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MĀTRI VĀNI

Do you know why worry arises? Solely because God is thought to be far away. Unrighteousness also has the same cause. To remove God into the far distance is called unrighteousness; that is to say, the idea that God is far away is itself unrighteousness.

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While working with your hands, His name should be repeated mentally. The work you do with your hands is the *mudra*. With this very *mudra* sustain the flow of His name. Nursing the sick—anything at all is His service, His work. Let this be your attitude of mind.

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If one wants to go beyond belief and disbelief one has to believe in Him. Instead of doing so, you believe in all kinds of other things.

Just as there is a veil of ignorance, there is also a door to Knowledge.

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HE IS. If He were not, where would I be? He is in close touch with me. If you keep up this attitude of mind, you will see Him and Him alone. If 'I' remain, let me be His servant, His handmaid. Thus I shall not be separate from Him anymore. In order that this spirit may prevail, sustain uninterrupted *japa*. The more you think of your Beloved (*Iṣṭa*) the more your faith will increase. Do not allow your

mind to wander in many directions, but become one-pointed. Why should there be fear and anxiety? Solely because I imagine He is not near me. He is holding you. Why fear? If you cling to the One in whom fear is not, how can there be even a question of fear?

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Blame may be likened unto cowdung. When it lies about just anywhere it is of no use. But when mixed with earth and turned into manure it is put under plants, what lovely flowers, fruits and grains will not grow! Similarly, if an aspirant can bear to be blamed and criticized, that is to say, if he uses it to improve his character, it will be very beneficial—just as the soil is made fertile by manure. Do you see how much good even blame can do? Blame also is none but He, the One.

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While living in the world you can with a calm spirit attend to spiritual practices. Then only will that which is to be given up, fall away. And that which can never be relinquished, which does not go, that indeed will remain.

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Mātri Satsang

SWAMI BHAGAVATANANDA

(Translated from Hindi)

9th of December, 1947.

Question :—Sri Uddhavaji was Lord Krishna's constant companion, his childhood friend. In spite of this, why did Lord Krishna when He left the world and went to His own abode say to Uddhava : "Go to Bhadrinath and practise *sādhana* there !" Why should He have separated His eternal companion from Himself ? Why did He not take him to His supreme dwelling-place ?

Mataji : What has one to do to please God ?

Question : God alone knows everything.

Mataji : If God knows everything, then He does according to His knowledge. Are not all His companions equal in His *Līlā* ? When the Lord sent Uddhavaji to Badrinath, who is Badrinath ? God is there also of course. God Himself is indeed everywhere. By sending Uddhava to Badrinath, He sent Him but to Himself. Whatever you may behold, it is all God's own form. Bow down to everyone. To go to Badri Narayan and do *tapasyā* there, all this happens according to God's will. The entire world is His form. Get into the habit of seeing Him in everything. *Tapasyā* is also nothing but God. Do whatever He prompts you to do. You see yourself as separate from God, but God tells you to see Him in all forms. All shapes, all movement and all rest are contained within Him. In the field of His play, He and none but He is present in every form.

The Guru's words are mantras. According to the Guru's instructions practise *sādhana* with deep religious feeling and God will have to respond. Just as the parents know what will make their children thrive, so also God

knows exactly what is wholesome for you and what harmful. To ask : "why has God done such and such a thing" is out of place. From your point of view it is of course right. God and His gifts are one. Don't think of yourself as far away from Him. Everywhere God and God alone is present. The father's wealth belongs to his son. Try to see God in every shape and in every mode of being. Man receives according to his desire. Separation is one of God's ways of manifesting. In the separation of Radha from Krishna there also lies a certain charm. Does it not ?

Question : Some people go into a state of *samādhi* when listening to kirtan or other religious music. What actually is this *samādhi* ?

Mataji : Who goes into *samādhi* ? He who goes into *samādhi* becomes one with God. To remain absorbed in meditation for an hour or two is not called *samādhi*.

Question : Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa also went into *bhāva samādhi*.

Mataji : Ordinarily when *bhāva* occurs to someone during kirtan, yet afterwards he again becomes engrossed in worldly affairs, one has to understand that this was just a momentary glimpse of Light, nothing more than that. What is achieved by repeating God's name is all right. As to Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's state, this is quite a different matter. This body is not going to say anything about his *bhāva samādhi*. Just as an M. A. can teach small children the alphabets, but thereby he does not lose the status of an M. A., precisely in a similar manner, once real *samādhi* has occurred one does not divert from this state anymore. For you small and great exist, but *There*, there is no question at all of small and great. Even while moving about, *samādhi* may supervene. For one who has reached the ultimate state, for him all conditions are equal. Some people have the capacity to recognise such a superman.

Question : How can by time-bound knowledge the essence of things be attained ?

Mataji : When you attain to real knowledge, you will have found the essence of things.

Question : Truth is one. When we adhere to one particular doctrine, why do all the others seem false to us ?

Mataji : There are many paths to Truth. But Truth itself is one, it knows no distinctions. Depending on his predilections and temperament man adopts the path most congenial to him. It is said : "There are as many doctrines as there are Munis."

Question : Momentary glimpses of Light are experienced but they vanish. Why should this happen again and again ?

Mataji : Even though they vanish time after time, they will appear again.

Question : What is the simplest method to make them permanent ?

Mataji : If you cannot do anything else, at least seek *satsang* ; or if you are unable to secure the company of real saints and sages, read scriptures, meditate, worship, contemplate God. In the measure as you exert yourself you will make progress on the spiritual path.

Question : God is all-pervading. How can this be proved ?

Mataji : A teacher or professor tests his pupils. Why ? The tests are meant for the benefit of the students, not for the examiner ; the teacher knows how much his pupils have learnt. The purpose of examinations is to make the students aware of their shortcomings. Before putting God to the test, you must first scrutinize yourself ; you have to adhere to your practices and it is God who is the examiner. The examiner is beyond examination. The test is taken for your sake, so that you may know yourself. Many people

do in fact practise *sādhana* with a view to God-realization, but they do not pay attention to their short-comings, such as anger, greed and so forth. This is why they become diverted from their aim. Thus tests and trials are not for the professor but for the students.

Question : Again and again doubt assails the mind. Is this a good sign or a bad one ?

Mataji : It is natural that doubts should arise to those who are on the path to find God. Until you reach the state in which doubts are impossible, doubts are bound to come. When problems arise, they also call for a solution. In the course of one's practice, doubt will awaken. Those who have not started learning and those who have completed their course successfully, for them there are no questions. When queries spring up in your heart, put them before your Guru again and again. Whatever your Guru says, accept and follow without criticising. At the same time proceed also with your spiritual practices. Just as you eat, drink, sleep, and do your professional work regularly, exactly with the same regularity pray to God to make you free from doubts. By sustained effort fire will be generated and its heat felt as well. Once the fire of real knowledge is kindled, everything will be burnt to ashes. By giving a little one receives a little; obtaining a fragment is worth nothing. When you pray for any particular thing, it will be granted to you, but you will not get the whole. Burn up everything by the fire of Knowledge or else melt everything by intense devotion.

Question : Mataji, every day I listen to your words—I also pay attention to what you say. How much I have heard you speak about God ! And yet, when I get engrossed in my work, why do I not remember Him ?

Mataji : Fickleness is one of the characteristics of the mind. For lives and lives you have formed the habit of letting the mind turn outward. The mind is so used to it that now you

will have to reverse its movement and make it turn inwards. So long as the mind's movement does not tend within, it is impossible to find God, therefore try your utmost to make your mind face inwards. By becoming inward turned, God, who is enthroned on the lotus of your heart will be revealed. If the mind roams about outside, it is turned away from God. By practising *sādhana* consistently, a condition ensues when worldly conversation seems distasteful. One is unable to enjoy it. Therefore, so long as you do not enter the current that drives you inwards, you must continue your efforts to make the mind face within. The mind cannot simultaneously move in two directions. Aiming at the two is detrimental ; try to realize the ONE. Worship God, but not for the sake of showing off. Become steady in your practice. What will be the result of this ? There will be no more interruption of your practice. Later you will transcend both practice and non-practice and realize oneness.

Question : Some people are of the opinion that the visions, etc. that come through spiritual practice are due to an unbalanced mind. Is this true ?

Mataji : An unbalanced mind is the cause of vision ? How lovely ! God is manifested everywhere and you have to attain to the vision of Him. How can this vision be due to an unsound mind ? To go beyond the pairs of opposites is the characteristic of Enlightenment. How can this be achieved by a deranged mind ? By the vision of God even insanity is cured.

Question : Is it possible to behold God-with-form (*sākāra*) ?

Mataji : Most certainly.

Question : If you meet a man in the street who is in pain, won't you take pity on him, even though he be unworthy ? Won't you assist him ? Will not God help him ?

Mataji : When appealed to with a sincere heart, God will definitely help.

Question : God is all-pervading.

Mataji : Vasudeva is enthroned upon the lotus in everybody's heart.

Question : When little ants fall into water, we pick them out. Won't God have compassion on us and lift us up ?

Mataji : There are two ways in which God bestows His grace: by favour and also by disfavour. In the world there is both good and bad. Whatever path is right and proper for anyone, that God will choose. In the shape of disease, of *kriyā*, of work, in every shape God's grace can be perceived. At the end of sorrow it comes to light. There is yet another way of looking at it: by sending adversity God destroys adversity. By making you ill He purifies you. God alone is the true doctor who purifies you within and without. Now look at it from yet another angle of vision. Who hits whom ? Who is ill ? That you see sickness is an error. Only God alone is present everywhere. He and He and none but He !

From the Diary of a European

MELITA MASCHMANN

(*Translated from German*)

Varanasi, November 1963.

For the last six weeks I have been watching Mataji very carefully. I do not know how many thousands of people I have seen her greet one by one. For nearly four decades, day after day, men and women have crowded round her, in need of consolation, in search of knowledge, in adoration and out of curiosity. Invariably she receives them with a smile of irresistible charm. This smile has many nuances, only its loving-kindness is unchangeable.

The other day I realized that now and again I am observing Mataji with the unconscious motive to discover at last a smile which is but a mask, not the expression of heartfelt loving-kindness. To this day I have not succeeded and I am happy about it, although it would give me a questionable satisfaction to see her, at least once, smile like a prime minister, or a filmstar, or a nuclear scientist, or a bishop. It might perhaps give me some kind of satisfaction because what I see here in Mataji is—according to human understanding—hardly possible. And because it 'disturbs' to experience something that according to reason cannot be: the expression of a kind-heartedness that by the 'wear and tear' of 35 long years has lost nothing of its freshness, spontaneity, genuineness and strength.

To-day, after Mataji had vanished into her room, she asked one of the girls whether many people were waiting for her. When this was confirmed she at once got up and went to meet them. She walked as I had never seen her walk

before : with difficulty. Probably she is quite ill. When she sat in silence (in her place - 10 minutes later she left again—her smile was indescribably touching and expressive. "Look at me, my dear ones", it seemed to say. "At times the flesh feels rather miserable. But God is full of infinite glory and strength. Gaze at Him through this sick body."

One of the women who has travelled with Mataji for some time told me yesterday that Mataji's illnesses are quite different from our own. One day she may appear to be seriously ill and the next day again perfectly well. It all depends on herself. When she is ill, we pray to her to make herself well again for our sake.

To-day she really is well again. At any rate she appears as fresh as ever, although deep shadows can be detected under her eyes. The crowd pressing for private interviews increases daily. This morning the old, nearly blind *sannyāsini* came again for Mataji's *darśana*. She seemed in a specially deplorable condition. While fumbling about at Mataji's feet she cried and wailed. Obviously she is losing the last remainder of her eyesight.

Mataji spoke to her with unclouded serenity, laughing several times in between. She said : "It is time for your inner eyes to open. God assists you in this by making your outer eyes blind. You know it yourself : that which is really worth while, you have never seen with your outer eyes. What you could still perceive with them would only distract you. That which you are going to behold with the eyes of wisdom is infinitely more beautiful than what the ordinary eyes can see. But as long as you are not willing to close them, the eyes of wisdom will not open."

For a moment the *sannyāsini* remains still, then she starts lamenting once more. For a second, surprise passes over Mataji's face. How can you rebel against God's will so persistently ? it seems to say. Mataji silently looks at the *sannyāsini*. A short flicker of sympathy in her eyes quick-

ly again gives place to crystal clear cheerfulness. "You will not be the first of my friends to acquire real sight by becoming blind."

Often I have noticed that Mataji responds to lamenting and wailing by laughter. Of course, not in all cases when people weep at her feet. Sometimes she caresses the desperate person in silence, sometimes she very gently says something, but most of all she replies to tears by laughter. Many times she has said, "You should cry only for God; for the realization of Him alone should your tears flow."

What was the significance of the short flicker of sympathy in Mataji's face to-day? As far as I know I have never before noticed this expression with her. At first I felt non-plussed at her laughing at the sight of tears. Was the sympathy to-day an ascent to Christian compassion or rather a touch of human weakness, similar to the emotional pity with which most of us react to this kind of situation?

She sees what we cannot perceive: the imperishable behind the earthly processes of decay, and the Light in which our human darkneses are only like the shadows of a fly on a white wall. In order to wail with us, she would have to deny her wisdom and descend to our ignorance. But does not comforting assurance lie just in her laughter? I have seen how quickly people dry their tears. Perhaps those who still weep when they go away, afterwards come to understand why Mataji laughed.

I notice that it has already become a matter of course to me that Mataji can read in our heads and hearts as we read in books. How does such a conviction develop? I have heard it stated a few times, but that by itself would not persuade me at all. Again and again I have the impression that Mataji "catches me red-handed" at some thought. To-day I was just reflecting about the Lemurian landscape she may sometimes have before her inner eye, when the souls of a hundred people are spread out in front of her like open

books. I was sitting in a corner. Suddenly she turned her head in my direction and, looking, at me, called my name and laughed loudly.

A young doctor told me, "When Mataji is sick, this has two causes. Either she takes the illnesses of others on herself, or our wickedness makes her suffer, which manifests in her body."

A few days ago, someone brought some sweets to the Ashram and all who partook of them fell ill. Fortunately only twenty or thirty people were affected, but they were in a rather pitiable condition. A child, an old woman and a delicate *sannyāsi* got seriously ill. This morning at *darśana* time, Mataji discussed this incident. Already for quite a while I had been observing a strange lightning in Mataji's face. For a long time she did not say anything, suddenly she laughed loudly. After calming down a little, she asked: "Do you know why I am laughing?. I have just been reminded of how I saw you lie that morning when you had caught food poisoning. On entering the room, you can't imagine how difficult it was not to laugh. But I did not want to hurt you, so I suppressed it. But now - now it is coming again, now it may be allowed its free course." And it comes over her in a veritable storm. It is shaking her for several minutes. She is unable to utter a single word. Tears are running down her cheeks. Her whole body is one mighty laughter.

By and by the laughing fit decreases and at last subsides. Mataji dries her tears with the lappet of her dhoti and then tries to speak, but it is still vibrating in her throat and the abating earthquake is still visible in her shoulders. "How miserable you were, my friends. How you prayed: 'He Bhagavan, he Bhagavan !' "Still laughing, she imitates the whining of the sick. "Then you remembered God, because you were afraid you would die: 'He Bhagavan, he Bhagavan !' Do you see how beneficial it was for you ? It will help you to get over your lukewarmness." Mataji once more laughs a

little, while looking with affection from face to face. Gradually the people also join in her laughter. Most of them had so far looked rather puzzled. I often notice that they find it difficult to understand why Mataji is laughing. In one or the other face some faint resentment can be detected on occasions. That I am always irresistibly forced to laugh with her and able to give in to this compulsion, may be due to the fact that I only rarely understand what it is all about (to-day I have by way of exception a good interpreter.) Usually it does not puzzle me : Why on earth is she laughing ?

In the meanwhile Mataji continues: "When the doctor came that morning I at once said to him : 'Don't feel anxious, all will be well.' After examining you, he again came to me. I asked him three times : 'How does it look ?' At first he said with hesitation : 'Hopeful'. The second time his voice became somewhat more reassuring : 'Yes, hopeful'. Only to my third question he replied with conviction : 'It is hopeful, Mataji.' In the evening, after the worst was over, he told me that three of you had been dangerously sick. But I was sure that nothing would happen."

Mataji looks round with friendly derision. All at once she starts laughing again. Or rather : she does not laugh herself, it laughs in her. It passes through her body like a tempest and she gives in without resistance. Again the gradual subsiding of the outbursts. "I am now laughing about something that happened thirty years ago", she says, "I have just been reminded of it. I got a terrible fit of laughter, although it was out of place. We spent the night in a temple at Dehradun. Early morning in the dark, Bhaiji sat and meditated. Suddenly we heard the priest approach. Bhaiji did not speak at that time and this body* was also keeping *mouna*. He got up and wanted to go near the priest so that he should not enter the pitch dark temple and perhaps stumble over us and take us for thieves. But Bhaiji

*Mataji.

was not quick enough. The *pūjārī* really thought burglars had broken into the temple and wanted to arrest Bhaiji. The two men struggled with each other in the dark and I stood there, laughing and laughing.....”

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Yesterday morning a gentleman from Calcutta came to the Ashram with his ten years old nephew. The boy had a large, malignant looking abscess on his forehead. His uncle felt so worried about the child that he cried. At mid-day I saw them again. Radiant. The gentleman told me : ‘When I came to Mataji with the boy, she said : ‘Ah, here he is. I thought he would come.’ She then put her hand into the air over his head, saying : ‘Don’t feel anxious, he will soon be all right.’ The same afternoon the boy was playing with the other children. The pain had subsided. This morning the inflammation had decreased considerably. The gentleman (a Government official) is convinced that Mataji has saved the child.

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Last night an old, one-eyed *sādhu* in ochre robes with a *brahmachāri* dressed in white who was also quite an old man, came for Mataji’s *darśana*. Mataji offered her own *āsana* to the *sādhu* and pressed him to sit on it. She first stood up to greet him. Mataji spoke to the bearded *sādhu* as if he were her father.

This morning the two old men returned, the *brahmachāri* walking behind his master at a respectful distance. Mataji stood up and offered to the *sādhu* a place by her side on the couch. When he refused to accept it, as he obviously thought it too great an honour for him, Mataji was about to sit down on the floor next to him. Thereupon he gave in. Strange to see the two sitting side by side. The one-eyed old man, erect and motionless, with fixed expression; a perfect

yogi. Mataji relaxed, leaning against the wall, chattering, sometimes laughing, graceful and expressive in the gestures of her hands. Suddenly one can again see and feel distinctly the girlishness in her. One forgets her age completely on such occasions. She addresses the *sādhu* as '*Pitāji*' and about herself she speaks as his little daughter.

But she does not *play* the role of a young girl, she *becomes* that. To the very sound and pitch of her voice. A little later she is again the mother who comforts, or the sage who interprets a difficult passage of a scripture, or the judge of peace who settles a dispute, or the physician who gives advice as to the treatment of a patient, or the seer whose eyes reflect super worldly light: *Mātri Līlā!*

Tat Karma

“GAURIDASI”

*There is a state in the spiritual life where unconditioned self-sprung action is possible, because there are no ties. And where no ties exist, there is no danger and no wrong path—one cannot take a false step.**

—MATAJI

Some time ago, feeling that writing about spiritual life when one is only a beginner on that treacherous path must be detrimental to one's progress, I asked Mataji if I should continue to do so or not. Her reply to that was merely: “Whatever God causes anyone to do.”

It has been experienced again and again, by others as well as myself, that Mataji seldom, if ever, gives a direct, decisive answer regarding what one should or should not do. Yet, if one thinks about it or rather just allows the mind to rest as it were, in the apparently evasive words of such a simple remark as that given above, letting it connect itself, as it will naturally do, with the one great aim which is the true content of whatever Mataji has to say, it becomes ever more pregnant with meaning. It leads one deeper and deeper into the realm of silent surrender and beyond that to where it makes no difference one way or the other, whether he speaks or does not speak. “The question of solution or non-solution will then cease to arise: whether one says ‘yes’ or ‘no’—everything is THAT.”*

However, where questions do still arise, I might now ask, how are we to discover, in the course of any action whatsoever, if that action has been ordained by Him? Trying to move in the light of Mataji's response to my doubts, how can I discern whether or not God is causing me to write these lines? Is it not rather ego seeking to express itself, when it would be better for all concerned if it kept still?

* Words of Sri Anandamayi Ma,

Perhaps mother's reply to a problem I put to her the other day will shed some light on this also. The question was regarding the attainment of what Mataji refers to as self-sprung or spontaneous action as opposed to self-willed or ego-produced action. I asked her how it is possible to attain to spontaneous action, to the idealized "planless life" when one is obliged to live a life regulated by one's work in the world, which must be done according to a definite schedule and under conditions that are not in the least conducive to spiritual aspiration. The question was in a sense, of course, wrong. For in relation to the ideal of spontaneous action it can as well be asked of the life of one who is exclusively on the path of the spirit : How can self-sprung action arise from living by a strict routine, of any sort? And Mataji's answer came in response, not to my implied complaints about my life as it is, but to the essential question. She said, "When all work is done in the awareness of God, (*Bhagavad buddhi*), that is to say with the attitude that God alone is the actor, the work and the act of working, and if this attitude then comes of itself (spontaneously) there is hope that the ego may lose its hold."

The thing to be discerned then is not whether He is the cause of this or that particular action but rather *that He is the cause of all action*. What is to be found out is He Himself. It is the ego that thinks itself to be doer, whereas, in fact, not only is God the cause of our action, He is verily the action itself. Further, to *know* this fact—that there is nothing but He, is the sole aim of all action.

However, merely to act with no thought of Him will not do. It is the attitude that constitutes *sādhana*, even though so long as the attitude is consciously, deliberately practised it is an act of the ego. As long as I am aware that I am the doer, or making an effort to think "I am not the doer" there can be no question of freedom from action or self-sprung action. Only when that *bhāva* comes, as Ma says, *of itself*, does ego begin to lose its hold; and only by sustain-

ed practice of the awareness of God can it eventually arise spontaneously. And, as Ma has also told us, it is not possible to maintain successfully *Bhagavat buddhi* during the active round of our daily life without practising *japa* and *dhyāna* regularly as well. The two forms of practice nourish each other as it were ; and what holds good for the one holds good also for the other. Only what in time, as the result of continued effort, becomes effortless, spontaneous, has the power to cut the knots of the ego, to destroy the veil of ignorance. *Japa* must become *ajapā* ; and how many times has she not said that the only real meditation is that which comes of itself ?

Therefore, in order to be free, it seems we must willingly be bound; in order to experience the world as His spontaneous *līlā*, we must not only carefully regulate our every action but, also, equally carefully, control our conscious attitude towards it,

In essence, Mataji said exactly the same thing to the *vratis* during *samyam saptāh* last year when she declared. "You practise *samyam* (self-control) so that *samyam swarūpa* may come about. *Samyam swarūpa* means that *asamyam* (lack of control) becomes impossible. Action, speech and thought are then naturally disciplined : right thought, right speech and right conduct have become your second nature. No effort is required anymore. All unnecessary movement of mind and body ceases. When one attains to *samyam swarūpa*, then THAT for the sake of which *samyam* is practised will stand revealed."

It may well be, as indeed it must be, that He is *all* action, uncontrolled as well as controlled, but without *samyam* this cannot be known. Someone once asked Mataji, since one's evil tendencies are due to evil *samskāras* from previous lives, from where did the first disposition to evil action arise ? Her somewhat surprising answer to this query was that to find out this very thing was the purpose of our *sādhanā*.

Again she has said, many times in many different ways, but I quote her from *Words of Shri Anandamayi Ma*:

"...He is infinite ! Out of your union with this infinity spring your actions, feelings and thoughts, at the present time or in the future, in whatever form that He may be pleased to assume."

How full of paradox is the spiritual life ! Little wonder then that we sometimes find that He has assumed in us the form of doubt, and we come to Mother full of questions. All action, *all* thought, of whatever nature, spring from that One. Nevertheless, without practice, without control, without sustained effort, that origin of all, which is our Self, cannot be known. Furthermore, neither can That be known by the means of any action or attempt at inaction whatsoever. No effort on our part can reveal Him who is ever and only Self-revealed,

"Even when the state of *samādhi* has been reached, during which one seems to be wholly absorbed within, this also," says Ma, "is still a state. Yet, when by this spontaneous inner process (*antarkriyā*) the veil is lifted, then the Vision of Reality may come about. It can never come through outer activity, such as the attempt to efface desire."

And again: "Supreme knowledge does not come *through* anything. Supreme knowledge reveals Itself. For destroying the veil there are suitable spiritual disciplines and practices."

Therefore, must we put forth conscientious, sustained effort: in order to attain spontaneous "effortless being." We must practise *samyam* so that *samyam svarūpa* may come about. Then only is there hope that this veil which is the sense of "I" will be destroyed and THAT may stand revealed, THAT which is the origin and cause of all that is seen and unseen; THAT which alone IS.

*Yā devī sarva bhūteshu vritti rūpena samsthita
Namastasyei namastasyei namastasyei namo namaha*

Psychosynthesis and the Ishopanishad

PROF. BIRESHWAR GANGULY

Introduction.

The present essay is a humble attempt to interpret the Ishopanishad in the light of the latest researches on dynamic psychology and psychosynthesis, specially based on the works of Dr. Roberto Assagioli, Chairman of the Psychosynthesis Research Foundation, New York.

Dr. Assagioli's original essay on 'Psychoanalysis and Psychosynthesis', published in Hibberts Journal (London) was subsequently revised, enlarged and printed as a separate text in 1959 by the Research Foundation and his essay on 'Self-Realization and Psychological Disturbances' was published by the Foundation in 1961. The Foundation came forward in 1965 with the publication of Dr. Assagioli's magnum opus : 'Psychosynthesis' ; A Manual of Principles and Techniques.

The word 'psychosynthesis' or 'mental synthesis' has been used by several psychologists, and psychiatrists, e.g. Janet, Bezzola, Neutra, Bjerre, de Jonge, Trub, Freud, Jung, Maeder, Caruso, Stocker and Kretschmer.

The concept of psychosynthesis as gradually developed by Dr. Assagioli, while including the usage of his precursors, is much more comprehensive, definite and near Indian Yogic psychology. In this age of extreme materialism and extroversion, it is a happy augury to find that after the publication of Shri Aurobindo's 'Life Divine' and 'Synthesis of Yoga', some Western psychologists have tried in a scientific way to explain the total personality of man and rehabilitate him on the glorious peak of Vedanta.

Assagioli mentions the following schools of thought, which have also tried to make valuable contributions to the knowledge of human nature :

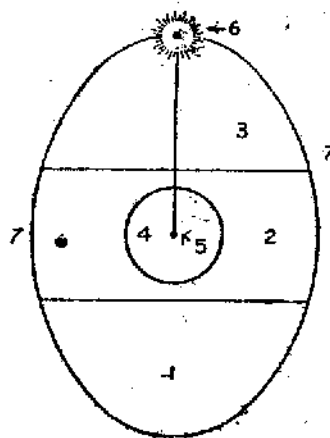
1. Psychosomatic Medicine, 2. The Psychology of Religion, 3. The Investigation of the Superconscious, 4. Psychological Research or Para-Psychology, 5. Eastern Psychology (especially Indian), 6. Creative Understanding, 7. The Holistic Approach and the Psychology of the Personality, 8. Inter-individual and Social Psychology, 9. Psychiatry and, 10. The Anthropological Study of man.

The Total Personality of Man :

Assagioli gives a pluridimensional conception of the human personality, which includes not only the three Freudian levels, viz., conscious, pre-conscious and unconscious, but rather the following seven levels¹ :

Diagram I

(The Total Personality of Man)



1. The lower unconscious.
2. The middle unconscious.
3. The higher unconscious or superconscious.
4. The field of consciousness.
5. The conscious self or 'I'.
6. The Higher Self,
7. The Collective Unconscious.

1. The lower unconscious contains the following elements:

- (a) The elementary psychological activities which direct the life of the body.
- (b) The fundamental drives and primitive urges.
- (c) Many complexes, charged with intense emotion.
- (d) Dreams and imaginations of an inferior kind.

1. Assagioli, R : *Psychosynthesis*, p. 17.

