

Ananda

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Sound file:

<https://www.anandamayi.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Didima.mp3> Didima singing Source of sound recording: Anandamayi Ma_ Recordings, DIV_bMS00556_AU_002_B: Del_Side_2, Performed by Anandamayi, 1896-1982 Varanasi Feb 1955 -Repository: Andover-Harvard Theological Library, Harvard University. Digitized content a

Text file:

<http://www.shreeshreeanandamayeesangha.co/Didima.pdf> 50th Tirodhan Anniversary of Sw Muktananda Giri (Didima.)

Talk in Hindi, with English subtitles:

<https://youtu.be/qDr46iHQJkQ> Baba Ashok Kulkarni 1941-2021

<https://youtu.be/qDr46iHQJkQ> In Memoriam - Baba Ashok Kulkarni (1941-2021) who attained Sri Ma's lotus feet on 12th July 2021

Ma Anandamayee Ma - Sri Ramanasramam

V. Ganesan

India abounds in Sages and Saints. Ma Anandamayee Ma occupied a special place in the spiritual history of India. True spiritual aspirants from the West and East flocked to her for spiritual guidance. She shed light, as she was the Great Light itself!

In 1952, on her pilgrimage in South India, Ma Anandamayee Ma was invited to Arunachala by Sri Ramanasramam to lay the foundation stone for the construction of a temple over the *Samādhi* shrine of *Bhagavan* Ramana. Those who were present on that occasion still remember the meticulous and measured way Ma handed over one brick after brick to lay the foundation. When the traditional *purna kumbha* was offered to Ma at the entrance of the Ashram, she graciously remarked, "Why all this? Do you do all this when a daughter comes to her father's home?"

Falling prostrate at Sri Bhagavan's yet unbuilt *Samādhi* shrine, Ma Anandamayee Ma, solemnly stood up and spontaneously uttered the following words, "Here is the 'Sun' - we are all like 'stars' in the day time!"

I could not be at the Ashram and have *darshan* of Ma in 1952 as I was studying in the college, far away from Arunachala. When I came to stay permanently at Sri Ramanasramam, and started to imbibe the import and greatness of true spiritual life, I had the great good fortune of having encouragement, support and guidance of the Old Devotees of Sri Bhagavan who were there at that time.

In the early 1970s, when I was busy helping the Ashram management in various ways, Mrs. Taleyarkhan, Balarama Reddiar, Hugo Maier and Dorab Framji (old devotees of Ma Anandamayee Ma) met me at the Ashram office. They insisted that I go along with them to Chennai to have *darshan* of Ma Anandamayee Ma, who was being given a rousing reception in that city. I could not immediately obey them. While Mrs. Taleyarkhan, Hugo Maier and Dorab Framji left earlier, the great good-hearted devotee Balarama Reddiar, stayed on and took me to Chennai towards the end of Ma's stay in Chennai.

Thanks to these old devotees, I had my first *darshan* of Ma at 'Kalki Gardens' where she was staying and conducting *satsangs*. She was giving a talk and I listened with rapt attention. Ma was saying, "To lose control over oneself is not desirable. In the search after Truth one must not allow oneself to be overpowered by anything, but should watch carefully, whatever phenomena may supervene, keeping fully conscious, wide awake, in fact retaining complete mastery over oneself. Loss of consciousness and of self-control is never right. While absorbed in meditation, whether one is conscious of the body or not, whether there be a sense of identification with the physical or not - under all circumstances, it is imperative to remain wide awake - unconsciousness must be strictly avoided. Some genuine perceptivity must be retained, whether one contemplates the Self as such, or any particular form. What is the outcome of such meditation? It opens up one's being to the

Light, to that which is Eternal.” The devotees took me near Ma and made me prostrate to her. When I stood looking at her, she showered her grace on me, so profusely that I felt as if I was in the physical presence of our Beloved Bhagavan. I stood still, in ecstasy! However, I was taken away very quickly as there was a huge queue of devotees, waiting behind me.

When I expressed to the old devotees that I wanted to meet Ma personally and seek her blessings, Balarama Reddiar held my hand and assured me that he would take me to Ma, who was leaving Chennai the very next day. Impatiently I waited for the fortunate hour.

The next day, Balarama Reddiar took me to the Central Railway station. There were lots of police constables guarding all entrances. Reddiar held my hand and walked in a right, royal manner to the compartment in which Ma was travelling. Her compartment was adorned with flower garlands. So, it was very easy to locate it. There was a thick posse of policemen guarding it. But, none dared stop the majestic Reddiar! And he boarded the compartment with a meek me in tow.

Ma was seated all alone – not even a single person or assistant was there. Balarama Reddiar prostrated to her and directed me to put my head on her outstretched feet. She blessed me by fondling my head and asked me to rise up. Reddiar introduced me as the grand-nephew of Sri Ramana Maharshi, and added that I sought her blessings - especially for progress in my *sādhana*, as I had left all worldly links and was permanently staying at the Ashram serving the old and new devotees. Ma graciously blessed me and said, “Everything is in God’s hands, and you are His tool to be used by Him as He pleases. Try to grasp the significance ‘all is His,’ and you will immediately feel free from all burdens. What will be the result of your surrender to Him? None will seem alien, all will be your very own, your own Self. Either melt by devotion the sense of separateness, or burn it by Knowledge – for what is it that melts or burns? Only that which by its nature can be melted or burnt - namely the idea that something other than your Self exists. What will happen then? You come to know your own Self. By virtue of Guru’s power, everything will become possible. I bless you, child!”

Ma put her hands again on my head and said, “Sri Maharshi’s Grace is fully on you. Stick to your *sādhana*, studiously. Guidance will flood you! Sri Bhagavan’s teaching of Self-Enquiry is your path. Stay at the Ashram. Don’t go anywhere else. He is your Guru. His teaching is your only guidance. Arunachala is your *kshetra*. All blessings will accrue to you. I bless you, my child!”

She gave me two oranges and gestured to me to eat them. Reddiar too confirmed it. So, I ate both of them in Ma’s presence. I felt her Grace seeping in. I felt profusely blessed!

In 1960, I went to Varanasi from Bombay. No one knew where I had disappeared to from Bombay. Naturally, the office I was working in, my friends in Bombay, and especially my parents back at home in Arunachala, all were worried over my disappearance. Taleyarkhan took my father to Bangalore, where Ma Anandamayee Ma was staying and giving *darshan* to devotees. When my father expressed deep concern as to where I

could have disappeared, Ma gave a beautiful smile and said, "Don't worry! My Ganga *Mata* is protecting him. You will soon hear from him. He will be alright!" When father went back to Arunachala from Bangalore, a telegram was waiting for him, informing that I have been located at Varanasi!

More than 25 years later, I went to stay for a year in Varanasi (1988-89) - as directed by Yogi Ramsurat Kumar. Many spiritual experiences happened to me. One such was the following: I used to visit the Ramakrishna Ashram there and get totally absorbed in myself in their Meditation Hall, which was open to all. One day, when I was coming out of the hall, an elderly swami of the ashram approached me and said, "I have been observing that you often meditate here in front of *Thakur* Sri Ramakrishna. It fills my heart with joy that a young man is absorbed in such deep meditation. Have you ever been to Ma Anandamayee Ma's Ashram on the banks of Ganga *Mata*? If you have not, please go there and spend some time in meditation in front of the Shrine which was worshipped by Ma herself. Make sure you request the elderly swami there to show you the 'Crawling Krishna' idol. It is sculpted out of black stone and is about a foot in height. Also, ask him to tell you about the unique greatness of the idol." I hastened to go to the Ashram of Ma that very same day. I searched for and found out that particular elderly swami. He was very happy to know that I came from Arunachala. He said he had been on a pilgrimage to Holy Arunachala at the behest of Ma herself. Even before I could ask of him about the 'Crawling Krishna' idol, he brought it out from another room and proceeded to tell me the thrilling incident that he had witnessed:

"Ma brought the Krishna idol during one of her visits here and told us that the child Krishna was very hungry and that we should bring food for him. We brought the *naivedhya* (sacramental food) that is offered to the main deity that is daily worshipped here. The Holy Mother sat down and held the idol on her lap. Embracing it like a mother, Ma offered the idol morsel after morsel of food. And lo! Every morsel was eaten by this idol of 'Child Krishna! Not only I, but a few others who are still alive, were also eye-witnesses of this spiritual spectacle! Ma was all joy and went into ecstasy as soon as she finished feeding Sri Krishna! After that, every time Ma came over to Varanasi and stayed here, she took enormous interest in feeding her '*Kanhaiya*' (Black Krishna). Please touch it, prostrate to it, and receive not just Sri Krishna's blessings, but also the profuse blessings of Ma!"

The very touch of the 'Child Krishna' sent me into ecstasy. After that, every time I went to Varanasi, one of the main shrines I would spend time without fail was that of the 'Child Krishna' at Ma Anandamayee Ma's ashram - in addition to the other shrines in Varanasi of Lord *Kashi-Vishwanath*, Mother *Annapoorna*, Mother *Vishalakshi* and Mother *Varahi*, among others. Many of my close friends too, have had the same spiritual experience when they followed suit in response to my persistent and eager pleading to have the *darshan* of the black, 'Child Krishna' at Ma Anandamayee Ma's Ashram in Varanasi. Truly, we are all very fortunate that we are always profusely blessed by the Grace of Sages and Saints !

Sri Ma's Special Directives for Spiritual Aspirants

"In order to advance towards Self-Realisation, it is absolutely necessary for an aspirant to yearn constantly for his sublime goal. He should practice *sādhana* regularly, whether he feels in a mood for it or not."

"To criticize people or to feel hostile towards anyone harms oneself and puts obstacles into one's path to the Supreme. If someone does something bad, you should feel nothing but affection and benevolence towards him or her. Think, 'Lord ! This is also one of Thy manifestations.' The more kindly and friendly you can feel and behave towards everybody, the more will the way to the One – who is goodness itself – open out."

"Take care not to be contented at any stage. Some aspirants have visions, others realizations. Or, someone experiences bliss, great happiness and thinks he has himself become God. On the spiritual path, before true Realisation supervenes, one may get caught in supernatural powers (*vibhūti*s or *siddhi*s). These constitute obstacles."

"The positive proof that the aspirant is centred in God is that he ceases to hate any person or object, and that good qualities such as love, forgiveness, patience, forbearance go on increasing in him. When this change takes place in an aspirant, he will come to see that the One *Brahma* pervades each and every form, all sects, creeds. An aspirant should not indulge in useless conversation or gossip, but speak only when it is really necessary, which means that he must be a man of few words."

"Try and try again to reach the goal you have set before yourself. So long as Realisation does not come, you must never relax your efforts. Let this be your firm resolve."

"In the quest of Self-Knowledge, Love is the crucial factor. Whether it pleases you or not, you will have to make the Eternal your constant companion, just like a remedy that has got to be taken. Without loving God, you will not get anywhere. Remember this all the time."

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Salient features of Mysticism

M. M. Gopinath Kaviraj

Who is a mystic? It is difficult to answer the question. A mystic is not necessarily an occultist, although he may have some occult powers (telepathy etc.) at his command. A mystic need not be an intellectual prodigy, though he may have all the blessings of the pure light. A mystic is not a devotee in the conventional sense, though he may have the most fervent ardour of devotion. He is neither an ascetic, though he may be found using methods of self-mortification. A mystic need not be a visionary, though he may have visions from time to time.

That the supra-human light of knowledge may be revealed to a mystic is not strange to western mysticism. St. Ignatius is said to have comprehended marvelously a great number of truths pertaining to faith or to human sciences. These truths were so numerous and the light was so bright that he felt as if he had entered into a new and glorious world. The intensity, amplitude and excellence of this heaven sent knowledge was so great that all that he had earlier learnt in his life of sixty-two years, whether acquired fortuitously or through diligent study could not be compared to that which he had gained at this climacteric moment. Similar is the account of St. Francis Xavier. He also had found himself inundated by the Divine Light. In India too, the acquisition of natural knowledge in a super natural way is not unknown. The great *yogi* Sivaramkimkara Yogatrayananda had acquired an exact comprehension of the details of the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patanjali in a vision at night.

Different people have seen mysticism in different lights. But all diverse views finally lose their rigidity and agree in implying a sense of vagueness inherent in the concept of mysticism. True mysticism, as I understand it, implies that the soul is successively awakened (*prabuddha*), and fully awakened (*suprabuddha*), so that the sense of exclusiveness pertaining to each of the normal human states viz., waking (*jāgrat*), dream (*svapna*) and deep sleep (*susupti*), is supplemented by a state of unbroken self-awareness which presupposes the integrations of consciousness (*turiya*). The awakening of the soul involves as its commitment the disappearance of the sense of alienness of the so called outer world and causes the soul to turn inward, first from the object to the light which shines upon it, then from the light to the subject, the source of illumination, thirdly from the subject to the transcendental consciousness and power, and finally from this, back to the central being which stands behind all manifestations. This is the usual process. It is assumed that all powers lead back to the self-conscious will (*ichhā-sakti*) which when turned outwards controls immediately the entire machinery of the cosmic movement, viz, the movements of *jñāna* and *kriyā*. This represents for the *yogi* a state of mastery or lordship (*aishwarya*), a state of perfection implying full control of the outgoing forces. This state

represents the majesty of the soul which is now within the Divine circle and reigns supreme over the outer creation.

The above state leads on to the higher state of absolute resignation to the Divine will. The human will at this point unconditionally surrenders to the Divine will and becomes one with it. The soul of the *yogi*, now in close embrace with the Divine, enjoys the bliss of union (*ānandā*) and supreme self-realization (*chit*). The consciousness of this state involves a blessed union of *parā-jñāna* and *parā-bhakti*, or *chit* and *ānanda*, which is universally and eternally the twofold heritage of every true mystic. Neither the senses nor the reasoning of a man can aspire to this ineffable condition without Divine Grace.

The Divine presence may be realized as 'that' (*tat*), as a living light permeating all and subsisting beyond all. It may be realized as 'Thee' and 'Me', both inseparable from each other, or it may be realized as 'Me' alone. Thus It reveals itself as a third person as 'That' (*tat*), or as a second person as 'Thee' (*tvam*), or as a first person as 'I' (*aham*). There is an impersonal presence also which is at once elusive and really magnificent. In each case, the soul exists in a state of indifference (*udāsin*), or as the closest companion, or as one's very self. In the impersonal, however, there is no trace of 'I', even the integral 'I' (*purna aham*) is absent there. And yet awareness persists. It is the same as the *bhāsā* of the *Sakta Āgamas*, beyond the *anākhyā*. Even here there is a 'beyond' which cannot be called present, yet which *is*, of which we hear so much in Jewish *Kaoāla*. As a matter of fact, even the 'beyond' or 'beyond-beyond' is also within the orbit of the Absolute (*akhanda*).

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Children section

Result of the *Naam-Kirtana*

Swami Shivananda (Shri Sailesh Brahmachari)

There was a young *Brahmin*, who was very religious and had faith on the rules of religion. He had no dearth of money. Since he wanted to enjoy a unrestrained life, he did not want to marry. He had heard that the Lord of *Vaikunth*, *Shree Narayan* roamed about in this world in the form of a guest. On several occasions discarding his human guest form, He had given *darshan* to many in His *Chaturbhuj* (holding *Sankh*, *Chakra*, *Jadhha*, *Padma* in His four hands) form. Hence the *Brahmin* decided that he would not eat a meal without serving at least one visitor and he obeyed it too.

His bosom friend kept persuading him to get married saying, "You have to get married, there is no shortage of finance, it is our wish, why will you not marry?" The *Brahmin* was always submerged in thoughts of the God and hence he did not want to answer their questions. However, after a lot of persuasion from his friends, one day he told them, "Since you all wish, I will marry on one condition, i.e. with whomsoever I marry she has to obey all my orders. If for any reason she fails to obey I will behead her. If someone agrees to marry with this condition, I will marry otherwise I won't.

The friends thought that there was no logic in this. Can a husband behead his wife after marriage? This is not possible. So they agreed to this condition and got him married to a young beautiful lady. On the very first day, he ordered his wife, "Serve at least one visitor daily, only after that call me for partaking of *prasād*. After I finish, you take your meals, understood? A guest is *Narayan*, without pondering, do immediately as the visitor says. Remember if this is not followed I will behead you. The newly-wed had to obey his husband, otherwise her life was at stake. Daily she used to wait for a visitor after cooking the meals. Some days the visitor used to arrive quite late and she used to cry due to hunger. But she was helpless, other than wiping her tears, she had no other option.

One day, the meals were ready but for a long time there was no sign of a visitor. The day was passing by and she thought maybe today God has not fated her to have meals. In the meanwhile she saw a horrible shaped person with a staff on his shoulder to which a freshly cut head of a cow was attached and blood was oozing out of it. On seeing the visitor, the bride started shivering with fright. What to do? How to serve him? But there was no other option, shivering she brought him inside and placed a mat for him to be seated. After washing his feet, served food and with folded hands requested him to accept the meals. Hearing this the visitor spoke in a grave voice to cook the head of the cow after cutting it into pieces. Saying this he directed the staff with the head towards her. The bride started shivering with fear and panic. For a few moment she had become stiff like a stone.

Then remembering her husband's order she cut the head and cooked it so that she may become free from her duty. The honored guest then ordered her to eat the meat first.

Now the lady was truly terrified, *brahmin* girl, wife of a *brahmin* too, how could she take cow's meat. Tears started rolling down her cheeks, but the visitor was not interested. Seeing her hesitating he said Eat if you want to, otherwise I am leaving. Hearing this she put forth her hands towards the meat. The visitor then stopped her and asked her to call her husband. Shivering she proceeded to call her husband and pondered, why did she not take the meat and put it in her mouth, now for this reason she would have to die with her husband's hands. Seeing her, the husband thought that maybe she had arrived to call her for meals. Hence he asked, had the visitor been served properly. She replied, not yet, but he has called you. Hearing her he immediately understood that there must have been some discrepancy on her side in treating the guest. Otherwise why would he be called. He started abusing her with anger.

Both of them then entered the dining room. But behold! Placed on the mat of the visitor was the dual idol of *Radha-Krishna*. And what an extraordinary glow was emanating from the idol. Seeing the idol of their adorable Lord and the glow around it, tears started flowing out from the eyes of both the husband and wife.

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Tara's experience of Ma's Grace

Liana Steindamm

My husband Arash and myself are the parents of three young girls, Devaki, Tara and Radha, aged seven, four and one year ten months respectively. We live in Sri Ma Anandamayi Ashram, Kona, Hawaii. We have been devoted to Ma since childhood and are raising our children with Ma's Grace and teachings under the guidance of Swami Dayanandaji. One of Ma's teachings that Swamiji has emphasized to us is that, when Ma's name is repeated with devotion, Ma Herself is present with us. One of our young daughters had an experience of the truth of this teaching during a terrifying afternoon.

One day Radha was choking on a small toy that she had put in her mouth. Her father and grandmother were doing everything they could to dislodge the object, but were at first not able to get it out, and they feared she would die. Radha's older sisters, Devaki and Tara were watching what was happening and were very scared at the sight of their sister choking and bleeding as their father and grandmother struggled to remove the toy. They began calling on Ma to help their baby sister. The toy was finally removed and the baby was taken to the hospital for treatment of a severely scratched throat. Later, Tara explained that, after her sister was taken away in the ambulance, she and her sister were sitting in front of their grandmother's altar, crying and praying to Ma to save their baby sister's life. They did not know at that time if the baby was going to be alright. Tara said that, while she prayed, she heard Ma speak to her. Ma spoke in the most beautiful, sweet voice, and told her, "Don't worry! I am going to save your baby sister!" Through Ma's grace, Radha recovered.

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Amrit-Katha*

(Certain incidents in Shree Shree Ma's Own words)

Bhaiji

Chapter Six: Bholanath's transfer to Shahbag from Bajitpur:

One day news came from the Central Court in Dhaka that Bholanath would have to go somewhere else from Bajitpur. Worried and troubled Bholanath departed for Dhaka and took this body along with him. Not getting a proper accommodation there, he was making arrangements to move this body somewhere else. Then this body said, "Wait for three days, see what happens." Within the next three days arrangements took place to transfer Bholanath to Shahbag. We had gone to Dhaka in the second week of April 1924 and in the beginning of third week we arrived in Shahbag Gardens. (3rd Vaisakh 1331).

Few days after reaching Shahbag, asked Bholanath, is there a Siddheshwari here, it is being seen by this body. Is there a tree by this name? Bholanath showed a few large trees in Buda-Budi Tola, near Shahbag. I replied these are not that tree. Daily we used to go to Ramana *Kali-Bari* for evening *aarti-darshan*, which was nearby. One day while returning in the night from the *Kali-Bari*, we met Bholanath's old friend Baul Chandra Basak who was walking along in the path. While conversing with him, learnt about Siddheshwari *Kali-Bari*. Bholanath requested him to take us there one day. One day in the month of *Aashaad*, we went with Baul to the Siddheshwari *Kali-Bari*. On reaching there, saw a large *peepal* tree fallen on the ground near the gate of the temple. Immediately I said 'this is the place and the tree that I had seen in Shahbag; surely there must have been few more large trees here'. Then Baul replied, "It is said that three trees *Bargad*, *Peepal* and *Chandan* had combined together to form a single tree, it was known as '*Tintadi*'." I understood that this is the very Siddheshwari tree. Baul also said that glow of light was visible on this tree and on this itself the luminescent form of *Ma-Kali* of Siddheshwari was seen to be installed. Many a time a luminescent glow used to travel from this tree to the temple and return back to the tree, this glow is reputed as the *Jyotirmayi Kali* (Illuminated *Kali*) of Siddheshwari.

That night we stayed back in Siddheshwari. That night only Surbala's thought was coming in mind and suddenly words came out from the lips, now she should be liberated. The next day we returned back to Shahbag. In the evening mother and father arrived, they said that Surbala had left her body yesterday night. Mother was crying a lot. My emotions were just unperturbed. Days were passing in *maun* (silence) in Shahbag. One day a humble family came to visit that place along with their children. Observing me they were commenting as to what a beautiful face she has, maybe she is dumb, otherwise why is she not talking with us? They were eating something. This body gave them salt. Then they said, 'We did not say, then how could she understand that we needed salt, now is smiling. Oh! Maybe she cannot hear too.' Later they went away and discussed this

matter in their house. The elders of their house investigated this matter and came to know about the state etc, of this body. Hearing everything they came back to Shahbag with a sick eight year old child of their family. The boy was unable to walk. Told them to come on some another day. When the boy arrived on that day, seeing him I put him on my lap and started caressing his body, the boy sat quietly motionless. After some time all of them went away. Later heard, his illness had been cured. The boy had visited Shahbag again and was running around.

In the month of Ashaad there was a change in my diet. One day while eating saw that I ate only three times the three grains of rice that I had taken in my hand. From that day the daily routine was like this only and this continued for eight nine months. The rule followed was to take meals once in the day time and once in the night. Did not even drink water, at any time other than the meal time. Did all the household chores. The day I took banana etc. instead of rice, that day also put the same only three times in my mouth. Even on trying one extra gulp would not go in.

In the month *Bhaado*, again there was preparation to go to Siddheshwari *Kali-hari*. Before dusk going to Siddheshwari with Bholanath, prepared rice, vegetables, etc. and *bhog* was offered to Siddheshwari *Kali*. I had never offered *bhog* earlier, but Bholanath said, 'Offer *bhog* in the way the emotions arise within you.' I did just like that. The night was almost over, stayed back the next day too. In the day-time the father of this body stayed in Siddheshwari. Bholanath used to arrive in the evening and stayed for the night. After two-three days, Baul babu also arrived and started residing there. That time used to stay alone in the room attached to the temple room. Used to enter the room early morning after bathing etc, and remained in the room for the whole day and night. In my own *bhaav*, remained lying on the floor without any bedding, sometimes sat on the floor and sometimes moved around in the room. Came out in the night, once for a short time, offering some fruits etc. to *Kali-ji*; after eating a little bit of something, within a short duration, again went back into the inner room. After seven days passes in this way, on the last night, carrying along the offered fruits, told Bholanath that we are going out and went to the place where *Mahadev* is installed now. Baul was sitting on the door of the temple, but while coming out with Bholanath he could not notice. From worldly view point I had seen this place for the first time. It was like a barren land, there was termite earth mound nearby and on the other side a little further away rain water had accumulated. It was then raining heavily. Fully drenched, going there, this body along with Bholanath circling three times around the raised spot where now *Mahadev* is, putting the right hand heavily on the floor sat down on the ground. What do I see, the whole hand right upto my shoulder, passed into the ground. Bholanath shrieked, 'What is this, everything is going inside.' Saying this catching my hand he pulled it out and made me sit properly. While pulling out the hand, along with it mud and red colored water had spurted out like a fountain. Almost half an hour later, Bholanath saying 'let's go, let's go', hurriedly brought me back to the *Kali* temple. When the hand had plunged inside, the hand had collided with some item,

had taken out some of it, Bholanath threw it back into the pond adjacent to the Siddheshwari *Kalibari*. Next day we returned back to Shahbag.

After three days because of certain action, Baul was told to cover that hand marked place with mud and also to maintain that spot. After making a thatched roof on top and surrounding the four sides with a wall, the place looked like a rectangular pit. When a tinne room was constructed there, then everything else were removed and a pillar of the height equivalent to the height of this body when it kneeled down on the raised spot, was constructed. Later the *Shiva-linga* was installed there.

One morning while sitting in *bhaav*, saw that this body's father somewhere is very much troubled with asthma. Breathing is not taking place, the body has become lifeless. He always suffered from asthma. This body got up and informed Bholanath about it. He said, 'You see that he recovers from it.'

(to be continued.)

*(From an old manuscript of Bhaiji, recently printed as "Amrit Katha", where Shree Shree Ma Herself informs Bhaiji about various incidents in Her life)

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Reminiscence of Matri-Darshan

Shri Tara Prasad Chattopadhyay

In 1929, while residing in Deoghar, I had been blessed by *Srimat Swami Mohananda*, whom Shree Shree Ma affectionately called as, '*Gopal*'. I had met this *sanyāsi* in the Tapovan hills and had received pious advices from him. He was the disciple of *Srimat Swami Shree Shree Balananda Brahmachari*. Shree Shree Ma during Her stay in Deoghar had visited Shree Shree Balananda's ashram and met both of them. Before coming within Shree Shree Ma's proximity I had accepted Shree Shree Ramakrishna Paramhansa Dev's ardent devotee *Pujyapaad Shri Shri Hemchandra Rai* as my first *guru*. And he had departed from his material body long before I got acquainted with Shree Shree Ma. Now also, remembering the highly affectionate Shree Guru, his joyous face engulfs my mind.

On 20th November 1941, after working in Calcutta in a central government office for ten years I was transferred to Delhi. With Shree Shree Ma's grace I got lodging in a mess in Delhi's centrally located Connaught Place.

While staying in the mess one day I heard the news that *kirtan* will be held in a house nearby. From a very young age I was fascinated with *kirtan*. Hence hearing the news, the very night I arrived in the house in Curzon Road. The fenced compound in front of the house was illuminated and a lot of people had assembled. The *kirtan* group was also overcrowded. Learnt that, Shree Shree Anandamayee Ma had arrived in this devotee's residence. I had not had a glimpse of Ma till then nor I knew anything about Her. Saw Shree Shree Ma there seated, wearing a red bordered *sari* illuminating the surrounding with Her angelic and captivating radiance. And with the heart inspiring *kirtan* lead by the dancing Aboy-da in Her presence, I seemed to have had lost myself in that unnatural environment. This was my first *darshan* of Shree Shree Ma. And seeing Her my heart was engulfed in happiness. Even after returning back to the mess, this effect stayed within me for a long time.

In 1942, during the summer our office shifted to Shimla and hence I too went to Shimla and stayed there for almost a year and then returned back to Delhi. The *Kali-bari* in Shimla is an eminent achievement of the Bengalis. Shree Shree Ma had arrived in the *Kali-bari* several times earlier and had enthralled the bengali, non-bengali and the local community with Her divine grace and there used to be big gatherings with *kirtan* and devotional functions. However, Ma had not arrived in the period I was present.

My second contact with Shree Shree Ma was in 1951, through my wife Pannarani. My wife had a desire to have a *guru*. I advised if she got a lady as a *guru* then she should accept her. At that time she saw Shree Shree Ma in her dream and disclosed this to her neighbours Bulu-di (devotee of Shree Shree Ma and wife of Shri Purojit Lahiri) and Noni-di. Fortunately, Shree Shree Ma had then arrived for a function at the residence of

an ardent devotee of Shree Ma and a famous doctor Shri J.K.Sen. Bulu-di took my wife to the doctor's residence. There she was blessed by Shree Shree Ma. After a long wait Shree Ma Herself called her and after discussing and making all arrangements asked her to go to Kashi. I too went to the doctor's residence and had *darshan* of Shree Ma. I was extremely delighted. After staying there for quite some time we returned back home.

We visited Dr.J.K.Sen's house every time Shree Shree Ma graced his house and used to have Her *darshan*, enjoy the glorious *kirtan* and return back home. On one of these occasions, I went for Shree Ma's *darshan* and paid Her obeisance just after She came out from Her bathe. Nobody else was in the room. Shree Ma stood in front of me like Shree Shree *MaKali* with Her tongue protruded out and accepted my *pranām*. I had been amazed with that incident. Such was Shree Ma's infinite grace. May be to judge the devotee of *Ma-Kali*, Shree Ma had taken that form and had graced me.

In 1952, Shree Ma advised us to go to Kashi, so we decided that while going to Calcutta we will break journey for three days at Kashi. We decided on a date, boarded the train from Delhi, got down at Kashi and went straight to Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Ashram at Bhadaini. Shree Ma had once said, "I am a flying bird." She ceaselessly moves around various places giving joy and comfort, and fulfilling their earnest wishes. We were lucky that incidentally Shree Ma was present in Kashi then. We just cannot forget how happy Shree Ma was to see us and took full care for our fooding and lodging. We were given a room adjacent to the *Kirtan Hall*.

Every day in the morning, Bibhu-da in his melodious resonating voice used to sing *kirtan* and *bhajan* in the presence of Shree Ma. His first day's song '*Achutang Keshavang Ramanarayanam*', still rings in my ears, wherever I am. On the second day after bathing we went to Shree Ma as She had called for us. However, She had requested us not to bathe in the Ganges. We (me, my wife and three children) were alone with Shree Ma in Her room. We were overwhelmed to see Shree Ma's radiant and exuberant facial expression with part of Her hair curled up on top of Her head. Shree Ma blessed us with several advises and talked on various subjects. Shree Ma told my wife to repeat the 'Name', given to her in Delhi, constantly along with the inhalation and exhalation of breath.

I informed Shree Ma about my predicament, "I pray by saying 'Ma', 'Ma' in front of a combined frame of Shree Ramakrishna Paramhansadev on one side and Shree Shree Ma-Kali on the other. I don't understand, while praying I used to see Shree Ma-Kali within a glowing 'Om'." Shree Ma said, "While praying just add 'Om' before saying 'Ma', say 'Om-Ma, Om-Ma'. Since it has occurred with you, hence said so." The third day while we were packing, Shree Ma came to our room and supervised us to faultlessly and effortlessly pack our luggage. We then paid our obeisance to Shree Ma, went to the station, and placed our luggage in the train which had already arrived. I then went to the cloak room to collect our remaining baggage. By the time I returned to the station with the coolies and baggage the train had left. I frantically started praying to Shree Ma for her blessings. And, what infinite grace of Shree Ma, the train suddenly stopped near the end of the platform and I boarded it comfortably.

In the year 1961, my daughter who was 8 months old, had to be given *mukhe-bhaat* (a function for feeding rice etc. to a baby child). Shree Ma arrived in Kalkaji Ashram. On asking, Shree Ma requested Swami Paramanandaji to fix an auspicious day for it. He fixed a date and then Shree Ma said, "Go, all accomplished." Arriving at the ashram again on the recommended date, learnt that Shree Ma was not well and would not take any food and was lying in Her room. My wife started praying earnestly to Shree Ma. If Shree Ma does not take even a morsel then how to feed the same *prasād* to our daughter and then how will her function be completed? Suddenly Shree Ma got up and said from inside, "If this body does not eat anything then a eight months old baby will not be able to eat anything? Bring rice for me immediately." Then after Shree Ma's *bhog* (meals), She herself came outside and put a small quantity of the *prasād* in my daughter's mouth. We also took *prasād*, paid obeisance to Shree Ma and returned back home, excited to the full with Shree Ma's infinite grace. Now also, thinking of that incident purifies our body and mind with veneration and reverence.

(to be continued.)

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"He is the Supreme Form as well as the Formless Self. In one aspect, He appears ever present in full form, beauty, qualities and attributes, whereas in another aspect He is found as Formless, without attributes, here is pure, non-dual identity. In another aspect He is Full. If fullness is subtracted from fullness it remains full all the same. There is no difference anywhere. He is Dual as well as Non-Dual. He is the Discord as well as Harmony. He is boundless, He cannot be grasped even in our thoughts."

- Ma Anandamayee

Memorial Tribute

Late Bidyut Kanti Basu

In the evening of 29th September 2019, Sunday, at the age of 75, our beloved President of Varanasi Ashram, Shri Bidyut Kanti Basu in full consciousness breathed his last and left for the heavenly abode to be absorbed at the lotus feet of Shree Shree Anandamayee Ma.

Bidyutda will always be remembered for his humble and joyful nature. In 2005, Bidyutda, as he was generally called by everyone, retired from government service. After that, on Panuda's request he was absorbed in the service of the Varanasi Ashram. Initially he held the post of Asst-Secretary, then Secretary and finally President of the Ashram.

He was the nephew of Shree Shree Ma's ardent devotees Late Potolda and Late Hiruda. At the age of eleven or twelve, in 1956, Bidyutda came with his parents and uncles for Shree Shree Ma's *darshan* at the Varanasi Ashram when the diamond jubilee celebration of Shree Shree Ma's *Janmotsav* was being celebrated in the Ashram.

He actively participated in the ceremonies and programmes of the Ashram along with his uncles. In 1968, when Srimati Indira Gandhi (the then Prime Minister of India) arrived in our Ashram for the inauguration of the Hospital, Bidyutda had assisted Panuda in the smooth completion of the programme. Bidyutda got married on 18th January 1974. Shree Shree Ma in Her *kheyal* had offered a towel to him, a *Benarasi Sari* to his wife and had also sent *prasad* to their house. In 1975, on the occasion of *Durga Puja*, Shree Shree Ma had been to their house in Chowkhamba, Varanasi, being carried in a *palki* (palanquin) within the by-lanes. On 1st January 1982, on Panuda's request, he was asked to hold Shree Shree Ma's chair, when Ma arrived in the Ashram. He was extremely pleased and honored to do so.

Bidyutda selflessly and silently donated immensely for the benefit of the Ashram. Beautifying Shree Shree Ma's room in the ground floor of the Kanyapeeth with marble flooring is just one example of his highly charitable temperament and he will always be remembered for all these and also for his humble and joyful nature.

His departed soul must be surely resting in a state of bliss at the lotus feet of Shree Shree Ma. We pray to Shree Shree Ma for consoling his bereaved family.

Late Binoy Bhusan Sarkar

On 14th September 2019, another ardent devotee of Shree Shree Ma, Shri Binoy Bhusan Sarkar breathed his last and left for the heavenly abode. He was loved by everyone for his pleasant and humble nature. He was the author of several Bengali books like, '*Lila Vighraha Ma Anandamayee O Jyoti Gopal Darshan*' and '*Ke Tumi Ma Anandamayee*'. He had actively participated in the installation ceremony of the statue. He then fell ill and finally Shree Shree Ma took him in Her affectionate lap. He used to organize *Janmotsav* and other Ashram functions with full devotion and reverence in his house. He will always be remembered by the devotees of Shree Shree Ma for his literary contribution. We too pray for his departed soul to get eternal peace at the lotus feet of Shree Shree Ma and also extend our sincere condolence to his bereaved family.

Ashram Varta

Like every year, this year too, the festival of *Sharadiyā Durgā Pujā* was celebrated from 4th to 8th October, 2019 with great devotion and enthusiasm in the various branches of Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha, namely Kankhal, Agarpara, Ranchi, etc. Just after *Sharadiya Navrātri*, *Lakshmi Pujā* on 13th October, *Kālī Pujā* on 27th October and *Annakut Mahotsav* on 28th October were also celebrated in various branches.

From 4th to 8th October 2019, the Diamond Jubilee year of the *Shree Shree Sharadiya Durgā Mahotsav* was celebrated in the Ranchi Ashram. Though the first *Shree Shree Durgā Mahotsav* was held in 1954 in the presence and *kheyāl* of Shree Shree Ma, it was continued on a yearly basis from 1959, with the blessings and instructions of Shree Shree Ma, by the present President of Anandamayee Sangha, Swami Achyutanandaji. To commemorate this occasion, a souvenir was also published.

From 5th to 12th November 2019, *Shree Shree Sanyam Saptāh Māhāvrata* was organized in various branches including that in Kankhal. The inaugural function of the *Sanyam Saptāh* in Kankhal was held on the evening of 4th November. Besides several other dignitaries, Sw. Parameshwaranandji of Sadhana Sadan, Sw. Uttamanandaji of Bikaner, Sw. Vigyananandaji of Kailash Math, Sw. Omkarananda Teerthji of Suratgiri and our beloved President Sw. Achyutanandaji were present for this function. The Kanyapeeth girls started the function with the recital of the Vedas. *Brahmacharini* Bishudhha-di sang the welcome song composed by Shree Shree Ma. This was followed by, a welcome lecture by Shri. Ashish Chowdhury; information of the special rules of the 7-day *Sanyam vrat*, by Shri P.K. Mazumdar, deliverance of Ma's *Vani* on *Sanyam vrat* by Sw. Parmeshwaranandaji; finally a note of blessings to the devotees and participants (*vratis*) of the *Sanyam vrat* by Sw. Achyutanandaji.

From 5th onwards, as per the rules and regulations, the *Sanyam Saptāh vrat* commenced with *Ushā kirtan*, Shree Shree Ma's *pujā* in the *Ananda-Jyoti-Peetham*, *Ved-pāth*, *kirtan*, *Dhyān*, *Gita-pāth* and finally discourse on the *Upanishad*.

Sw. Uttamanandaji of Bikaner, spoke on '*Ingshabasheyapanish*'. He said, "To be born again and again and to die again and again is the greatest disease called *Bhabrog*. The medicine for this disease is *Tatwa-vichār*. After that *Brahmacharini* Geeta read the *Rās-Panchadhyaaya* of the *Srimad-Bhāgvat* and then narrated the famous incident, "Ma was in Tarapeeth. Somebody questioned Ma from outside Her room, 'What is the name of Mataji? Where does Mataji stay?' Ma came out from the room and laughingly said, '*Avaykt-dhām, Svaroop-grām, Sacchidānanda Ghan Shyam-naam*.' In other words, Her abode is *Avaykt*, i.e. it is inexpressible; Ma is forever residing in *Sva-Svaroop*, i.e. She is in Her Own-Self. And Her name is *Sacchidānanda Ghan Shyam*. She is always in the state of *Sat-chit-ānanda*. *Sat* means eternal presence. *Chit* means unknown form. And *Ananda* means ever-bliss. She is both, *Ānanda* the Bliss and *Anandamayee* the Bliss-Incarnate. She is *Nirgun-Nirākār*, and again She is *Sagun-Sākār*. By trying to comprehend Her, everything can be realized, everything can be attained, this is Shree

Shree Ma's unique identity. Later Sw. Achyutanandaji also narrated incidents with Ma. In the evening after the *dhyān*, Sw. Vijayanandaji of *Kailash-Math* discussed the *Vāyu-Purān*.

On 6th, the President of *Divya-Jyoti Sangha*, Sw. Padmanabhanandaji remarked, "Dedicate yourself to virtuous deeds, devotion, yoga, sense control, and peace of mind. Complete sacrifice of addiction, passion and abstinence of power. Upliftment of detachment, discretion, forgiveness, devotion, reverence for the Guru and faith on his teachings are extremely essential for the purification of the soul. We feel angry and sad when we see others being praised and felicitated. The only recourse to such a situation is to pray sincerely at the lotus feet of the Universal Guru Shree Shree Ma. Ma will then remove all the negative tendencies."

On 7th the third day, after the discourse on the Upanishads, Sw. Dvijananda Saraswati of Kailashpeeth commented, "The soul is not different from the body. Just as the reflection of the Sun or Moon vibrates on the rippled water, similarly when there are vibrations in the base of the spine, the soul also vibrates. The soul is the seer of the awakened, the dreamt and the deep slumber states of the body. All scriptures are specifically meant for the purification of the mind. The ignorance of our true Self is the reason for our sufferings. Our evil deeds only give rise to our sufferings and these sufferings are the messengers of the Almighty God. To make us vigilant over our deeds and action, God gives us these sufferings. Reform yourself instead of keeping vigilance over others and their deeds. There are several ways available for the purification of the mind. For this very reason *Satsang* (company of the good) and *Sanyam* are required." Later in the night, *Matri* discourses were given by *Brahmacharini* Geeta, Sw. Golakanandaji (of Puri ashram), Shri S. Banerjee (Somuda), Shri S.K. Banerji (Patunda) and Shri Ashish Chowdhury (Chotonda).

Sw. Uttamanandaji gave explanatory discourse on the Upanishad. He told about the four divine statements: (a) '*Pragyanam Brahman*' – this statement is from the *Rigveda*. (b) '*Aham Brahman Asmi*' – this statement is from the *Ajurveda*. (c) '*Twat-tvam-asi*' – this statement is from the *Samveda*. (d) '*Ayam-Ātma-Brahman*' – this statement is from the *Atharvaveda*.

Sw. Omkarananda Teerthji of Suratgiri explained, "The four castes have been given four different titles: (a) Sharma to *Brahmins*, (b) Verma to *Kshetriyas*, (c) Gupta to *Vaishya*, (d) Das to *Shudra*. Again there are five types of *Brahmins*: (1) *Saraswat*, those residing near the river Saraswati, (2) *Kanyakubj*, those residing near the Ganga and Yamuna rivers, (3) *Gaud*, those staying in Rajasthan and Gujarat, (4) *Dravid*, South Indians, and (5) *Utkal*, the *brahmins* of Orissa. If *karma* (action) is done with *dharma* (piously and truthfully), then that action is called *Karma-yog*."

In the night everyday from 8:00pm to 8:45pm, Shri Mohan Chetanaji read the *Gita*. He said, "Whatever work or action is done it should be aimed at following the instructions of the *Guru*. Never attach the mind towards condemnation or praise."

On 11th November, the seventh and last day of the *Vrat*, in the evening Shree *Satya Narayan Pujā and Pāñchālī pāth* (reading of the scriptures related to Shree

Narayan) was held in the *Shiv Mandir*. After that in the night the *Māhā-Nishā Dhyān* (midnight meditation) was held. The *vratis* took *prasād* after the *dhyān*.

On 12th (*Rās-Poornima* day), the *Sanyam Saptāh Māhāvrāt* was concluded with the *yagna* and later everyone paid there obeisance to Shree Shree Ma in the *Ananda-Jyoti-Peetham*. *Sadhu bhandara* was held in the afternoon and after that all the *vratis* and devotees had normal *prasād* (lunch). In the late evening the *Naam-Yagna* with full-night *kirtan* commenced.

On 13th, there was *mālsa bhog* for everybody. The seven days long *Sanyam Saptāh* festival came to an end after the culmination of the *kirtan* in the evening, with all devotees and *vratis* enriched and enlightened by the combined meditation and spiritual discourses.

From 5th to 8th December, *Gitā Jayanti* was celebrated in every ashram of Shree Shree Ma.

Earlier in the month of July-August 2019, *Br. Guneeta*, *Br. Geeta*, and two other Kanyapeeth residents visited Amarkanthak for 25 days. In Amarkanthak, they were assisted by an ardent devotee of Ma, Shri Milind Kopargaonkar. The river Narmada originates from here and flowing westwards finally falls in the Arab Ocean. There they had a dip in the holy Narmada river, visited the temple of *Ma Narmada* and the Narmada garden and another holy place called Sonmuda. The river Sonbhadra originates from Sonmuda and flows eastwards.

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List of Festivals

1. Shree Shree Saraswati Puja	January 29, 2020.
2. Maghi Poornima	February 9, 2020.
3. Maha Shivratri	February 21, 2020.
4. Holika Dahan	March 8, 2020.
5. Holi Mahotsav	March 9, 2020.
6. Shree Shree Basanti Durga Puja	March 30, 2020
7. Shree Shree Ma Annapurna Puja	April 1, 2020.
8. Ram Navami	April 2, 2020.
9. Shree 108 Swami Muktananda Giri Sanyas Utsav	April 13, 2020.



Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Satsanga Sammilani
Salt Lake, Kolkata