

Ananda Vārtā

A quarterly journal dealing mainly with the divine life and
teaching of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee and with other
religio-philosophical topics

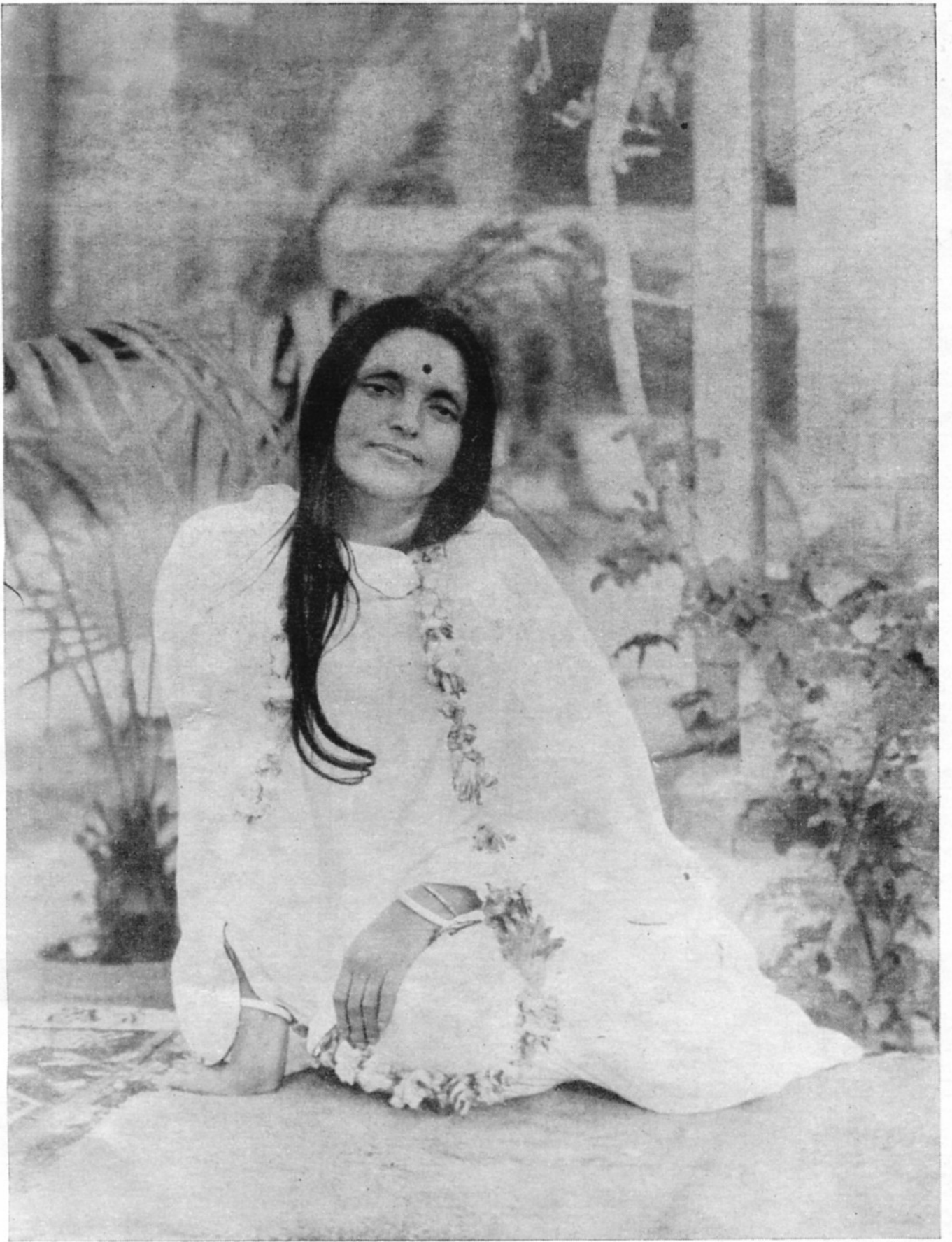


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—An unpublished photo of Mataji.

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

MATRI VANI

The awakening of the sense of want is to be welcomed. It opens up the way and makes the unfit fit to tread the path. In the guise of want and emptiness Thou indeed art present. Lord, I take refuge in Thee, I take refuge in Thee!

* * *

The empire of the mind is enclosed by the body. Even though you may desire to turn the mind inward, will it voluntarily renounce its empire? To divide, to wander backwards and forwards again and again constitutes its natural movement. But your sole duty is to realize: Thou alone art within and without, in want and emptiness, in fact in all circumstances whatever. In order to destroy the undesirable (*anishṭa*) one must focus one's mind on the invocation of the Beloved, the one desired (*Iṣṭa*).

* * *

Your whole life you have spent in acquiring knowledge from mercenary motives, and in similar pursuits. With all

your strength you are serving worldly aims. Learn also to do a little service for the love of God, so that your thought may dwell on His Lotus-feet.

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Spiritual affinity is undoubtedly stronger than blood relationship. The happiness it gives is very special. By the atmosphere created by your meditation, your spiritual endeavour, the place ought to become so wonderful that even people coming from outside will be able to notice it. Ashram life must be made worthy of its object. This surely is as it should be ! And then your eyes, your face, your whole countenance will radiate peace and tranquillity.

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The faithful devotee, the ardent lover of God, the ascetic, the great yogi—all are pilgrims on the path to the Supreme : The revelation of their forgotten SELF, of His touch, their common goal.

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Unless one penetrates to a certain depth, it is but natural for the mind to be fickle and distracted. Those who are absorbed in divine aspiration, must they not constantly abide in His Presence so as to discover pure love ? Let not one precious moment be wasted !

Conversations with Śri Śri Anandamayī Ma

PROFESSOR B. GANGULI

(Translated by Atmananda)

(14)

Ranchi Ashram, 23/10/1962.

Question : If someone cannot enter even by breaking the door and is equally unable to throw himself down in front of the door in self-abandonment, will the Mother Herself open the door and come out to him ?

Mataji : She does indeed come.

Question : If this is so, then have those who cannot succeed either by self-reliance nor by self-surrender no cause for despair ?

Mataji : They have not. One must be desperate after Him. The agony of having failed to find Him, the despair over the fact that He has not been realized, will take one there.

Question : Have we come to the Mother or has She come to us ?

Mataji : (Pointing towards the image of *Kālī*) : The Mother comes to you—and yet again also attracts you to Herself. Where coming and going is, there is duality. But a state exists which is beyond coming and going.

Question : Nowadays everyone feels deeply concerned; for, although it is true that we have escaped the major disaster due to evil planetary influences that had been foretold

for this year (1962), how are we to be saved from atom bombs ?

Mataji : This time He has come in the guise of the atom bomb. Take refuge in the ONE. Due to the world-wide fear of a major disaster in 1962, prayers and the invocation of God's name were offered in many, many places. This was very beneficent.

Question : The following is not a question but an appeal to you: When at every step of one's life one compromises, speaking untruths and committing unlawful actions, how can man's own *dharma* remain intact ? In society and in our country we have fallen prey to such conditions that everyone living in the world is forced, even against his wish and inclination, to compromise all along, although he knows that his character does not remain unimpaired. Every single person is today suffering in this way.

Mataji : Such suffering should persist. Where there is suffering, Truth Itself will come to save Truth.

Question : I am not speaking for the individual only, but also for the entire community.

Mataji : If the suffering is universal, its result will likewise be accordingly.

26/10/1962.

Question : If one does not count every penny one cannot live. On the other hand, unless one is completely uncalculating, one's heart is not preserved. Thus, in order to keep alive one has to become heartless, or if one wants to save one's heart one cannot live.

Mataji : Will you do one thing, Baba: Leave all calculation alone ! Turn your steps towards the ONE. If it should be necessary to do accounting, someone else will come and see to it. Who keeps all the accounts of Mother Kali ?

Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Ranchi, 29/10/62.

Question : Seven years ago this Aurobindo Study Circle was born in the presence of Anandamayi Ma. Now in its 8th year, Mataji has come to invest it with the sacred thread. Is it not so ?

Mataji : This body is father's little daughter. What is she to say ? Why the 8th year ? Why should there be separation from Him with Whom one has ever been before birth and will be after birth for evermore ? What does 'then' and 'now' mean ?

Ranchi Ashram, 29/10/1962.

Question : Should one attempt self-extinction, effacement of oneself ? Or destroy the sense of I ? Or give the power of attorney over one's immature self to the Mother ?

Mataji : If the sense of giving remains, effacement has not taken place. Effacement occurs of itself. Obliteration is not of oneself, but of one's desires, of one's ego. So long as one dwells in the empire of the mind, extinction has not occurred and cannot occur. The mind has to be employed in order to discriminate. For the awakening of goodwill an effort can be made. But effacement occurs when the mind has been transcended. However, the mind has countless levels. Having reached a certain level, there is a semblance of Self-awakening. On the other hand, the mind is also He.

What is to be renounced, or wiped out? In the sphere of the mind there is 'doing' and beyond the mind there is (effortless) 'being.' Who is to be effaced? Who effaces whom? Effacement signifies realization—the realization of Him. Until He reveals Himself one attempts to obliterate oneself. Obliterating means to eliminate step by step, the method of '*neti, neti*' ('not this, not this'), to eliminate the impermanent, that which is subject to destruction. In the Kingdom beyond the mind art Thou in all shapes and forms. What indeed is eternal and what impermanent? All is in fact He alone. On the plane of the mind there is relative happiness, not unconditional bliss. And where relative happiness is, there will also be sorrow side by side. Unconditional bliss is the Bliss of the Brahman, (*Brahmānanda*); and what is *Brahmānanda*? Thou indeed. Seen from one angle, everything is Thou and Thou alone. And from a different point of view: that which Thou art, I also am. Cleanse the mind of everything, and He will stand revealed as the 'Thou,' as the *Ātmā*. To begin with, you have to make use of the mind (*man*)—so as to go beyond it (*aman*), so as to realize the Self (*Ātman*), so as to be Enlightened.

Pages from my Diary

GURUPRIYA DEVI

(Translated from Bengali)

New Delhi, 16th February, 1961.

This morning Mataji arrived here from Hardwar. Sri Dalmiaji has arranged for a huge religious function in town to continue for several weeks. Sri Haribabaji Maharaj is also here. In response to the very urgent request of all of them, Mataji has come and is expected to remain here over the Holi festival.

Mataji is in Her room, alone with Didima and myself. Referring to Didima, She says to me very softly: "She keeps herself so carefully concealed that nobody can possibly know or understand what she really is. This is the way such people live." Indeed, the more one watches Didima and gets to know her, the more one marvels at her. Truly, such a character is very, very rare. Many people have taken initiation from her. The demeanour of a perfect *sādhu* comes to her without the least effort, spontaneously. I have known her for the last 35 years. It goes without saying that anger, greed, self-conceit, aversion, malice are simply non-existent in her. She is loving and affectionate towards all. It never even occurs to her to find fault with anyone. Suppose a very wicked person is being discussed in her presence, Didima will always manage to point out some good quality in the culprit. She really is a wonderful character! Nowadays Didima has become completely child-

like. She is nearly 86 years old. Without Mataji she does not want to remain anywhere ; wherever Mataji happens to be, Didima quietly sits near Her and feels contented. If at that time someone comes to call her for a meal, she says — “I am not at all hungry.” When we smile at her reply, she also, just like a child, smiles back at us. On occasions one can see her sitting quite still outside of Mataji’s door. Mataji’s mother ! It never even strikes her to claim the position that is naturally hers. Most of the time she remains in the background—it is impossible to guess who she is.

24th February, 1961.

Today also a few of us had assembled in Mataji’s room. The discussion turned to the fact that in former years, whenever Mataji gave to a sick person anything She had been holding in Her hand, the disease would be cured. Once, for instance, Mataji held the fruit of a tamarind in Her hand for a few days, without feeling inclined to throw it away. Then someone came and prayed to Mataji to heal a patient. Ma gave him the fruit and the patient became well.

Mataji listened to our conversation with a smile and remarked : “O yes, how these things used to happen ! Later I had the *kheyāla* to stop all this.”

25th February, 1961.

This morning, as soon as Mataji got up from bed, She said : “I hear the sound of weeping.” I thereupon informed Her that a little while ago an urgent wire had been received from Bombay with the news that an old devotee had suddenly passed away. Mataji said : “You had not told me anything until now, had you ?”

After midday Mataji returned from Sri Haribabaji's *satsang*. At about 2 O'clock in the afternoon, Raihana Tyabji together with a number of her followers came for Mataji's *darśana*. Madalasa, the daughter of the late Sri Jamnalal Bajaj was also with her. Raihana Tyabji is a renowned person in this part of India. Although Moham- medan by birth, she has since her childhood been extremely fond of Hindu *kīrtana* and religious music. I have been told that she was to have been married. But on hearing that her prospective husband would not allow her to continue to practise Hindu religious songs, she refused to marry him. She now spends her days in *sādhana*, *kīrtana* and devotional music. For several years she was also closely associated with Mahatma Gandhi.

As soon as she came to Mataji, she put her arms round Her and held Her tightly; then grasping Mataji's hands, she kissed them again and again in rapturous love and veneration. Then, with her head bent and her eyes shut, she remained quite still for a few seconds. Thereafter she gradually began to talk. Pointing to one of the women who had come with her, she exclaimed : "How many lives have we not spent together !" And about Jamnalalji's daughter she said : "This is my niece. Her father looked upon me as his sister."

We put marks of sandal-paste on the foreheads of Raihana and everyone of her party. Mataji took a garland made of *tulsis** and put it round Raihana's neck with the words : "Like everyone else I am also garlanding my mother !" Mataji then motioned to me to put a rosary round

* *Tulsi* sacred basil, a plant sacred to Sri Krishna.