

**MA ANANDAMAYEE**  
**AMRIT VARTA**

A quarterly journal dealing mainly  
with the divine life and sayings of  
Sri Anandamayi Ma

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## CONTENTS

1.	Matri-Vani	... ..	1
2.	Pages from Ma Anandamayee Prasang — <i>Prof. A.K. Dutta Gupta</i>	... ..	3
3.	To remember me — <i>Robert N. Test</i>	... ..	10
4.	Ma Anandamayee—A confluence of Gita & Chandi — <i>Prof. Bireshwar Ganguly</i>	... ..	11
5.	The fundamentals of Indian Philosophy — <i>P.C. Mehta</i>	... ..	16
6.	The Divine Mother — <i>Dr. Prem Lata Srivastav</i>	... ..	23
7.	Ma Anandamayee—Beyond Imagination — <i>Sri S.K. Bose</i>	... ..	32
8.	From notes taken in Sri Ma's presence — <i>'Kirpal'</i>	... ..	35
9.	Our sixth trip to India — <i>Shraddha Davenport</i>	... ..	36

## MATRI VANI

Verily, abounding sorrow is the essential characteristics of life in this world.  
Fix your mind upon God.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Ishwara*, the Lord of the world is not a thing to be perceived by the senses or grasped by the mind. By contemplating the Divine peace is won. God Himself draws you towards Him.

\* \* \* \* \*

Never let your mind be idle: endeavour to keep it concentrated on the Eternal.

\* \* \* \* \*

In all matters without fail depend wholly upon God. To Him you should submit your heart's petitions and yearnings. Your whole life will have to revolve round Him, you have no other resource; on your own you are utterly helpless, for are you not His creature ? Whatever He does is all for the highest good. You certainly are not in a position to choose what seems best to you. Why should He permit you, who are the off-spring of the Immortal, to stray towards that which is of death ?

\* \* \* \* \*

You may deem yourself fortunate, for as you yourself say, God has rescued you from the jaws of death and preserved you to this day. Place your reliance on Him alone. The sufferings and obstacles bred of desire which you encounter, even these should be welcomed as in fact the doing of His merciful hands. To become agitated is of no avail. If you must be impatient, be impatient for God; cry "To this day I have not received any response from Thee and invaluable time has been spent in vain". Do not let your mind and body be tormented with restlessness induced by worldly longings.

\* \* \* \* \*

On hearing the news of someone's death, Mataji had the following conveyed to the bereaved : "Such is the law of worldly existence. You must dwell in fortitude. Surely, you have realized by now what is the true nature of the world ? Peace can be found only by directing one's mind towards God. The more time you devote to *Japa* and meditation - whether so disposed or not - the greater the likelihood of your obtaining deliverance from your grief."

\* \* \* \* \*

To perform one's duties is a good thing. At the same time one has to be mindful of man's real Duty.

\* \* \* \* \*

Since everything belongs to Him alone, there is no other means but to lie prostrate at His Feet. If there is to be anxiety, it must be solely for Him.

\* \* \* \* \*

Under all circumstances depend on God."Of Him is all that need be said, the rest is vanity, woe." Wherever you may find yourself and in whatever condition, appeal to Him. In this way only, you may expect peace.

\* \* \* \* \*

Set your mind on God. Whatsoever He, the Fountain of Goodness, does is the very best that could have happened.

\* \* \* \* \*

Placing your trust in your Guru practice the *Seed Mantra* you have received from him and contemplate the Beloved (*Ishta*). It is imperative to have firm faith in one's particular *Ishta*. What is the use of seeking initiation again and again ? Rather is it not of the utmost importance to strive strenuously after the full revelation of the form under which He has manifested Himself to you ?

\* \* \* \* \*

Whenever practicable seek *satsang* - the company of Sages, Saints and seekers after Truth.

**PAGES FROM**  
**"Ma Anandamayee Prasang"**

*by*

**Prof. A. K. Dutta Gupta**

[ Translated from Bengali ]

**About Bhaiji & Mataji's father**

**16th May, 1941, Kishenpur Ashram, Dehradun**

Ma : The spiritual stage that can be reached by one through regular worship and adoration can also often be attained even through the compassionate glance or touch of a *Mahapurush*. In such cases no outward act of worship or the like is needed. But this does not mean that those who possess the inherent tendency to perform puja, will be asked to remain idle. For them it is better to progress through worship and adoration. God's grace does not wait for anything. This is why it is said that all things are possible at all times. Through this body too God's grace has often been manifested. But such manifestations have occurred in a perfectly natural way, not in response to anyone's request or entreaty.

The trouble which started in Jyotish's\* family life was also due to an event of this kind. The day I gave Jyotish my golden necklace to be used as a sacred thread, from this very day his life started changing radically. As soon as he received the necklace, all the outward signs of a true Brahmin, such as eating only food cooked by himself, etc. began to manifest. Noticing all this, his wife could no longer tolerate it. An intense feeling of opposition was aroused in her. This is what usually does take place. When husband and wife do not think and feel on the same lines there is bound to be this kind of trouble. If one can't be in tune with the other's feelings and ways, then severe opposition is the result and at every step one tends to put obstacles into the other's path. This feeling of defiance gradually becomes more and more intense. This sort of things also happened in the case of Jyotish.

"On learning from Jyotish of his wife's behaviour, I often used to exhort him to try and explain everything to her. But although he tried his best to follow my advice, this had the reverse effect. Jyotish would tell me : "Ma, what is the use of

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\* Late Jyotish Chandra Roy, commonly known as Bhaiji, one of Ma's top, most and very early devotees.

trying to explain to her ? In response to every such attempt she only assumes an even more rough attitude."

"Soon after obtaining my necklace, Jyotish's desire to receive the sacred thread became more pronounced. He duly donned the sacred thread and with great zeal and enthusiasm started performing his daily practices with the help of a Brahmin pundit. In this way the bonds of his life as a householder gradually loosened. He did of course continue with his official duties and thereby maintained his family, but all this was done in a spirit of complete aloofness. His attitude of mind was quite divorced from his outer life. During this period he used to walk with me in the morning, in the Ramna ground and talk about his inner life in great detail."

"Now see the fun of it all ! Although his spiritual progress gave rise to a wild rage and resentment in his wife, which alienated her from her husband, yet how can the influence of *satsang* go in vain ? Due to her association with Jyotish, nobler qualities such as faith and trust in God were slowly kindled in her. Consequently she also took on as her Guru Bhagavan Brahmachari and began to carry out all his instructions with the utmost faith. Some of you must have observed how Jyotish's wife reposed implicit faith and confidence in her Guru."

I : Ma, I have heard that Jyotish dada relinquished on the shores of lake Manas Sarovar the necklace he had received from you.

Mataji : Yes, I shall tell you what exactly happened. On way to Kailash, when we were nearing the lake, Jyotish, Bholanath and others reached about two hours earlier than Swami Akhandananda and myself. Immediately on arriving there, Jyotish was gripped by an irresistible urge for total renunciation. Without telling anyone he went all by himself, bathed in the Manas Sarovar lake and after offering oblations of water to the gods, he adopted *vidvat sanyasa*.\* The thought that before anyone arrived to prevent him, he would disappear and hide himself in some cave in the mountains round the lake and spend the rest of his life there.

"But before he could carry out his plan, Bholanath arrived and found him completely naked on the shores of the Manas sarovar. Jyotish did *pranama* to Bholanath and disclosed his heart's content to him. But Bholanath would not let him go anywhere in this way, made him put on clothes again and brought him to me. I returned with Jyotish to the lake, where he made me sip nine mouthfuls of water. This seems to have been a part of the rituals for taking *sanyasa* . Thereafter he laid the golden necklace and his sacred thread at my feet and said : "Ma, please

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\*. There are two types of *sanyasa* : *vividisa sanyasa*, which is preceded by a sense of detachment from the world, and *vidvat sanyasa* which is *sanyasa par excellence*, preceded by Realization of THAT.

give me permission to depart for the distant hills so that I can live all by myself in one of the solitary caves." He seemed to feel no hesitation or sorrow for leaving me. At that time his deep inner conviction was : 'Ma is not confined within any particular body, but is omnipresent, everywhere in the whole universe. So it is impossible to forsake Ma under any circumstances.' I picked up the gold necklace and the sacred thread and putting them into Jyotish's hands, I said : 'For the time being let them remain with you.'

"Then I began strolling with him on the shores of the lake. All of a sudden some *mantras* started coming out of my mouth. On hearing them, Jyotish at once understood them and started repeating them in japa. Jyotish's condition then was such that he felt not the slightest attachment for anything at all. In that condition the body does not remain for long because there is nothing more to be done. Subsequent to this, Jyotish's last illness was a mere pretext."

"Jyotish had developed certain powers already before he took *sanyasa*. He used to say sometimes that he could even depart from his body at will. But such a death would have been self-willed, whereas his leaving the body as it actually took place was quite natural. Already much earlier he had a desire to leave his body. In fact once when he was critically ill at Tarapith this was due to some such resolution on his own part."

Ma was at this juncture taken away for Her meal, the discussion was stopped and we came downstairs as well.

In the afternoon when we again assembled near Ma, She resumed the topic of Jyotish dada of Her own accord.

Ma : I had already explained that Jyotish's condition was such that it was no longer possible for him to retain his body. On the way back from Kailash, he soon fell ill. He was treated by a good doctor in Almora, but this did not lead to any improvement in his health. He gradually became very weak. In due course, he had no longer the strength to even get up from bed and his speech also became indistinct. But just before his death this feebleness disappeared and he uttered quite clearly several words in quick succession. On noticing this some people thought that his condition had changed for the better and that his life could be saved. But others were of the opinion that this change was nothing but the dying embers of a fire bursting into flame before being extinguished for ever. The doctor also noticing the deterioration of the patient's pulse, went to the adjoining room and started crying.

The doctor was a Muslim, but the way he served Jyotish both medically and as a nurse was something very rarely to be seen. He used to come frequently to



examine Jyotish's condition, and often helped him also to pass urine and stool. He never took a farthing for his treatment. One day, everybody present compelled him to accept payment, because genuine expenditure for medical attention was widely believed to often lead to success. The money was given to him through Jyotish's hands. He did accept the money, but before leaving, he quietly put it again under Jyotish's pillow.

Meanwhile, Hari Ram Joshi and others present, realizing that Jyotish's end was imminent, said to him, "Bhaiji, please give us some advice !" Jyotish then spoke quite distinctly : "*Ma and I are one, we are all one.*" Then he repeated his *sanyasa* mantra, and uttering the name '*Ma*', he breathed his last. Although a number of people were present there, nobody except Khukuni (Gurupriya Didi) could hear the *sanyasa* mantra.

A little before his demise I asked Jyotish to take off the gold necklace and his sacred thread. But they were under his clothes and it was not possible to remove them. So it was cut open with a pair of scissors and they were taken out of his body.

I : Why did you ask him to remove the necklace and the sacred thread ?

Ma (smiling) : There was no particular reason for this. Jyotish had already previously relinquished them, and it was only due to my request that he had agreed to keep them. So before his passing away I took these things back in order to relieve him from all responsibility. Of course, many people naturally surmised that had they not been taken away, they might have been the cause of Jyotish's further bondage. But in reality this was not so, because Jyotish's condition was such that none of those things could have created any bondage for him.

I : When Jyotish dada said just before leaving : "Ma and I are one, we are all one," what exactly did he mean by this ?

Ma : He had then realized the oneness of all and everything.

I : Does this mean Self-realization ?

Ma : This sort of question has already been raised. After his death, a lot of people have asked me whether or not Jyotish had attained Self-realization. At that time I did not give a clear reply, but from what I had said they gathered that Jyotish had indeed attained *Nirvana*. I first spoke to Gopinath Kaviraj about Jyotish's ultimate state. Later, I spoke to one or two others, now I am telling you : I have seen Jyotish three times after he left his body. On those three occasions I saw him in three entirely different forms.

"The first time his appearance was just like what I had noticed on the shores of Manas sarovar -- he was in a state of total renunciation (*vairagya*), the place was

just like that, with an expanse of a plateau and distant hills in the background. Jyotish was running quite naked towards the hills. This body was standing there, and though Jyotish passed quite close by, he paid not the slightest attention to it. Even when he turned his head slightly and looked in the direction of this body, his gaze was not focussed on anything. He was entirely possessed of the idea to find sanctuary in a cave of the distant hills."

"When I was travelling in the Narmada valley, I saw Jyotish for the second time. On that occasion I saw him as a body of light. At that time the wife of Gangacharan Babu\* was with me. She could not see Jyotish, yet she told me : "Ma, I feel that Jyotish is here. He used to love me very much, perhaps this is why I am sensing his presence." I of course did not reply to her words, but on looking round I saw Jyotish standing nearby, on one leg, with the other leg bent behind.

"The third time I saw Jyotish, his appearance was quite different. It was neither like the first time when he seemed in a human body of flesh and blood, nor a luminous body like on the second occasion, but it appeared somewhat like a cloud of smoke. If you had seen it, you would not have been able to know what you saw, but I realized that Jyotish had arrived in that particular shape. He was proceeding slowly and slowly to merge with this body, but I forbade him, saying : "There is a *kheyala* that so long as this body exists, one has to communicate with it separately." He nodded in acquiescence. Later he very gradually mingled with the atoms and sub-atoms of this body. Thus, Jyotish's deep aspiration was fulfilled."

"When he saw me for the first time, I used to remain heavily veiled and speak only very rarely after drawing a circle around myself. On the first occasion when he met me, he saw me seated in *siddhasana*, fully veiled. He could not see my face, except only small portions of my hands and feet. Even so, he resolved : "*I shall end up myself under these very lotus feet.*" And this actually came to pass.

Ma : A similar series of events occurred also after the death of the father of this body. Jyotish died in August of that year, and merged with this body on the 12th Agrahayan (approximately 27th November) of the same year. And your *Dadamashai*\*\* merged with this body on the 5th Magh (approximately 20th January 1938).

"You will remember that your *Dadamashai* accompanied us to the Narmada valley and returned to Calcutta from there. At that time this body had no intention to visit Bengal. But see how events actually came to pass ! Due to Bholanath's

\* Late Gangacharan Dasgupta was a relation of Bhaiji and a very old devotee of Ma.

\*. *Dadamashai*, mother's father is called in that manner by Bengalees.

urging, I had to go to Tarapith agan. In the meantime your *Dadamashai* fell seriously ill. On seeing his condition, Jatish (Guha) and others came to Tarapith to take me back to Calcutta. I told them that I would go to Calcutta on a certain day, but they held that according to the doctor's opinion, *Dadamashai* would not last till then. So they insisted on my going to Calcutta with them. I told them that I would not enter the house and that I would come away after seeing him only from outside. This is what actually happened. After seeing your *Dadamashai* from the courtyard on arriving at Calcutta, I immediately went to the Birla Mandir in Ballygunge."

"The following day we were to return to Tarapith. Before our departure, the next morning, I again went to visit your *Dadamashai*. A number of house-holders were also staying in the same house. In the morning they had all lit their kitchen fires, and when I arrived, the yard was full of smoke. You know very well that up to then your *Dadamashai* had looked upon this body as just his daughter and nothing more. But that day I noticed a change in his attitude. Lying on bed he was trying to catch sight of this body. In the gloom he could not perceive anything, yet kept on crying, "Ma, Ma", while straining to catch a glimpse of me. It was the moment of our farewell. All were trying to make me eat something, so nobody noticed the changed attitude of your *Dadamashai*."

"After this we returned to Tarapith. When we were in Burdwan, waiting for a train connection to Kashi, I asked Swami Akhandananda to go with certain instructions and see your *Dadamashai*. Had he started in time, he would have been able to see your *Dadamashai* before he passed away. Of course, he had been given an indication that there was a possibility that they might never meet. For some reason or other, Akhandananda could not reach Calcutta in time. On arrival at Kashi, we heard the news that your *Dadamashai* had expired. It was then realized by all that the day I had previously fixed for visiting him in Calcutta from Tarapith was the day of his passing away."

"After that, I caught a glimpse of your *Dadamashai* in January, 1938. I saw him in an extra-ordinary form. His appearance was that of a naked fakir with a turban tied round his head. See, how significant is all this ! When alive he often used to threaten all when in a temper, "What do I care ? I will put on a turban and go off in some direction or other." Form time to time he had had a desire to become a fakir, hence his appearance seen by me was that of a fakir. But the nearer he came to me, the more did he resemble like a smoky cloud. Later he slowly and gradually merged with this body."

"Don't think that only those known to you have merged with this body -- others unknown to you have also attained that state."

**May 17th, 1941**

In the morning I went and sat down near Ma and resumed the discussion which had taken place day before yesterday. I asked : "Ma, you have mentioned that Jyotishdada and *Dadamashai* both have merged in your body. What exactly does "merging" mean ? Did they entirely lose their own identity (*satta*) ?

Ma : What do you mean by "their own identity" ?

I : Was there a complete disappearance of the individual identity that was Jyotish ?

Ma : Had there been any thing left, how could he be considered to have merged completely ?

I : Why ? To merge and yet remain separate, can this not happen simultaneously ? Cannot a being remain finite and be infinite at the same time ?

Ma : To be both finite and infinite simultaneously, this is called total merging. This in fact is realization of the self. In that condition one cannot define what remains and what does not remain. In such a state everything exists and yet nothing exists.

I : Does this realization of the Self supervene after one realizes Divinity (*Iswaratva*) ?

Ma : Certainly. After becoming established in Divinity (*Iswaratva*) that is to say, realizing the significance of creation and destruction, of the power of divine compassion and suffering, the attainment of the Supreme Self ensues. But how long this divine state lasts depends upon the the upward progress of the *sadhaka*.

I : You had mentioned yesterday that not only those known to us had merged with your body but that others, even unknown to us, had also done so.

Ma : Quite right.

I : Well, if they were unknown to us, were they known to you in their physical bodies ?

Ma : They were not .

I : Then why did they merge with you instead of with their own *Ista Deva* ?

Ma : To merge with one's *Ista Deva* is all that matters. Did they not merge with their *Ista Deva* ? *In Him also I exist, just as their Ista Deva exists in me.* I already explained to you that at all times everything exists everywhere.

[To continue]

## TO REMEMBER ME

— Robert N. Test

The day will come when my body will lie upon a white sheet neatly tucked under four corners of a mattress located in a hospital busily occupied with the living and the dying. At a certain moment a doctor will determine that my brain has ceased to function and that for all intents and purposes, my life has stopped.

When that happens, do not attempt to instil artificial life into my body by the use of a machine. And don't call this my death bed. Let it be called the bed of life, let my body be taken from it to help others lead fuller lives.

Give my sight to a man who has never seen a Sunrise, a baby's face or love in the eyes of a woman. Give my heart to a person whose own heart has caused nothing but endless days of pain, give my blood to the teenager who was pulled from a wreckage of his car, so that he might live to see his grandchildren play. Give my kidneys to one who depends on a machine to exist from week to week. Take my bones, every muscles, every fibre and nerve in my body and find a way to make a crippled child walk.

Explore every corner of my brain. Take my cells, if necessary, and let them grow so that some day, a speechless boy will shout at the crack of a bat and a deaf girl will hear the sound of rain against her window.

Burn what is left of me and scatter the ashes to the winds to help the flowers grow.

If you must burn something, let it be my faults, my weaknesses and all prejudice against my fellowmen. Give my sins to the devil. Give my soul to God.

If by chance you wish to remember me, do it with a kind deed or words to someone who needs you.

If you do all I have asked, I will live for ever.

●

# MA ANANDAMAYEE-

## A CONFLUENCE OF GĪTĀ AND CHANDĪ

—Prof. Bireshwar Ganguly

Mā Anandamayee is a unique phenomenon of India's cultural history. She is the epitome of the spiritual culture of the last five thousand years of Indian history after the advent of Lord Krishna, the plenary incarnation of God and the preacher of *Shrīmad Bhagavad Gītā*, the greatest scripture of Hindu religion. The supernatural powers, as exhibited in the life of Lord Krishna cannot be emulated by ordinary virtuous persons, aspiring for liberation, but the ideal of the *Parābhakta Sthitaprajna* (a devotee of steady wisdom and ecstatic love for God, who is always busy in the welfare of suffering humanity, as preached in Gīta) can be accepted as the highest ideal of *Yoga* (self discipline) for the realization of God. And Mā Anandamayee represents this ideal in the highest degree, but her unique motherly personality represents something more than the synthesis of Gīta. For She also represents the synthesis of *Durgā Saptashatī Chandī*, the best scripture of the *Tāntric* tradition of Hindu *Sādhana* (technique of self-realization).

The three best scriptures of *Sanātan* (perennial) Vedic religion based on the Vedas and known as Vedānta. are known as *Prasthān-traya*, viz. (a) *Shruti Prasthān*, represented by the Upanishads, (b) *Nyāya Prasthān*, represented by *Brahma-Sutra*, and (c) *Smṛiti Prasthān*, represented by *Bhagavad Gītā*.

*Gītā* not only gives the essence of 108 Upanishads, but also offers a summary of practical Vedānta, which can be applied in day-to-day life. However, religion or *yoga*, as a scientific technique of self-realization finds its detailed practical note in *Tantra sadhana*, which was pre-Vedic in origin, but post-Vedic in codified literature. Maharshi Veda Vyāsa compiled *Brahma Sutra* and *Gītā* (a part of *Mahābhārata*), as well as *Bhāgavat Purān*, *Devī Bhāgavat Purān* and *Markandeya Purāna*, in which *Chandī* appears as *Devī Māhātmya*. *Gīta* and *Chandī* are complementary treatises on integral yoga.

### *The Essence of the Gītā :*

According to Lord Krishna, *Purushottama Paramātmā* is the highest, absolute and monistic Reality, which has two aspects within it, viz. (i) *Kshara Purusha* or *Aparā Prakṛiti* or *Kshetra* or the physical and subtle universe (including mind, intellect, will and ego) and (ii) *Akshara Purusha* or *Parā Prakṛiti* or

*Kshetrajna*, which includes innumerable individual *Jīvātmās* (souls). As mortal life in the world is full of suffering, *jīvātmās*, feeling the pangs of the bondage of lower nature (*Aparā Prakriti*) should strive for liberation or Self-Realization or God-Realization, not by forsaking works of life, but by performing the duties of one's profession and station in life in a detached spirit of sacrifice of egoism and fruits of work at the feet of God. Hence the prescription of Krishna to aspirant souls like Arjuna is a combination of *Jnāna Yoga* (knowledge), *Karma Yoga* (action) and *Bhakti Yoga* (devotion). The synthetic *sādhana* (yogic technique) of the *Gītā* is one step ahead of the Upanishads and is universal in its application for the whole of humanity.

### ***The Essence of the Chandī :***

Mahādevī Durgā or Chandī is the dynamic but, conscious aspect of the static, but conscious Shiva, both of which are inherent in *Parama Shiva* or *Parama Brahma*. However, the creation, maintenance and destruction of *Jagat* (innumerable universes) is carried on by Durga with the seal and sanction of Shiva. *Jīvātmās* (individual souls) can get liberation from the bondage of *Māyā* (lower *Prakriti*) by yogic *sādhana*, as well as worship of God as Mother, so that by the grace of Goddess Mother, the obstacles to yoga or demoniac forces like lust, anger, covetousness, infatuation and jealousy are destroyed. The struggle of Chandī is applicable both to the cosmic world for maintenance of divinely ordained balance as well as to the individual *sādhaka's* *yoga-sadhana* for raising the *Kundalini Shakti* (primal energy) from the *Mulādhāra* (solar plexus) to the *Sahasrāra* (cerebral plexus). Action, devotion and knowledge of the science of yoga, — all three are essential in *Tantra Sādhana*; Prayers, rituals and icon worship are also essential ingredients in this *sādhana*.

### ***Devī Sukta of Rig Veda :***

The following English translation of *Devī Sukta* of the Rig Veda reveals the nature of Goddess Durgā, or God as Mother or Brahman with His *Shakti* (energy which is conscious) according to the *Āgama (Tāntric)* monism of *Chandī (Devī Māhātmya)*. The Absolute Brahman of the Upanishads is the same as *Purushottam Paramātmā of Gītā* and the Mahādevī or Durgā of *Śrī Śrī Chandī*.

*Devī Sukta (Hymn to the Goddess) :- (Rig Veda, Mandal 10, Sukta 125)*

*"I roam about in the guise of (eleven) Rudras and (eight) Vasus. I travel in the forms of (twelve) Ādityas and all Viswadevas (gods). I sustain Mitra, Varuna, Indra, Agni and (two) Ashwini Kumārs, (1)*

*I preserve Soma, the destroyer of foes (demons). I sustain Twastā (Vishwakarmā), Pushan and Bhagadevas. I bestow the fruits of sacrifice to sacrificers, who have plenty of sacrificial materials, and who offer Soma (nectar) to the Gods. (2)*

*I am the embodiment as well as empress of the universe. I arrange for the wealth needed for the sustenance of devotees. I have realized Brahman as identical with my Self. I am the chief among the heavenly deities. I dwell in all creatures in diverse forms. Divinely oriented gods perform their duties for my sake. (3)*

*Whoever breathes, eats, sees, hears, does so due to my seal and sanction and with energy bestowed by me. Those who know not my real nature, remain in pitiable mortal condition, for they see multiplicity in unity. Listen to me my dear friends, I am delivering the message to be derived by innumerable strenuous efforts. (4)*

*I am myself giving the message of absolute Brahman, for I am that Brāhman, whom all mortals and gods worship. I bestow results of self-knowledge and supernatural powers to those whom I want to protect. I create Brahmā, the creator, as well as the Rishis and the wise. (5)*

*For destroying demons, inimical to God, I fasten the string to the bow of Rudra, the destroyer. I fight for the protection of virtuous devotees. I envelop the earth and the sky as the indwelling spirit. (6)*

*I have given birth to Brahmā, the highest creator. My womb is the vast ocean of knowledge eternal. I am immanent in all universes. The heavens above and the earths below are filled up by my perennial seeds, and the whole creation is sustained by me. (7)*

*I float like free air on the earths, sky and stellar systems of the universe after creating them from my womb. However, I transcend the physical and astral worlds as eternal Brahman. though I am immanent in them." (8)*

This *Devi Sukta* or the hymn to the Goddess Durgā (*Chandī*) is meeting ground of the Vedic and the *Tāntric* traditions of ancient India. It occurs as the 125th hymn of the 10th chapter of the Rig Veda, the oldest among the four Vedās, codified about 5000 years B.C., and constitutes an essential part of the recitation of the *Durgā Saptashati Chandī* (*Devi Mahatmya* of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāna*, compiled later by Maharshi Veda Vyāsa).

Surath, the King, and Samādhi, the merchant, worshipped the icon of Goddess Durga (*Chandī*) for three consecutive years by muttering this *Devī Sukta*, according to the instruction of Medha Rishi and got back their kingdom and liberation



respectively. This hymn was revealed to Vāk, the self-realized daughter of Ambhrin Rishi, who identified herself as the Divine Mother as well as *Brahman*, just as Mā Anandamayee identified herself as *Purna Brahma Nārāyana* as well as *Mahādevī Durgā*.

### **Mother's Realization :**

Once in 1922, at the age of 26, when Nirmala Devi (later known as Ma Anandamayee) rose from her *nirvikalpa samādhi*, Baba Bholanath (her husband and the first initiated disciple) and Nishi Kaviraj, asked her, "Who are you"? Slowly came the sweet reply, "*Purna Brahma Nārāyan*." Then Baba Bholanath asked her, "If you are *Purna Brahma Nārāyan*, then who am I?" Mother replied emphatically, "*Mahādeva*". Baba Bholanath asked her again, "If I am *Mahādeva*, then who are you?" Mother's mystic but unequivocal reply was, "The same, *Mahādeva* as well as *Mahādevī*".\*\*

### **Śrī Rāmakrishna and Ma Ānandamayee:**

As the *Gītā* is a unique synthesis of *Vedānta* and *Vaishnavism*, *Chandī* is a unique synthesis of Saivism, *Shākta-ism* and Patanjali's *Rāja yoga*. If Swami Vivekananda is taken as a model of the synthesis of Yoga in the modern age, Śrī Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Ma Anandamayee can be safely taken as the unique models of the *Gītā* and the *Chandī* put together, with the following differences:

- a) Śrī Rāmakrishna appeared in a male body and Ma Anandamayee appeared in a female body.
- b) Śrī Rāmakrishna had several gurus (spiritual preceptors) and demonstrated intense *sādhana*, according to techniques of *Tantra*, *Vedānta*, *Vaishnavism* and *Rāja Yoga*; whereas Ma Anandamayee had no *guru* at all and did not practise any method of *sādhana*, though, of course, some yogic practices and symptoms were automatically revealed through her body from time to time in her youth.
- c) Though Śrī Rāmakrishna was a realized soul, he used to pose like a child before Goddess Kālī and instructed his devotees and disciples to surrender to God (or Goddess) as pure and simple children. Ma was not only an epitome of motherly love for her devotees, but also behaved like mother even to icons of Rāma or Krishna, and always identified herself, though most humbly and sweetly, with Goddess Kālī, Durgā, Lakshmi and Saraswati.

\*\* Vide : (i) Brahmacharini Kumari Chandan—Swakriya Sarasāmrita (Bengali), Vol. IV. P. 117. 1983. (2) Mātri Darshan (Bengali), by Bhāiji (Jyotish Chandra Roy), 1937, pp. 46-52 for spontaneous hymns like *Devī Sukta*,\* coming out of Mother's mouth after her *samā dhi* trances.

Differences apart, the similarities are however striking indeed. Both were *parā bhakta* (supreme devotees) after attaining *Brahma Jnāna* (self realization) like Shuka Deva, son of Vyāsa Deva. both practised and preached synthesis of all religions and all methods of *sādhanā*. From this point of view even spiritual giants like Bhagavān Buddha and Bhagavān Śri Chaitanya fall short of this integral view, for Buddha was an atheist and Chaitanya represented only Vedānta and Vaishnavism, but not Tantra. Without intense faith in God, no religion has survived among the masses in India. And without the practical science of *Tantra Yoga*, no religion will be acceptable to the scientific mind of the twenty-first century.

According to *Brihadāranyak Upanishad*, there are two aspects of Brahman, viz. *Avyakta* (transcendental) and *Vyakta* (immanent). The latter is also *Satyam* (truth), but the former is *Satyasya Satyam* (the truth of truth). *Moksha* means liberation of the *Jīvātmā* (individual self) from the bondage of the *Vyakta* and merging in the *avyakta*. According to the *Gītā*, *Purushottam Paramātmā* (God) has two powers to create the universe, viz. *Parā Prakriti* (the sum total of conscious *Jīvātmās*.) and *Aparā Prakriti* (the objective world, including mind, intellect, will and ego). Modern science deals with the latter, and spiritual science deals with the former and the technique of self-realization or God-realization. Enlightened Rishis and Yogis specialised in the science and art of self-realization. Examples of such enlightened souls are Vyāsa Deva, Shuka Deva, Yājñavalka, Janaka, Vāk, Gārgi, Buddha, Patanjali, Shankarāchāryā, Rāmānujāchārya, Śri Chaitanya, Śri Ramakrishna, Śri Aurobindo, Śri Ramana Maharshi, Swami Vivekānanda, Swami Yogānanda, Mā Ānandamayee and a host of other ancient, medieval and modern saints. The truth, enunciated in the Vedānta, *Tantra*, Vaishnavism, and Rāja Yoga is not dependent on any particular scripture or particular prophet, unlike that of the Christianity or the Islam. The tradition of self-realization in India is eternal and perennial. Every human being is potentially divine and has the capacity of self-realization. Rāma, Krishna, Buddha, Shankara, Chaitanya, Rāmakrishna and Ma Anandamayee are the ideals not only for Hindus, but also for the whole human race. Hinduism is a universal religion and Mā Ānandamayee is an epitome of Hinduism in all its dimensions. The ills and evils of our modern materialistic civilization, boasting of achievements of science, can be cured only by recourse to the practice of spiritual science and that is the relevance of the advent of Ma Anandamayee in the twentieth century.

# THE FUNDAMENTALS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

— P.C. Mehta

[ Continued from before ]

## Mahāyāna Buddhism :

The first council of the disciples of Buddha called elders, met at Rajagṛha near Magadha. About a hundred years later, a split occurred at a second council in Vaisali. The liberal group accepted relaxation in the severity of monastic vows, but the orthodox prevailed. However, the liberal gained a large following. They held their own council called '*Mahasangha*' or the 'Great Council', which separated from the main body. According to Dr. Radhakrishnan, in the first century AD, this movement developed into *Mahāyāna Buddhism*. In the first century A.D., Hinduism regained its intensity, early Buddhism declined, and *Mahāyāna Buddhism* evolved when the Guptas came into power.

That Buddha attained enlightenment is a fact. His teachings merely point out a way for others to reach enlightenment. The wisdom to be gained is a new dimension of consciousness, in the words of '*Dhammapada*', of 'Self as the lord of self'. He has also laid emphasis on Man working out his own salvation through diligence. Thus Buddha sowed the seeds of illumination in his followers which matured in due season and brought about enlightenment in his worthy disciples.

As Dr. D.T. Suzuki says, 'The life of Buddhism is the unfolding of the inner spiritual life of the Buddha himself, rather than his exposition of it, recorded as the 'Dharma' in Buddhist literature'.

No matter how appropriate these words are, enlightenment being always outside the dualities of the mind, is not something which can be imprisoned within the limits of concepts and therefore cannot be conveyed by words. The maximum that words can do is to point to an occurrence which has to be accomplished. Slavish adherence to words or dead letters would never catch the moving, living, vital spirit behind what is said.

Enlightenment is not a monopoly of anyone or any particular culture but springs from the most inner recesses of creation and manifests in evolving Humanity. A living organism does not remain static but flowers after its own pattern through the original impetus received by it. It is a growing, ever green and ever expanding tree

and with its contact with other cultures, it continues to add many more dimensions to its splendor.

Buddha's followers attained enlightenment and in the process came across truths beyond the spoken words, but contained within Buddha's enlightenment and these blossomed into The *Mahāyāna* school, which flourished from about the first century A.D. onwards

The fundamental ideas of the *Mahāyāna* are expressed in the *Mahāyāna-Sutras* also called *Vaipulya-Sutras*. They are in the form of instructions given by the Buddha.

The *Hinayānists* believed only in the impermanence of all things, while the *Mahāyānists* added that they were also non-essential, of an indefinable character and void at the bottom.

All the *Mahāyāna* Sutras preach the doctrine of essencelessness or voidness of all appearances. Thus the doctrine of *Sunya-vāda* was accepted by all *Mahāyānists*. It did not originate with Nagarjuna. Nagarjuna emphasizes it with great skill. The highest knowledge which is *Pranā-pāramitā* (i.e. wisdom that has gone beyond, or wisdom of the other shore) is this knowledge that everything is pure void. The *Prajñāpāramitā-Sutras* express this insight with remarkable terseness.

The other common feature of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism is that knowing that all appearances are void and that there is neither bondage nor liberation, the Bodhisattvas vow to help mankind to reach Nirvāna.

In India two *Mahāyāna* schools are known :

- i) *Yogācāra* also called *Vijnānavāda* or *Tathāta* philosophy.
- ii) The *Sunyavāda* or *Mādhyamika* philosophy.

Both these schools are idealistic.

The *Vijnāna-Vāda* or 'The sole reality of ideas' : (also known as '*Yogācāra*' or *Vijnyāptmatra* of Asanga or Vasubandhu), as propounded by Ashvaghosa in his *Tathāta* philosophy.

The famous exponent of *Vijnānavāda*, was a Brahmin named Asvaghosa, who flourished in about 100 A.D. He was the saintly preceptor of King Kaniska and a celebrated poet. Before being converted to Buddhism, he used to travel in India defeating Buddhists in debate.

Asanga was the next eminent proponent. He lived in 300 or 400 A.D. Asanga wrote a book called *Yogācāra-bhūmi-Sāstra* on *Vijnānavāda* i.e. the sole reality of ideas. It is likely that due to this book, *Vijnānavāda* came to be called *Yogācāra* also. Vasubandhu was a younger brother of Asanga. He was converted from

*Sarvastivādā*, into *Vijnānavāda*. he is the well-known commentator of a number of *Mahayāna Sūtras*. Vasubandhu's *Abhidharma-kosa*, with his own commentary is a great authority on this school as well as on the entire Buddhist doctrine. Another important work on this school is the *Lankāvatāra-sūtra*. It is so called because the teaching there is fictitiously represented as having been imparted by Buddha to Ravana of Lanka.

In explaining *Vijnānavāda*, Asvaghosa differentiates two aspects of the Soul, (i) *Bhuta-Tathata* or the aspect of 'Thatness' and ii) *Sansāra* or the cycle of birth-death-rebirth. As a result, *Vijnānavāda* came also to be called the *Tathāta* philosophy of Asvaghosa. It is the most representative form of *Vijnanavada* philosophy.

i) *Bhuta-Tathāta* is *Samatā* or oneness of all things also called *Dharma-dhāu*. It is uncreate, without attributes and uninvolved in duality. This *Bhuta-Tathata* holds all things within it. In its aspect as holding all things within it, it is called *Tathagata-Garbha*, or *Tathāgata-womb*. It is Reality.

ii) From this '*Tathāgata-Garbha*', or '*Tathāgata-womb*' issues forth, due to lack of enlightenment, the relative subjective mind called *Alaya-Vijnāna*, which is *Sansara*.

*Alaya-Vijnana* is the the mind in duality in which there is the subject-object split. This occurs due to ignorance or *Avidyā*. *Avidyā* is due to *Smṛiti* meaning remembrance of former *Vāsanā*, which is one's conditioning with its cravings and graspings along with unconscious memory of them from beginningless past lives. Thus the origin of this consciousness is from *Vāsanā*. Man forgets that he partakes of *Bhuta-Tathāta* and wrongly identifies himself with this *Smṛiti*, which becomes the center through which he acts. This center becomes the subject. It is then that, in that part of the mind which has become the object, all things appear under the forms of individuation, bringing about the birth of an objective universe. Under the theory of *Alaya-vijnāna*, the existence of matter is denied and things are analyzed as complexities of perception, the mental phenomena which we mistake for outer reality is attributed to the Absolute Mind. If we could disintegrate or dissolve this *Smṛiti*, the signs of individuation would disappear and there would be no objective universe.

*Alaya-Vijnāna*, along with its modes have no reality and therefore they constitute neither unity nor plurality. This *Tathāta* being existent and *Alaya-Vijnāna* being non-existent cannot form a duality.

At the level of *Alaya-Vijnāna*, when the mind is divided between '*Smṛiti*' as the subject and the responding objective universe, non-enlightenment takes place as follows :

- i) At this stage the person is totally identified with *Smṛiti* which is his personality or ego.
- ii) This total identification with one part of the mind which is *Smṛiti*, in turn creates the subject-object split in the mind, which is responsible for the formation of an objective Universe which comes into being only on account of the coming into existence of the beholder.
- iii) Being affected by the external world, the *Smṛiti* which is the subject, becomes conscious of pleasant and unpleasant sensations.
- iv) It begins to retain the sensations sequentially.
- v) This experience results in clinging to pleasant sensations and avoidance of unpleasant ones.
- vi) By thus clinging, the mind creates names, ideas and definitions called *Sanjna* with which to identify the objects of attachment and rejection.
- vii) This results in *Avidyā-karma* or ignorant action which perpetuates the cycle of birth-death-rebirth and the resultant suffering.
- viii) All the phenomena have arisen from *Avidyā* which does not exist.

The *Tathāta* has no attribute and as soon as it is understood that the Reality is outside the subject-object split in the mind, it can be pointed out only as 'Thatness'. It cannot be comprehended by the particularizing consciousness, which springs from identification with *Smṛiti*, which itself is a part of *Alaya-Vijnāna*. Therefore, in pointing it out, we have to point to the supramental level where there is neither subject nor object nor the duality of existence and non-existence. It cannot be done either by positive or negative affirmations. This is done by calling it *Sunyatā* meaning non-existence of phenomenal world of perceiver and perceived. *Sunyatā* is this 'void' where the illusion of creation has ended.

At the *Alaya-Vijnāna* level, *Tathāta* reflects imperfectly as *Prajnā* (wisdom) and *karma* (activity). When the ignorance is overcome, through the purification of the mind, the *Vijnāna* mentality is as it were tranquilized and the modes subdued. In that state one comes to enlightenment and steps outside the pale of birth-death-rebirth.

When through *Cetovimutti* or complete extinction of *Citta*, there is no identification with the *Alaya-Vijnāna* mind, the modes are obliterated (burnt through *Jnāna* or wisdom or dissolved through *Bhakti* or devotion and there is an end of *Avidyā*. It is then that the pure and genuine wisdom of the *Dharma-Dhātu* which is *Tathāta* will manifest itself as *Dharma-Kāya*.

Thus *Tathāta* is the reality within the Soul. As the *Avidyā* veils it, there springs forth the observer *Smṛiti* and the objective universe. Nevertheless, *Tathātā* exercises a constant pull for the elimination of *Avidyā* or ignorance. This urge to liberation is aided by the compassion of all the Bodhisatvas and Buddhas who foster non-attachment and not particularizing. When this *Avidyā* is removed, *Tathāta* radiates in all its glory.

By annihilating *Avidyā*, one abides in *Tathāta* to realize that all the modes of *Alaya-Vijnāna* including *Prajñā, Karma*, enlightenment and non-enlightenment are non-existent.

To abide in *Tathāta* is *Nirvāna*. As such the *Nirvāna* of the *Tathāta* school seems to point to an absolute Reality akin to the Reality propounded by Sankaracarya in Advaita Vedanta. In 'Nyaya Manjari', Jayant Bhatt claims that in addition to the particular egos, *Yogacaryas* also believed in an Absolute consciousness or Universal Self. The *Lankāvatāra-Sutra* (300 A.D.) which is considered to be an early work of the *Vijnānavādins* describes the ultimate reality as *Sunyatā* or a void in one place, as *Tathāta* in another place and as *Tathāta-Garbha* elsewhere.

Thus according to *Yogācāra*, knowledge points to no external object whatsoever.

There is only the self which is *Smṛiti* conceived of as a fleeting center or swiftly passing stream just as in *Hinayāna* Buddhism.

There is no knowledge that does not refer to an object and there is no object that can be conceived of except as known. This association between them, shows that there is no need for treating them as distinct and therefore the so called external reality may well be regarded as an aspect or form of knowledge itself.

Since objects are mere states or forms of the mind, they are a product of the self and consists of an aggregate of mental states. Thus the objective world is nothing else but ideas.

This doctrine is known as *Vijnāna-vāda* or the sole reality of ideas, since the doctrine reduces all external reality to thought without any objective counterpart.

The assumption of these forms by the mind is due to *vāsanā* or the revival of former impressions left on it by previous experience, and the diversity of perception is explained by the nature of the revived impressions.

