

MA ANANDAMAYEE
AMRIT VARTA

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

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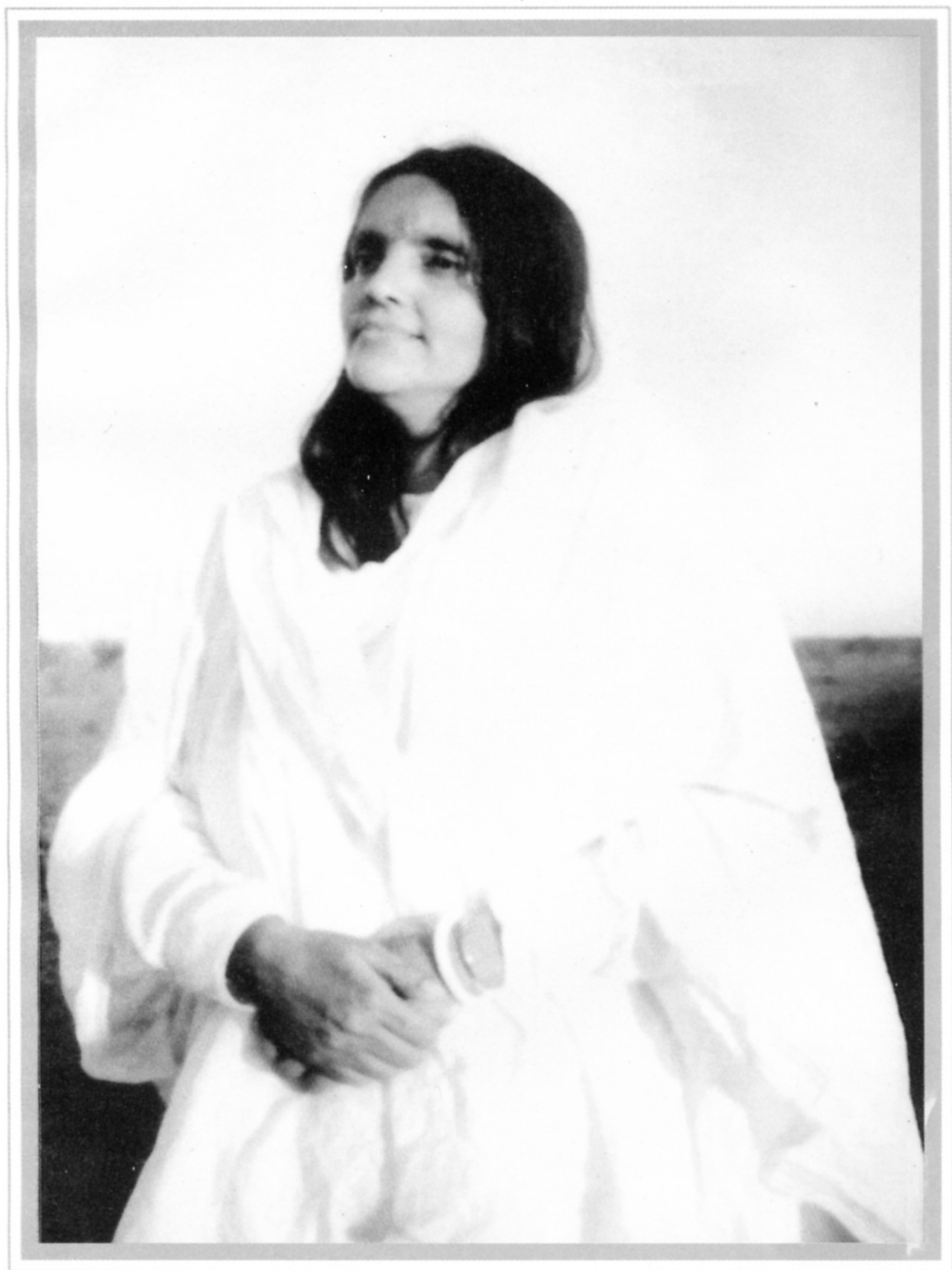
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MATRI VANI

It is by seeking to know oneself that the Great Mother of all may be found.

* * * * *

God's holy Name is in itself the rite for exercising undesirable influences. In the presence of God's Name, ghosts and evil spirits cannot exist.

* * * * *

Life's journey is bound to proceed inevitably in the manner you describe. Search in every home and see how many people can be found who have never known bereavement. This is why the one and only the way out of the misery is the path toward Self-realization.

* * * * *

A person who does not, for the love of God and with a cheerful heart discharge himself of whatever responsibility that may fall to his lot at any time, will find life excessively burdensome and never be able to accomplish anything. Man's duty – more especially for those who have made the Supreme Quest their one and only aim – is to work joyfully for the uplift of the world, with the conviction that all service is His service. Work done in such a spirit helps to purify the mind and heart.

* * * * *

Write to him, that his condition very often indeed occupies this body's *Kheyal*. He himself, by his own effort of will, must become strong-minded and drop his negative attitude, which makes him imagine that he cannot and will never be able to succeed. On the contrary he must be determined that it will be possible, that achievement will most certainly be his. He should say to himself: "In whatever condition pleases God to keep me, to that I resign myself, surrendering to Him whose creature I am, whose body this is." That is all. With perfect calm and tranquility he should pass most of his time lying straight on his back in what is called the "deadpose" (*Shavāsana*) and silently repeat his *mantra* in rhythm with his breathing. *'There is only one Brahman without a second'* – this is what he has to realize. Write to him in plain language that for him there is no need of an intermediary.

* * * * *

Maraji said : Write to him, to tell the truth. Some people undoubtedly do approach this body in quest of Reality; but very many come to get their desires and longings fulfilled.

Although he has had such unmistakable proof of what is the true nature of the world, his heart is still in it ? At this juncture he should try his utmost to engage himself solely in doing service; regarding whatever he does as service to the Lord. Ask him, at all costs to make a resolute effort against letting his mind become entangled in anything pertaining to this ocean of sorrow. It is his attachment to the world, which has brought such deep distress to the unfortunate man. Nothing but ignorance is at the root of it all. He should continue to give news of himself to this body in any way he is able, for he has no one to whom he can confide his troubles and afflictions, which — one and all — are but the fruits of his past actions.

* * * * *

By sorrow does the Lord dispel sorrow and by adversity does He destroy adversity. When this is done He sends no more suffering — this must be borne in mind at all times.

In very truth the Eternal's offspring must focus their thoughts on Him. Divorced from God there cannot be even a prospect of peace - never, never, never. By abiding in God man will find peace, the veil will be rent, and the Dispeller of Sorrow will stand revealed. He alone is the conqueror of evil. He is yours, the sole treasure of the human heart.

* * * * *

They imagine this body to be far away, but actually it is always very, very near. How could it possibly leave anyone ? The question of distance arises solely from their point of view.

* * * * *

No matter what work one undertakes it should be done well. If one cultivates the habit of doing everything well, there is fair promise of one's doing likewise also on the spiritual path. The action is He and the doer of the action is He and no other. At all events one should make an attempt to develop this attitude of mind. Truth - in the presence of which illusion is recognized as illusion - Truth, THAT which IS, has to be made one's own.

ON ŚĀKTA PHILOSOPHY*

by

M. M. Pd. Gopinath Kaviraj

The soul as a spiritual atom thus makes its first appearance when the freedom of Divine will be lost behind its own self-created veil through the transition of Śakti from *parā-kunḍalinī* to *prāṇa-kūṇḍalinī*. This transition is effected by a graded process in which *Śakti-kunḍalinī* coils itself more and more tightly through the evolution of *mātṛkāś* and *varṇas* and reaches the level of *prāṇa* and *sūnya*. It is a truism that *Sāṃvit* is first changed into *prāṇa* before the regular course of subsequent creation represented by the first principles or *tattva* can possibly take place.

The universe of experience consists of a number of *bhuvanas* or planes of life and consciousness made up of *tattvas*'. In the Śākta Śaiva Āgamas thirty-six *tattvas* are recognized, out of which twenty-four counted from below are considered as impure, the next seven as mixed and the remaining five as pure. In this scheme *prakṛti* (24) marks the end of impure, *māyā* (31) that of mixed, and *Śiva* (36) that of pure *tattvas*. Each *tattva* has a series of *bhuvanas* affiliated to it¹. The *bhuvanas* inspite of their mutual differences in detail have the common characteristics of the *tattvas* concerned as predominant, though it is recognised as in the Patañjala school that everywhere everything is to be found (*sarvam sarvātmakam*).² The *bhuvanas* are the abodes of living beings, endowed with bodies and organs made of the substance the materiality of which corresponds to the nature of their *karman* or *jñāna* and the degree of their perfection. The *bhuvanas* of the *pṛthivītattva* represent the sphere, known as *brahmāṇḍa*, the *bhuvanas* of the *tattvas* up to *prakṛti* form the *prakṛtyāṇḍa*, those of the *tattvas* up to *māyā* represent the *māyāṇḍa* and the *bhuvanas* of the *tattvas* up to Śakti beyond *māyā* constitutes the *śaktyāṇḍa* which is the widest sphere. Beyond *Śakti-tattva* there is no limitation and

* . Extracts from "Selected writings of M. M. Gopinath Kaviraj".

1. For the *tattvas* and the *bhuvanas* related to them, see *Mrgendra-Āgama*, Vidyāpāda, pp. 344-456 (Ed. Kṛṣṇa Śāstrin and Subrahmānya Śāstrin); *Bhogakārikā* by Sadyojyoti, VV. 109-13; *Ratna-traya* VV. 89-118 Cf. T. A. Gopināth Rao : *Elements of Hindu Iconography* II (Pt. 2) pp. 392-7 *Mātṛkācakra-viveka*, IV, pp. 86-93.

2. Cf. Vyāsa-bhāṣya under *Yoga Sūtra*, III. 14.

consequently no sphere, though *bhuvanas* are said to exist even in *Śiva-tattva* which is identified with *bindu* and *śāntyatīta kalā*.

The *tattvas* are generally supposed to be the ultimate principle, but they are not so, as they are constituted by *kalās* and *śaktis* which represent the multiple units of energy underlying the entire creation, and which considered in their totality represent the ground of self-expression of the transcendent Śiva. Thus the stuff of the universe is Śakti and in the manner shown in the earlier pages, *prakāśa* with *hārdha-kalā* constitutes the substance out of which the *tattvas* are formed.

The divine attributes of the Self are all diminished, in its atomic condition, when the *cit* appears as *citta*. Of the three well-known impurities or *malas* this is the first, called *āṇava*. It is the state of a *paśu* in which the sense of limitation is first manifested. This limitation makes possible the rise of *vāsanās*, as a result of which the assumption of physical body for a certain length of time becomes necessary to work off these *vāsanās* through experience. These *vāsanās* constitute *kārmamala*. The *māyīya-mala* is the name given to the source of the triple body, namely, (i) the causal or the *kalā śarīra*, (ii) the subtle or *purya śṭaka*, i. e. *tattva-śarīra*, and (iii) the gross elemental or the *bhuvanaja-śarīra*. In fact everything which reveals itself in our experience as knowable and objective comes under *māyīya-mala*. The function of this impurity is to show an object as different from the subject (*sva-rūpa*). All the principles from *kalā* down to *pṛthivī* represent the fetters of *māyā* or *pāśas*. These give shape to body, senses, *bhuvanas*, *bhāvas*, etc. for fulfilling the experience of the soul.¹ Hence what is popularly known as *saṁsāra* extends from *pṛthivī* upto *kalā*, and not beyond the latter. These three impurities persist always in the worldly soul.

This worldly soul is technically known as *sa-kala*, being endowed with body, senses, etc. corresponding to the *tattva* or *bhuvana* to which it belongs. Such souls range from the lowest plane to the plane of *kalā* and migrate from plane to plane according to their *karmans*. There is another state of the soul in which the *māyīya-mala* as described above is absent, but the other two *malas* continue as

1. As regards the three *malas* see *Pratyabhijñā-hṛdaya* pp. 21-2; *Saubhāgyabhāskara* p. 95; *Śiva-sūtra-vārttika* (1-2-3), *Śiva-sūtra-vimarśinī* (1-2-3). The *āṇava* is two-fold according as it refers to the loss of pure *aharṁtā* in the self and appearance of impure *aharṁtā* in the not-self. the self loses *svātantrya* and retains *bodha* or it is as *bheda* representing the appearance of multiplicity in unity. It consists of *māyā* and the thirty-one *tattvas* produced from it. *Kārmamala* is *adṛṣṭa* and may be regarded either as merit or demerit (*puṇya-pāpa*).

before. This is a state of *pralaya* or dissolution in which the soul is free from all the creative principles, is in a disembodied condition and remains absorbed in *māyā*. Such souls are called *pralayākālas* or *pralaya-kevalins*. These are bodiless and senseless atoms with *karmasatīskāras* and the root ignorance clinging to them. When, however, the *karmans* are got rid of through discriminative knowledge, renunciation or such other means, the soul is exalted above *māyā* though still retaining its atomic state. It is then above *māyā* no doubt, but remains within the limits of *mahāmāyā* which it cannot escape unless the supreme grace of the Divine Master acts upon it and removes the basic Ignorance which caused its atomicity and the limitation of its infinite powers. This state of the soul represents the highest condition of the *paśu* known as *Vijñānākala* or *Vijñāna-kevalin*. This is *Kaivalya*. Among these souls those which are thoroughly mature in respect of their impurity are competent to receive divine illumination at the beginning of the next creative cycle. The dawn of divine wisdom which is the result of divine grace (*anugraha*) acting upon the soul is the origin of the so-called *śuddha-vidyā*.¹

The states of the soul which follow are not those of a *paśu* but of Śiva himself, though certain limitations still remain. These limitations are those of *adhikāra*,

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1. The illumination of mature *vijñānākala* is either intense or mild according as the *kaluṣa* or original taint attached to the soul has run its course completely (*samāpta*) or otherwise; the former types of souls are raised to the status of *Vidyēśvaras* and the latter become mantras. The *sakala* and *pralayākala* souls, too, in which the *mala* is mature, are favoured with divine grace and raised to the position of (i) *Mantreśvaras* and placed in charge of the different division of *Brahmāṇḍa* or the planes belonging to *pṛthvī-tattva*, and of (ii) *Bhuvaneśvaras* or *Lokeśvara* with powers over the planes belonging to the higher *tattvas* beyond *pṛthivī*. The *Pralayā-kalas*, however, where *mala* is immature but *karma* mature, are associated with subtle bodies called *puryuṣṭaka* at the beginning of the next cycle and made to assume physical bodies and migrate from life to life, thus maturing the *mala* through experience. The Śākta or Śaiva belief in three-fold nature of the soul is comparable to the conviction of the Ophites and their predecessors the Orphical in the West—it presupposes a faith that the division corresponds to the degrees of grace and does not imply any essential difference. It is true however, that according to the dualists some difference does exist between Śiva and Parama-Śiva. The Valentinian conception of essential distinction in human souls has also its parallel in India as evident from the views of a section of Jaina, Buddhist and Vaiṣṇava writers, but finds no recognition in the Āgamās.

bhoga and *lava* according to the dualists.¹ They are removed in due course of time through fulfilment of experiences, etc., in the *pure order*.²

The successive stage of spiritual perfection consequent on the dawn of wisdom are represented by the *tattvas* to which the souls are attached. Thus the lowest stage is that of a mantra which corresponds to *Śuddha-vidyā*. The higher states are those of *Mantraśvaras* corresponding to *Īsvara-tattva*, of *Mantra-maheśvaras* corresponding to *Sadā-Śiva*, of *Śiva* corresponding to the *tattva* known under that name. The state of *Śiva* is really transcendent, being that of pure and absolute consciousness, but the true Absolute is *Parama-Śiva*, where identity with all the *tattvas* as well as their transcendence are present simultaneously³.

Due to the limitation of its powers the Self is bound. The Śāktas hold that there are certain hidden forces latent in *cidākāśa*, known as *mātrikās* (lit. mothers of the world), which preside over the *malas* referred to above and over the *kalās* or the letter-sounds of the language. The supreme *mātrikā*, known as *Ambikā*, has three aspects, viz. *Jyesthā*, *Raudrī* and *Vāmā*, each of them having a specific function. The *kalās* are the ultimate units of human speech with which thought is inextricably interwoven. The *mātrikās* beget in each soul in each act of its knowledge, determinate or indeterminate, and inner cognition (*antaḥ-parāmarśa*) and produce a sort of confusion there on account of intermingling with *śabda*. Knowledge in this manner assumes the form of joy, sorrow, desire, aversion, conceit, fear, hope, etc., under the influence of these forces. This is how *bhāvas* originate and govern the unregenerate human soul. *Mātrikās* are thus the secret bonds which bind down a soul, but when they are truly known and their essence is revealed they help it in attaining *siddhis* or super-normal psychic powers.

These forces function in *cid-ākāśa* so long as the so-called *brahma-granthi* is not rent asunder. This *granthi* is evidently the node of identity between spirit and matter and is the spring of ego-sense in man. The moral effect of *kuṇḍalinī* is so far clear. It is maintained that if the *mātrikā* is not propitiated and if the node is not removed, it is likely that even after the rise of truth-consciousness the soul may, owing to inadvertence (*pramāda*), be caught up in its snares, get entangled in the meshes of *śabda* and lapse into ignorance or go astray.

1. See *Ratna-traya* by Śrīkaṇṭha, vv. 276-95.

2. The pure order of *śuddha adhvān* represents the higher world of pure matter beyond the influence of *māyā*.

3. See *Pratyabhijñā-hrdaya*, P. 8.

The Divine Will is one and undivided, but it becomes split up after the origin of the *mātrkāś* which evolve out of the *nāda* co-eternal with this Will. This split in *icchā* or *svātantrya* caused a separation between *jñāna* and *kriyā*, its constitutive aspects. This is practically identical with what is described as a divorce between *svātantrya* and *bodha* or *vimarśa* and *prakāśa*, which takes place on the assumption of atomic condition by the Supreme Self. In this condition *jñāna* evolves into three inner and five outer senses, and *kriyā* into five *prāṇas* and five motor-organs connected respectively with the vital and reflex activities of the organism.

[To continue]

Ma – Playing Hide-N-Seek

— Mohua

The time is so quiet and dark
 With the eerie calls of insects giving evidence of life.
 I look up at the sky.
 There is only a thick blanket floating by,
 Sometimes breaking in with a soft rumble.
 It's so lonely and scary;
 And even as I look up at the sky
 Thinking of You, Ma,
 I see You !
 I find You shimmering down at me
 Through the irregular holes in the blanket.
 You disappear after a moment,
 As the holes cover up.
 Time again grows lonely.
 But it brightens up,
 As You reappear through the irregular holes.
 And only then I realize
 That You are never away from us.
 You are only showering Your infantile humour
 As if playing hide-n-seek with us.

PAGES FROM
"Ma Anandamayee Prasang"

by

Prof. A. K. Dutta Gupta

[Translated from Bengali]

Dehradun, Kishenpur Ashram, 19th May, 1941

Ma's Lila of Sadhana

There was a Gujrati lady amongst us named Miss Maniben. She asked : "Mataji, you have just referred to your visions of the past and the future. How do you have them ? Do you see them with your two physical eyes or (pointing at the space between the two eye-brows) with the third eye that is here ?"

Mataji : How do I see them ? Why, the eyes are all over the body. Don't you know that everything has within it all other things ? Hands, legs, hair, in fact every part of the body can be made the instrument of sight. Of course, it is quite possible to see through the two eyes which all possess; and the existence of a third eye of which you speak is also true. Persons do possess such eyes. This may sound strange to you, but nonetheless it is true.

"Once this body lived only on three grains of rice daily for four or five months. Can anyone live for so long on such a meagre diet. It looks like a miracle. But it has been so with this body. It has been so, because it can be so. The reason for this is that what we eat is not all necessary for us. The body takes in only the quintessence of the food, the rest is thrown out. As a result of *sadhana* the body becomes so constituted that though no food is taken physically, it can accept from the surroundings whatever is necessary for its maintenance. In three ways the body can be maintained without food : One way has just been referred to viz. the body can take from the environment the nourishment necessary for its maintenance. Secondly, one can live on air alone. For I have just said that in everything there are all other things; so that the properties of other things are in the air in some measure. Therefore, by taking in air alone we get the essence of other things. Again, it may so happen that the body is not taking anything at all, yet it is being maintained unimpaired as in a state of *samadhi*. Thus you find that as a consequence of *sadhana* it is quite possible to live without what we call food. In a similar way

sadhana can effect such transformation of the body, that by virtue of it any part of it can discharge the function of the eye."

Shyama Charan : We hear that sages can take upon themselves the sufferings of other people.

Mataji : This is quite true. Sages can mitigate the sufferings of other people in three ways : they can take the suffering upon themselves and thus relieve the sufferer : or without taking those sufferings upon themselves, they may distribute and apportion them amongst some other persons. This lightens to some extent the intensity and acuteness of the suffering. It may so happen that sages out of Supreme Grace can relieve an individual from all the consequences of his actions and restore him to Life Divine, which is his true Self. But such incidents are very rare. Hence it is said that purification comes through suffering.

Myself : Mataji, how is it possible to distribute sufferings amongst others ? This looks like sheer injustice.

Mataji : No, there is nothing wrong in it. Sages could divide the sufferings only amongst those who are only too willing and anxious to share them.

Shyama Charan : Why should I allow a sage to bear my cross ?

Mataji : That is well said. A *bhakta* would speak in this way. A devotee would not have the object of his devotion share his sufferings. He would rather bear the same. But sometimes such sufferings are too much for him, and his only concern then becomes how to get rid of them. In such cases only the question of mitigation or extenuation arises. With this body, however, everything has happened spontaneously. I have seen that this body has taken upon itself the sufferings of others, not purposely, but without any intention. Once I went to see a patient who was attacked by a severe type of dysentery. On my return I found myself attacked by that very disease. I had frequent motions and passed blood and mucus. This went on for twelve hours. Then I was all right again. For some time something like a blizzard the passed over this body, then everything was quiet. The man who had originally the attack came round as soon as this body had the disease.

"At another time this body took upon itself the fever from which another person had been suffering. Every third or fourth day I used to have a violent attack of fever which lasted for three hours. The temperature shot up to 103° or 104°. We were then at Cox's Bazar. The nature of the fever convinced Dina Bandhu Babu that it was nothing but malaria. Bholanath was also of the same opinion, and was anxious to administer quinine. But I flatly refused to take the drug. Dina Bandhu Babu had an almost paternal affection for this body, which used to address him as 'father'. He often used to humour me by complying with my requests. Though a Brahmin

himself, he had given up the Brahminical practice of uttering *Gayatri Mantra*. But I induced him to resume it."

"However when he found me suffering from repeated attacks of fever he lost all patience and woefully declared : "These devotees have conspired to kill my daughter. I won't listen to anybody. I intend to administer by force, if necessary, quinine this very night." I heard all this, but said nothing. In the afternoon this body fell into a trance-like condition. True to his words Dina Bandhu Babu came with quinine at night. Seeing me in a state of trance he shook me hard. Though his shaking and hustling made me open my eyes, they remained unmoved in a fixed stare. This pricked his curiosity. He examined me by focussing the light of a torch on my eyes and even thrusting his finger into them to see whether they would wink. When all his endeavours failed to restore me to a state of normalness, he gave up the attempt to administer quinine that night. But he could not abandon the idea of giving the drug to me. Of course I knew how long the fever was to last. So I told him that if the fever persisted beyond a certain period I would take the medicine. But I had not to take it, because within the specified period I was all right."

"I have referred to the incident of my living only on three grains of rice per day for four or five months. That is an illustration of how the physical needs can be overcome by renunciation. I have not had that sort of renunciation which you understand by the word in its ordinary sense. For this body has lived with father, mother, husband and all. This body has served the husband, so you may call it a wife. It has prepared dishes for all, so you may call it a cook. It has done all sorts of scrubbing and menial work, so you may call it a servant. But if you look at the thing from another standpoint you will realize that this body has served none but God. For when I served my father, mother, husband and others, I simply considered them as different manifestations of the Almighty and served them as such. When I sat down to prepare food I did so as if it were a ritual, for the food cooked was after all meant for God. Whatever I did, I did in a spirit of Divine service. Hence I was not quite worldly, though always engaged in household affairs. I had but one ideal, viz. to serve all as God, to do everything for the sake of God."

"At that time I lived as one who had taken a vow of silence. I found enough time at my disposal even after the completion of all my household work. A girl named Usha lived near our house. She used to read out the Mahabharata at noon. One day she handed over the book to me for reading. I took it in my hand but could not read; because at that time God's Name always bubbled out of me as from a

spring. Somehow it got itself tucked to my natural respiration. Hence I found that any attempt to read the book only resulted almost in my suffocation. Moreover, you have some idea as to the range of my education. In order to read I had to spell through every word. When I attempted to read I found that I could not take in two syllables at a time. Suppose I was to pronounce 'ami'. I could pronounce 'a' all right, but when it was time to pronounce "mi" I found that I had cleanly forgotten the 'a' and the effacement was so complete that I could not even trace its existence in me. In this condition no intelligent reading was possible. But when I sat down to spin, I found that it was not an hindrance to repeating God's Name. Both could go on simultaneously. I have spun a good deal of yarn. When I was at Bajitpur I myself prepared a towel and, with the help of a weaver, a pair of *dhotis* also with my own hand-spun yarn."

At this stage a lady remarked : "Ma, once I have seen you singing and weeping."

Mataji : There is nothing like uniformity with this body. *Svabhava* (Nature) takes its unhampered course. The singing and weeping you mention are possible at a certain stage of *sadhana*. Suppose I sat down to sing. At that time my idea was that it was through God's Grace I was uttering His Name. As I went on repeating the Name, another idea took hold of me, and I thought : "Alas ! I am praying so fervently and for such a long time, yet God is not revealing Himself to me !" This sense of frustration created a pang in my heart, and at once tears would trickle down my cheeks. These are, of course, stages of ignorance, for with the dawn of Knowledge even prayers and *sadhana* cease.

"When the different stages of *sadhana* were being manifested through this body, what a variety of experiences I then had ! Sometimes I used to hear distinctly: "Repeat this mantra". When I got the mantra a query arose in me : "Whose mantra is this ?" At once the reply came from within: "It is the mantra of Ganesha or Vishnu" or something like that. Again the query came from myself : "How does he look ?" A form was revealed in no time. Every question was met by a prompt reply and there was immediate resolution of all doubts and misgivings."

"One day I distinctly got the command : "From to day you are not to bow down to anybody." I asked my invisible monitor : "Who are you ?" The reply came : "Your *sakti*" (Power). I thought that there was a distinct *sakti* residing in me and guiding me by issuing commands from time to time. Since all this happened at the stage of *sadhana*, *jnana* (Knowledge) was being revealed in a piecemeal fashion. The integral knowledge which this body was possessed of from the very beginning was broken, as it were, into parts and there was something like a super-imposition of ignorance. At that time I was a *mauni* (observing silence). This was also due to

particular command. The father of this body came to see me at that time. I could not make obeisance even to him. Not that I refrained from doing it intentionally, but this body refused to do anything contrary to the commands it received from time to time. When he saw that I was not doing my duty to him, he took it to heart. But as I was a *mauni* at that time I could not explain the situation to him. He came to regard me with suspicion. He argued that if my various moods and experiences had a spiritual origin, there was no reason why I should be disrespectful to those to whom respect was due. This led him to consult different persons regarding my condition."

"In the meantime the occasion of *Siva Ratri* came. On such occasions it was customary with the father of this body to sit up the whole night and worship Siva. Corresponding to the four quarters of the night he used to perform *puja* four times. Each *puja* was meant for the well-being of a particular individual. This time also he proceeded as usual with the *puja*, and I sat up with him to make preparations for it. When after finishing *puja* three times during the first three quarters of the night, he proceeded to perform the *puja* for the fourth quarter for the benefit of this body, a curious thing happened. He found that as he was proceeding with the worship, this body was uttering aloud all the relevant mantras and prayers quite automatically. This surprised him very much. Though he said nothing, he could not help looking at me from time to time."

"However, to proceed with the account of my *sadhana*. After some time I again heard the voice within myself which told me : "Whom do you want to make obeisance to ? You are everything". At once I realized that the Universe was all my own manifestation. Partial knowledge then gave place to the integral, and I found myself face to face with the ONE that appears as many. It was then that I understood why I had been forbidden for so long to bow down to anybody."

Myself : How long was the period intervening between these two stages ?

Mataji : Quite long. But in the meantime various *vibhutis* were being manifested through this body. These manifestations have again occurred in various ways: Sometimes they have been manifested almost in ignorance, e.g., I found that as soon as I had touched a particular patient he recovered in no time, but I did not know beforehand that he would be cured in that way. Sometimes the manifestation occurred with knowledge mixed up with ignorance, e.g., on seeing a patient I used to argue in this way : "I know from my past experience that my touch has a healing effect. If I touch this patient he may also get well." To verify this I touched him and found that he was cured immediately. Then again manifestations of *vibhuti* have taken place with full knowledge and consciousness on my part. Thus I knew for certain that I could cure a disease by a mere touch, and I touched in full confidence of success."

Jiten Babu : In what other ways have your *vibhuti*s been manifested ? And how do they manifest themselves now ?

Mataji : *Vibhuti*s have now become almost a part and parcel of *svabhāva*.

Jiten Babu : I do not quite follow you.

Mataji : *Vibhuti*s becoming a part of *svabhāva* means that everything is regulated by *svabhāva* or the Supreme Self. Here there is no scope for the play of a limited self. This was so with this body from its very infancy. Such type of disclosures are not always made by this body. Since they are coming spontaneously now, I felt them. Let me tell you that what I am now, I have been from my infancy. But when the different stages of *sadhana* were being manifested through this body there was something like a superimposition of *ajnāna* (ignorance). But what sort of *ajnāna* was that ? It was really *jnāna* posing as *ajnāna* . Let me tell you a story relating to my childhood. In childhood when this body was at Vidyakut, a woman became pregnant, and her child was born when I was still there. I knew from the beginning that the child was not to live long. He came only to complete his cycle of births and deaths. However, the child became one year old. He was not very nice to look at. His complexion was almost jet black, but his body was very soft. That is why he was always seen in the arms of others, who all wanted to have the luxury of the touch. And the child was all smiles. When he was over a year and a few months old, his span of life came to an end; and he became seriously ill. I went to see him on the day he was to die. On my way I took with me a hibiscus flower, but rubbed it so that the people might not know what I had in my hand. I left the flower under the child's pillow. Those who were present there thought that I had left some *nirmalya*, seeing that the child was near his end. I did all this under the urge of *svabhāva*.

"At the stage of *sadhana*, *vibhuti* first manifests itself as joy which comes from the recitation of God's Name. When persons experience this, they think that they have got everything that *sadhana* can yield; and their upward progress gets thereby arrested. But he who keeps himself always on the move without being overwhelmed by such manifestations finds himself in possession of various miraculous powers. But those powers are not meant for display. They should be carefully kept under control. He alone can know his true Self, who keeps alive within him an insatiable thirst for the Divine, without being content with the possession of supernormal powers - powers which enable him to cure any disease by a mere touch of the hand or which leads to the instantaneous fulfilment of all his desires."

[To continue]

THE HOLY MOTHER AS I HAVE KNOWN HER

— Prof. Bireshwar Ganguly

I met the Holy Mother for the first time at Patna on the 17th February, 1951. She was then sitting in the midst of devotees, who were singing devotional songs. She appeared to be in a meditative mood. I have since come to know that for Her there are no changing moods. She always abides in a state which is beyond all changes.

I went there because a colleague of mine, who had introduced me to Śri Aurobindo's works, had informed me of the Holy Mother's stay at Patna. It was pure disinterested curiosity which had led me there. I did not expect much from an almost illiterate woman, who laid so much stress only on "*Kīrtan*", i.e. devotional music in chorus. Though she had been staying at Patna for about a week, I had, because of my intellectual vanity, not cared to go and ask Her any question on philosophy. I was convinced that nothing more than what was to be found in books could be said by or learnt from anybody. I was, however, eager to find, if possible, an ideal non-attached man spoken of by Aldous Huxley. It seemed to tally with the concept of *Sthita-Prajna*' of the *Gītā*. The lives of Śri Rāmakrishna, Śri Aurobindo and Śri Ramana Maharshi had convinced me that a non-attached *Brahmajnāni* was possible even in these days of industrial civilisation, nay, in fact the salvation of our industrial civilisation, which according to Dr. Joad, had lost the values of life. I have not had the good fortune to meet Śri Aurobindo or Śri Ramana Maharshi. Could it be, I thought, that fate had at last moved to retrieve my fortune and I was going to have *darshan* of a *Brahmajnāni*, an event at which, all unknown to me, my whole life-impulse had been aiming.

The uproarious *Kīrtan*, however, disappointed me, as I was of the opinion that such terrible noise must be a positive hindrance to meditation, which is considered the best method of communion with God. After an hour's severe trial, which was relieved only by the Divine Grace of the beautiful face of the Holy Mother, just as I was on the point of leaving, I fell into a sort of trance — almost the first of its kind in my life, and experienced a state of ecstasy, which was broken at about 10 P.M. by a sweet call from the Holy Mother. I felt a sense of great relief and perfect repose when I woke up, and looking at the face of the Holy Mother I found a touch of the Beyond in Her. By that time I had returned to my senses and thought that I

might have been under a hypnotic spell. I pulled myself together and got back my critical mood. However, before I could put any question to Her, She asked me to narrate my experience. By that time everybody had left Her room and so without any hesitation, I related to Her my strange physical, intellectual, emotional and possibly spiritual experience. What astonished me was the way She made definite and explicit what I had groped for in my narration. Ultimately She wound up the whole description my saying that she also had had similar experiences in Her childhood, such is Mother's way to encourage a child. I was naturally anxious to know from Her the correct interpretation of such experiences.

What followed was a masterly discourse on *Yoga*. It seemed to me that Her knowledge far excelled that of Patanjali's "*Yoga Sutra*" in matters of detail, or of Blavatsky's "*The Voice of Silence*" in sense of realism. I bowed down to Her in love and respect and came away a changed man. Out of the ashes of my philosophical knowledge, full of doubts and difficulties, was born a devotion that knows no doubt, no break. Her very presence, aglow with a sublime radiance, was sufficient proof that there was a Divine Mother, upholding and protecting the Universe. The presence of Mother in the midst of a *kīrtan* now assumed a completely new meaning to me, namely of a Being, standing beyond the '*Kīrtan*', and yet presiding over it. The necessity of seeking inferential proofs for such feelings was gone and it seemed to me as though I had an intuitive glimpse of the Lord of the *Gītā*.

Since then I paid many visits to Her Āshrams at Varanasi and Vindhyaçal and it would take one long chapter to write down every single event or idea that has struck me as something full of spiritual significance. Apart from the indescribable devotional atmosphere of the 'gnostic collectivity' around Her, reminding one of the Divine atmosphere created by *Devarshi* Nārada of the *Purānas* or Lord Chaitanya of Bengal, wherever they went, the most pleasing and astonishing thing about Her personality is that it offers a wonderful reconciliation of all religious and philosophical views and theories. She does not only resolve conflicts theoretically, but can actually satisfy the contending parties that they are all perfectly correct from their relative angles of vision. I have attended several conferences of philosophers and religious men in India, and always found them unsatisfactory and disappointing. On several occasions when I had the misfortune of offending somebody holding the view of Vedānta of a school other than that of Shankarāchārya, the Holy Mother intervened and like Śri Rāmakrishna Paramahansa proved to the entire satisfaction of everybody present that there are as many ways of understanding Truth as there are accepted theories. At the outset I

used to think that She reconciled those views in order to please all Her children, who are groping in the dark. But no, Her cosmic consciousness enables Her to identify Herself with everyone and thus realize as well as explain the truth according to the particular view held.

Mother often spoke in the terminology of pure monistic Vedānta. It seemed a little strange to me that one who appeared to be immersed in *Bhakti*, and dedicated to this cult based on pure dualism, should repeatedly speak terms of the Upanishads, such as "only Brahman is true", the world is an illusion or "Thou are that", etc. — concepts which form the very cornerstone of Absolute Monism. The theory of three levels of consciousness hinted at by Sir J. Woodroffe and P.N. Mukhopadhyaya in their '*The World as Power*' seemed to suggest a solution. The three levels correspond to three stages, viz. the state of the *Brahmajnāni* who sees one in the many, the state of the ordinary man who sees nothing but the many and mid-way between those two levels of consciousness lies the intermediary plane of consciousness through which a *Yogi* has to pass. The conflicting statements of many realized souls who got glimpses of the timeless, spaceless, absolute *Brahman* and yet had occasion to speak in terms of pluralism can probably be explained by the hypothesis, that they — the realised souls, so to say, come to other planes to meet the needs of men.

And yet doubt assails when one proceeds to apply this theory to MOTHER, from whom Truth flows at its source. In Her case the criterion of Truth as propounded above does not exist.

On the lower pragmatic planes of consciousness the apparent multiplicity has its relative importance, and it is through strenuous efforts or by the grace of the Divine that one can transcend the lower levels of consciousness. In the beginning the *Yogi* gets temporary glimpses of Truth, which cannot be described in language, but the goal of the *Yogi* is to reach the state of *Mahā Yogi*, who always lives in Absolute Consciousness. Whether we adopt the path of *tapasyā*, i.e. deliberate and strenuous efforts at *Yoga* or that of surrender to the Divine, we have got to get away from this sordid worldly consciousness by annihilating the composite elements in our being. So from an embodied consciousness, in which the conscious *Purusha* or Soul has been enslaved, we shall ultimately come to bodiless consciousness, or realise the *Purusha* free from *Prakriti* or Lower Nature, consisting of body, mind, ego etc. Perhaps *sādhana* ends there and the free soul waits for its final deliverance by the grace of the Divine Mother, the *Ishwara-Shakti*, when the divine spark merges in the Infinite.

Mother Ānandamayee reminds us of the *summum bonum* of human existence and re-enforces the truth of all the scriptures that we are greater than ourselves, that we are purer than we seem to be, that we are by nature Divine, and that we must realize the Divine in this very life. This body is the temple of the Divine Mother; let it not be made into the devil's workshop. By surrendering to the Mother we keep our shrine ready for the expression of the Divine within. The Divine pervades all existence, material as well as spiritual. Hence it is the sacred duty of physical-vital-mental man to evolve into a gnostic being, who also functions on the intuitive plane and on the plane of unconditioned joy. Sit near Mother Ānandamayee and Her joy will touch you, invade you and you will forget, at least for the time being, that there are things like cares and anxieties in life. Such a temporary infusion of joy may make you ultimately mad for Joy Absolute and a life of *sāadhanā* may begin.

Put an abstruse metaphysical question to the Holy Mother, and see how spontaneously, without any effort, without the use of inferential processes, She convinces you. Once I had a serious difference of opinion with a qualified monist and after spending a whole night arguing and She asked me, "By accepting which of the different schools of *Vedānta* can you accommodate the other schools most conveniently?" I replied, " *Advaita Vedānta*". She said, "Oh, then his qualified monism can also be reconciled to your pure monism. Why did you then quarrel with him all night long? Baba, you have as yet only intellectually approached the truth of pure monism. Had you actually realised the Truth, you would also have realised the relative truth from his angle of vision. He may not have had the vision of the One, but if you have come to it, you should accommodate the many in the One which contains the many."

The Holy Mother does not, like a philosopher of some school, try to and coerce others into submission. Rather does She encourage him to support the view point of other seekers, when he is in their company. A devotee, having blind faith should stick to his blind faith. But a philosopher or a teacher who knows the different theories of different schools of thought, should make an attempt to explain in the most logical way any particular view held dear by a particular group of devotees.

Once I had to suffer for my dogmatism in this connection. During the *Dol Purnimā* day of 1952 (the full moon day of the Bengali month of Fālgun, in which Lord Chaitanya was born), the Holy Mother was present, when at a religious sitting at Vrindāvan, I delivered a speech on the message of Sri Chaitanya. It was well received. When I was requested to give another discourse the next day at the same place, I began to explain the fundamental of the "*Synthesis of Yoga*" by Śri Aurobindo, which lays special stress on work without attachment as sacrifice to the

Lord, in view of the fact that free India needed divine workers more than hermits living in seclusion or in Ashrams. The source of the thesis of *Karmayoga* as developed by Śri Aurobindo and as explained by me on that occasion, is what Lord Krishna preached to Arjuna in the *Gītā*. And though everyone present in the audience was a devotee of Lord Krishna, most of them disliked my speech, because of the exuberance of the words. There was such an adverse reaction that some learned pandits complained to Holy Mother about my speech. I, of course, tried to justify myself, but ultimately became convinced that my talk had been an inopportune one. I was simply amazed to find in Mother a first class logician with wonderful sense of realism. She convinced me that not only the philosophical basis of life at Vrindāvan was quite different from that of other places, but also that an attempt at divine work by ordinary *sādhakas*, who have not attained to a certain stage, would lead not to "*Karma-yoga*" but to "*Karma-bhoga*", that is to say, the *sādhaka* at initial stages may just rationalise his ordinary actions, which have been dictated by his lower nature. Hence some *sādhakas*, at some periods of their *sādhanā* may require exclusive recourse to devotion after abandoning works of life. I was reminded of a reference to that effect by Śri Aurobindo himself in his "*The Synthesis of Yoga*."

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THE FUNDAMENTALS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

[Continued from before]

— P.C. Mehta

Spread and break up of Buddhism:

We have briefly dealt with three stages in the history of Buddhism

Buddhistic schools gradually declined under the stress of strengthening Hindu thought. The first great onslaught came from Kumarila Bhatt (700 A.D) and was continued by Sankara and others, with the result that the doctrine lost its hold on the Indian mind. From the twelfth century onwards the discussions of Buddhistic thought became academic. Therefore for the history of this great teaching after that time, we should look outside India, to Tibet, China and Japan.

Its emphasis on compassion is a feature which it shares with Jainism. This has greatly helped the growth of the quality of benevolence in those countries.

The doctrine is broken up in numerous sects. In China more schools developed, such as The 'Tendai' (Tien-tai'), The 'Kegon' (Avatamsaka), The 'Jodo' (Ching-t'u), The 'Zen' (Ch'an) etc. In Japan besides these they also have, the 'Hokke' The 'Shin', the 'Ji' etc.

Further development of the ideal of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism:

We now touch upon two other important areas in which it has developed;

(i) In developing the **Bodhisattva** ideal and ii) Deification of the Buddha.

The Bodhisattva ideal: Buddha the great Bridge:

The attainment of liberation by the individual has ceased to be the ultimate aim. The person who succeeds in acquiring enlightenment is expected to work for the salvation of mankind, instead of remaining satisfied with his own *Nirvāna*. Such a person is called '*Bodhisattva*' literally 'Wisdom-being'. This ideal, with its emphasis on the welfare of others, exceeds the goal of the *Arhant*, who is chiefly concerned with his own salvation.

According to folklore, at the time of Enlightenment it was suggested that on reaching enlightenment, Buddha may enter *Nirvāna*, but Lord *Brahma* intervened and requested Buddha to wait to teach the saving doctrine. Since *Jñāna* or wisdom and *Karunā* or compassion are the two sides of the same coin, Buddha's great emphasis on compassion brought forth the *Bodhisattva* ideal.

It is also said that Buddha gave up *Nirvana* to become the great bridge between *Alaya Vijnāna* and *Tathāta*. All Yogic efforts are within the duality of *Alaya-Vijnāna*. Effort within duality does not lead to the non-dual state. It is total cessation of movement in duality, because one has understood through insight, the futility of such activity, that frees one from its limitations. Buddha in his great compassion gave up *Nirvāna* and decided to be a bridge between the two dimensions, thus enabling the *sādhaka* or the practitioner, through Yogic efforts within duality, to transcend it, either by merging his will with the Divine will through *Bhakti*, or being lifted up through *Jnana* in a state of choiceless awareness of non-duality. This is another reason for the *Bodhisattva* ideal.

Buddha is represented to have been a *Bodhisattva* in many of his former lives; and the love and compassion which are the characteristic features of this ideal can best be indicated by citing the saying which tradition ascribes to Buddha, viz. that he would willingly bear the burden of everybody's suffering, if he could thereby bring relief to the world.

Deification of The Buddha :

While the *Hinayāna* was atheistic and looked upon *Buddha* as essentially a human being, though divinely gifted, the *Mahayāna* gradually came to deify him and adopted devout worship of him as a means to salvation.

This is a clear departure from the earlier position mentioned before where Buddha admonishes Ananda to be a light unto himself. Now both positions coexist.

In these developments, *Mahāyāna* Buddhism has been considerably influenced by theistic Hinduism.

In the history of Indian literature, (vol. ii, page 229), Winternitz states, "We see here the influence of the doctrine of *Bhakti* known to us from the *Bhagavadgita* and it is most probable that it was the *Bhagavadgita* itself which influenced the development of the *Mahāyāna*".

The Trikāyā doctrine:

These developments were brought together in the formulation of the three-body *trikāyā* doctrine. According to this doctrine, Buddhahood can be considered under three aspects :

- i) At one level Buddha appears in his *Nirmānakāyā* i.e. 'transformation' body, as the historical Buddha.
- ii) At another level as *Sambhogakāyā* i.e. 'enjoyment body' in which he appears celestially as heavenly god :
- iii) Finally, and most importantly, he appears in the *Dharmakāyā* i.e. 'Truthbody', where Buddhahood is identified with the Absolute.

Vajrayāna :

Vajrayāna is a form of Esoteric Buddhism which infiltrated into Tibet from India and China during the 7th. century and after. Despite resistance from the indigenous *Bon* religion, it became well established in its Indian form by the 11th century. The type of religion was an amalgam of Buddhism with *Tantra* a form of religion found in India, especially, in Bengal, that involved esoteric sacramental practices, some of which involved breaking taboos as a means of transcending duality.

The *Vajrayāna* is also known as *Mantrayāna*, or Tantric Buddhism. Its philosophy and aim are the same as that of *Mahayāna* Buddhism. *Hinayāna* or the *Mahayāna* schools of Buddhism did not subscribe to the Tantric practices prevalent in Bengal. The *Vajrayāna* school believes that individual realization could be accomplished more quickly through Tantric practices.

For enlightenment, the *sadhaka* or the aspirant has to correlate the three avenues of his body, speech, and mind with the "three mysteries" i.e. of body, speech, and mind of the supermundane Buddha, through the use of gestures (*mudrā*), incantation (*mantra*) and intense concentration (*samādhi*) respectively. This is possible only through transmission of the *Mantra-Sakti* or 'Mantrapower' by a competent Guru to a worthy disciple in a process where the Guru achieves the Buddha level at the time of initiating the disciple, and the disciple looks upon the Guru as the Buddha. The 'Mantra-power' thus infused has to correspond to the capacities and requirements of the disciple. Often enough the 'Mantra-power' is transmitted to the disciple through the '*Ista-devata*' or the tutelary deity of the disciple, whom the devotee daily propitiates and serves. This deity (Guardian-angel) both protects and helps the disciple in his spiritual progress.

To suit the dispositions of disciples, the Tantras are divided in four categories. The *Kriya-Tantras* are meant for disciples for whom external rituals are more important than inner *samadhi*. The *Cārya-Tantras* are suitable to disciples for whom external rituals and inner *samadhi* are equally important, the *Yoga-Tantras* are designed for those for whom inner *samadhi* is more important than external rituals, and the *Anuttarayoga-Tantras* are revealed for those for whom only inner *samadhi* is important.

"Various Buddhist Tantras have a theory about *klesa* or defilement, that differs strikingly from the non-Tantra aim of eliminating it, as though defilement were something to extract. According to these Tantras, the three 'poisons' viz., lust, hatred, and delusion, cannot really be extracted from man, they can only be 'detoxified'. It is a kind of alchemy they teach. These 'poisons' are to be turned

against themselves, as though to short circuit them. According to this theory, for man to be perfected nothing need be added or subtracted, only converted. The Tantras have of course been criticized, even condemned, for asserting that precisely what causes bondage is what causes release from bondage. But this doctrine was misunderstood as an endorsement of license to engage in practices that Buddhism has always condemned. It is true that the Tantric texts when read literally sometimes appear to give such reproachable advice. In fact, Buddhism does not speak ill of the craving for enlightenment or for liberation, so it appears that what is wrong with craving is not craving itself but what it is aimed at, that is, craving that is badly aimed or perversely directed. Nevertheless, Buddhism uses different words to maintain the contrast between different types of craving. *Rāga* or lust connotes bad craving while *pranidhaāna* or aspiration connotes good craving. But while non-Tantric Buddhism speaks as though they were different cravings, the Tantric outlook is that ultimately they represent craving, and therefore cannot be distinguished. Indeed, even the so-called bad lust has the function of preserving the species and permitting the birth of Arhats, Bodhisattvas and Mahasiddhas or Tantric adepts" (From the writings of Alex Wayman, in the Encyclopedia of Religion)

This subject is vast, deep and outside the scope of a book on the philosophies of India. It calls for independent treatment. After the take over of Tibet By China, the rich heritage of this Tibetan religion is getting distributed to various centers of the world, but noticeably in the U.S.A.

CONVERSATION WITH SWAMI VIJAYANANDA

Question : What is our real nature ?

Vijay Ananda : In the depths of our heart, our real nature is perfection. To find it we must remove "the crust", the veils which are hiding it behind a curtain of form and duality. Veils are made of our negative emotions, of our fears, of our desires, etc... It's like a golden bowl left into the earth for a long time. You must take off the dirt, but the gold itself will not be damaged.

Q : Which part of us becomes reincarnated ?

V : It is the subtle body which first goes away and then becomes reincarnated. It's an agglomerate of desires. At the instant of death our more powerful desire rises up and determines our next reincarnation. So it's very useful to have only pure thoughts to control the mental and at the moment of death it is recommended to practice some rituals. It will help the dying person to think of God when he or she leaves the body.

Q : What is the difference between mystical love and human love ?

V : Human love has inevitably its dark side, hostility, since it is within the range of duality. So it remains limited, personal and tied up to the form. Mystical love (for the Guru, the Divine) is pure, tending towards mystical union. To make human love purer, you can do your best to see the divine in the other people. In any way, it's better to have a common love, "Whatever it is", than having no love at all. Then, when the divine love increases the need of human love decreases spontaneously. Divine love is so purer, stronger. You must not force anything, it will come of its own when it's ripe.

Q : Why do we grow so fond of our body ?

V : We think we'll find happiness in it through pleasures like sex, food, etc.... In reality, these pleasures are nothing else but deformed manifestation of the absolute joy which is within us, which is our true nature. If you look outside in search of happiness, whatsoever it is, you'll be disappointed. It is a question of becoming aware of it and of renouncing gradually habits dating from innumerable lives. We must do so with patience, tolerance, vigilance and perseverance.

