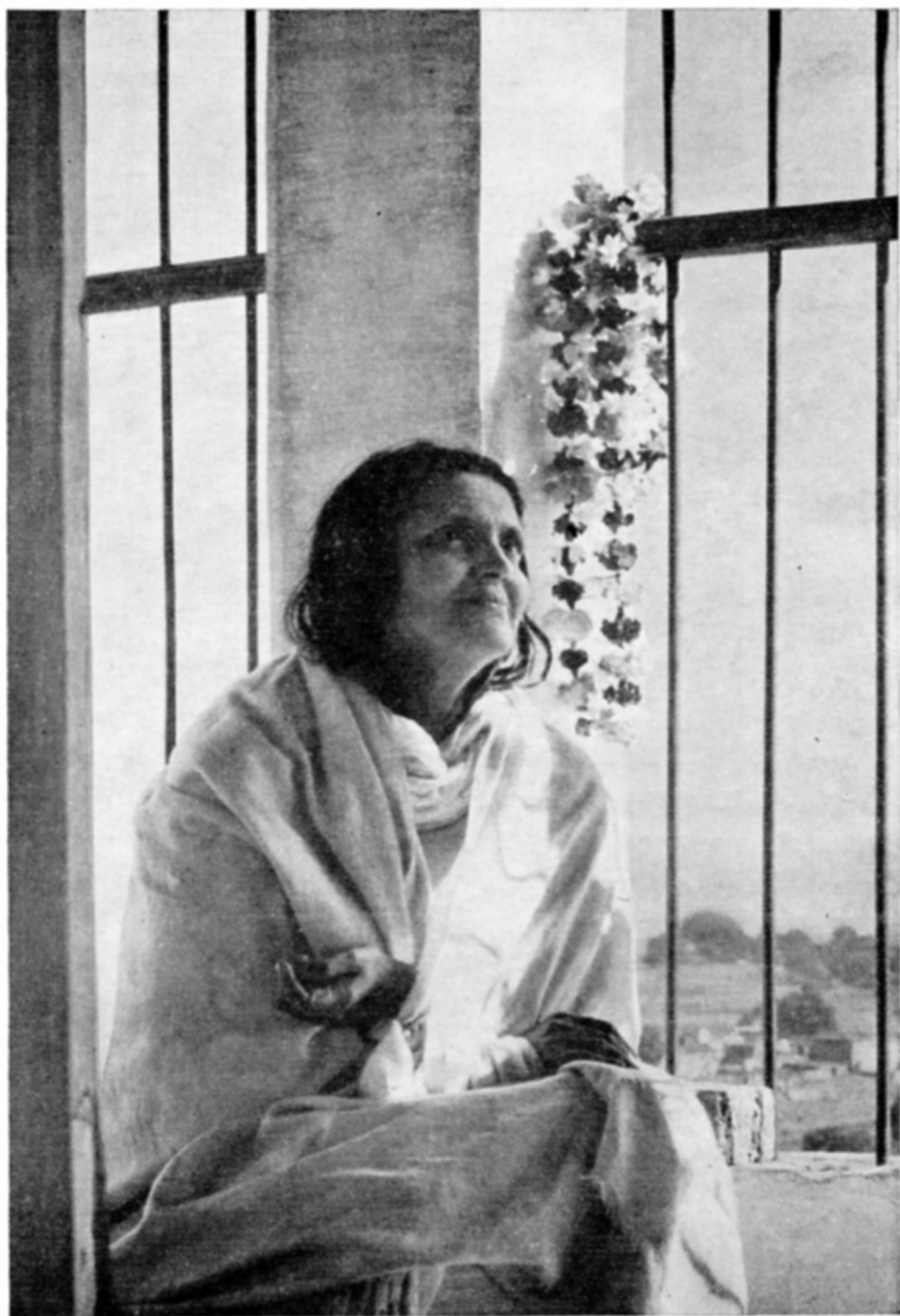


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*The Self, self-contained,  
calling to Itself for its own Revelation—  
this is Happiness.*

## Matri Vani

Wherever God may keep you at any time, from there itself must you undertake the pilgrimage to God-realization. In all forms, in action and non-action is He, the One Himself. While attending to your work with your hands, keep yourself bound to Him by sustaining japa, the constant remembrance of Him in your heart and mind. In God's empire it is forgetfulness of Him that is detrimental. The way to Peace lies in the remembrance of Him and of Him alone.

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Where the search after Truth is really genuine there can be no failure. In order to purify body and mind one practises the Presence of God, the repetition of His name, meditation ; one seeks *satsang* and studies scriptures. Of special importance are the Guru's instructions.

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The disciple prays for the Guru's grace and the Guru's power works through him. All this is the manifestation, the form of Him who stands revealed within. The Guru's grace should be solicited without ceasing.

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Striving to dedicate this transient ego or 'I' to the eternal 'I' leads to one's real Good. In order to keep the mind

fixed continuously on the Supreme Quest, one should ever be engaged in spiritual practices, the study of Scriptures, the awareness of God and so forth. At some auspicious moment in the life of the aspirant his prayer should receive full response. Do not even look in the other direction. Bind yourself solely and with unshakable determination to the practice that will take you to the goal of your pilgrimage.

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A traveller on the path to God-realization has to obey his Guru's instructions so that his journey may be crowned with success. However, in a case where there are no such instructions, one should, according to the dictates of one's heart, keep oneself occupied in calling out to God, in prayer or meditation. If someone prays to Him with a sincere and simple heart, God will fulfil his cherished desire. To yearn for Him with his whole being is man's duty.

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What fear is there for a man whose one and only object in life is the Supreme Quest? The One who is the goal of the journey is all-pervading. What is needed is His revelation. Nevertheless, the longing for Him must become genuine. If He manifests as longing, He will also manifest as fulfilment. Whatever arises spontaneously from within is good. Watching as a spectator, place your reliance in the Guru in all matters. The Guru is very, very near.

# From the Diary of a European

MELITA MASCHMANN

*(Translated from the German)*

(2)

Vindhyachal, October 1963.

Today Mataji saw me standing near her trellised window and suddenly broke out into ringing laughter. Just as she had calmed down, a second fit of laughter came over her and then a third. Her laughter is something very mysterious. For me it is quite irresistible. Even when I have no idea why she is laughing, I am forced to laugh with her. This morning I had for the thousandth time just asked myself the question : "Who is Mataji ?" Her laughter came as a reply, but when I try to translate it into my language I notice that I have not understood it.

In the evening we again sat in her room, while she was dictating replies to letters. One of them was from a South Indian Christian, who asked whether it was true that Christians were not liked much in Mataji's Ashrams. Ma said : "Write to her : Under whatever name anyone may seek God, this little child most heartily welcomes him."

Later Mataji suddenly said to me : "Melita, sing a German song to us !" I objected vehemently. How could I explain to her that I am unable to sing in tune ? Indian music is so fundamentally different. Never in my life have I sung to anyone. I like to sing to myself, but I know that it is out of tune. Mataji was adamant. "Why should you not be able to sing ? When you talk your voice sounds so nice. But whether you have a beautiful voice is not at all important. What alone matters is the feeling with which you sing. Or are you not in a mood to sing today ?" — "When I am with you I am singing constantly, but without sound." — "Then sing now with sound !"

We fought on for a little while, finally I gave in. I sang three couplets of a German song about the moon (grateful that no European was there to criticize). Mataji slightly bent forward and listened attentively and lovingly. Then she said: "It was very beautiful. You have a sweet voice." I felt amused and embarrassed. "No, of course not, but it is sweet of you to say so" — "You find me sweet only because you yourself are sweet."

This may sound like an exchange of rather cheap compliments. But there is more behind it. According to Mataji, we see in the people with whom we deal, that which is in ourselves. If they seem wicked to us, it is but our own wickedness that we find reflected in them. Consequently: Be good and those around you will be good.

Is this really so ?

Today I had a long personal talk with Mataji about prayer. Panuda translated with great care, putting many counter questions. I want to note one question which is as European as it is Asiatic.

"Again and again it occurs to me that I should stop praying altogether. Whether intentionally or not, our prayer usually becomes a petition. Does this not amount to some kind of interference with God's Will ?"

Mataji: "You should pray, in fact you can never pray enough. And you may also ask for something, but ask only for God Himself, for His advent. When the time comes for you to cease from praying, you will stop of your own accord. Then the question whether you should pray or not will not arise anymore."

For many years a record has been kept of Ma's life and her sayings. A small portion of it has been published

also in English translation.\* Amongst those reports I have found an account that states something very interesting about Mataji's deep cosmic understanding, or perhaps I should say "cosmic love". This is a feature of her being that I often sense very strongly although I have really never observed her in a corresponding situation. Her relationship to the sky, to air, water, earth, sun, the stars and so forth is different from ours. One can recognize this when watching her gaze over the Ganges or at a flower.

Except in very rare moments of mystic union, nature for us ever remains "the other life," foreign to human existence. For Ma, nature is the same one life : All life is rooted in the Self, there is nothing outside of the Self. The distinction between nature (*prakriti*) and spirit (*purusha*) is annulled in the Self in which she lives.

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Today I had a very impressive talk with Mataji. I was assisted by an excellent interpreter, an elderly lady who teaches English at the Allahabad University. She is not only intelligent, tactful and well educated, but also has for years been at home in Ma's spiritual world and can translate correctly even hints of Mataji.

No doubt, my personal contact with Ma gains intensity every time she talks to me. I feel that she listens with ever growing attention and her answers are more and more closely adapted to my individual approach.

Today she sat on the very edge of her bed, slightly bending forward—and while at times one has the impression of being watched through a telescope turned upside down : (although the picture remains clear-cut it yet seems very remote)—this time I feel under her gaze like in the focus of a magnifying-glass. I am convinced that she sees everything.

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\* In "Ananda Varta and four English books.

In fact, I should prefer to remain silent, for she anyway knows what I want to ask or say. But this would be against the rules of the game.

I am not noting down the personal problems that were discussed. Only a general query : Misfortune—for instance in the history of peoples or in the lives of families and individuals, seemingly senseless destruction—how are these facts compatible with the idea of God, whom we should like, not only to fear but also to love ?

*Mataji* : Do you believe that God is the creator of the world and therefore its Lord ?

*I* : Let us anyway in our discussion take this for granted.

*Mataji* : Very well. If God is the Lord of the world, He can do with it as He pleases. Suppose you have grown beautiful flowers in your garden, but decide to plant fruit-trees in their place, won't you have to remove the flowers ? If you have a fine house, but wish to build a larger and better one on the same plot you will be obliged to demolish the old one. The freedom that is yours in small things, God wields in great ones. In both is He, in destruction as well as creation. The history of nations, families and individuals is the great *Līlā* (play) that He stages with Himself.

*I* : What about evil in the world ?

*Mataji* : When you have realized God, then good and evil are like two ways of dressing your hair. (While saying this, Mataji pulls her hair first to the right and then to the left side of her forehead.) Good and evil do not exist for you anymore when you have realized your union with God.

I cannot grasp the simile with the hair dress, I do not see what it intends to convey. So I say : “Probably I do not understand rightly what you have told me about good and evil. Do you mean to say that I should refrain from fighting the evil in my surroundings ?

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*Mataji* : Serve human beings as much as you can; but do not identify yourself with their wants and needs. You must go beyond all this and seek God.

*I* : Where does the source of evil lie ? If *Brahman* is all in all, as Hinduism teaches, then evil must also derive from Him and occur within Him.

*Mataji* : Good and evil are distinctions that arise in human thought and experience. Only when entering the world of duality we begin to distinguish between good and evil.

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Evenings are lovely here. We either sit in Mataji's room or on the veranda in front of it. When sitting outside I find a place from where I can see Mataji. On the verandah there is only the light that the moon sheds. In the room a dim kerosene oil lamp is burning. Sometimes there is singing for hours together, with short intervals. I never get tired of listening to the beautiful songs that often transport the audience.

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Twenty or twenty-five men and women sit scattered over the verandah. Rarely does one hear anyone talk. Probably most of them are praying or meditating; many hold a rosary in their hand. For the first time here something like a community feeling arises in me. I never missed it, as I was not intent on finding it. But I often ask myself whether it exists in the people with whom I am together here, and if it does, of what substance it may be. That I sense little of it, is only natural. I can hardly talk to the people and very rarely understand their conversations amongst themselves and what concerns them under what circumstances.

In general, as far as their religious life is concerned, the individualistic element among men and women here

seems much more dominant than with us Westerners. What we call a community does not appear to exist here. Everyone has his own personal relationship to his Guru and proceeds along his own path. Temples where congregations assemble are the exception here. Nevertheless, some kind of community feeling seems to develop. It is too dark to distinguish anyone's features. Everyone abides undisturbed in his own contemplation and everyone knows of the others that soul and spirit are open to the common centre. Of course, in a very individual manner. Many of my companions must be praying to Ma as in the West one prays to Christian saints or to the Christ Himself. I am not praying, neither do I attempt to meditate, and even if I try to reflect over a question, my thoughts soon stop. I just keep still and absorb something that is as mysterious as the beauty of a landscape, the radiation of a sublime thought or the charm of lovely music.

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This afternoon we went for a walk with Mataji for the first time. Nobody seemed to have known it beforehand. The girls were as usual barefooted and had to perform a painful dance on the path that was strewn with thorns. But apart from this we all enjoyed it immensely. At first Mataji advanced at great speed so that we found it difficult to keep pace with her. Later she slowed down. On the way there was much laughing and joking. When we passed a high, solitary house, the men amused themselves by waking the echo from its slumber : "Jai Ma, jai Ma !"

It was dusk by the time we returned. Mataji ascended the platform that has been built over the foundation of an ancient temple, and for a long while walked up and down in silence. We remained standing on the edge. In the West the evening sky was flaming as if the jungle were on fire. In the East it was already night. Venus hung above us, glittering brightly.

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Somewhere nearby a peacock screamed again and again. "Do you hear", said one of the men, "this is Krishna's bird." Later we all sat on the platform and it became a wonderful night. A lengthy conversation ensued, interrupted at intervals by laughter or by silence. Everyone who had something to say participated. Then Mataji told us about her childhood and about her pilgrimage to Mount Kailash from which Bhaiji did not return. That evening Pushpa sang more beautifully than ever and the silence that followed was full of intensity. The stars joined into our meditation.

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