

The background of the cover is a photograph of a mountain range under a warm, golden sky, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. In the foreground, there are several large, spiky plants with long, thin leaves, possibly agaves or similar succulents, which are illuminated by the same warm light. The overall color palette is dominated by oranges, yellows, and browns.

# GLIMPSES OF A MYSTERY

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The proceeds from the sale of this book will go to the ecological reforestation of Anandanagar and the free distribution of medicines to the villagers there.

# GLIMPSES OF A MYSTERY

**Acarya Bhaskarananda Avadhuta**

Most beloved Baba, You have not left us. You are watching us from all directions. Whatever I see is You, in Your different transient forms; even the obstacles I meet are You. I dedicate this small book to the sacred memory of all those who realize this truth and hold the dust of Your feet as the most sacred thing in this universe.

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# Preface

How is it possible for a small lily flower to contain an ocean? Does it not sound absurd? Like sheer madness? Yet it is true that the desire of our individual ego is to be the master of everything. This is its dharma. The limitless thirst of our doer "I" wants all. Similarly, how can a drop of water fathom an ocean? The drop need not fear that it will lose itself upon merger with the ocean; the drop becomes the ocean.

Once Paramahansa Ramakrishna<sup>1</sup> asked his disciple Narendra, "If you are a bee and Saccidananda (the ocean of infinite bliss) is a pot full of honey placed in front of you, what would you do?"

Narendra, who was always considered brilliant, replied, "I would carefully sit at the edge and slowly sip it."

The Master laughed merrily and said, "You fool - you won't drown by jumping into it; rather it will make you immortal!"

A brother of mine, Ac. Rameshvarananda Avt., thought that I would be fit to write a chapter of the book he was preparing on Shrii P. R. Sarkar. He asked me to write about the mystical aspect of Baba. This book is an expansion and development of that original article.

It is impossible to write about Him unless one becomes Him. Yet I ventured to try only because of my human anxiety to share my feelings with others. Once Baba said, "Every human has this wont: to share his or her knowledge." I did not make this attempt to gather kudos from readers. Rather I want to share a few experiences and a little knowledge which my Master generously bestowed upon me.

I feel that all of us close to Him suffer a sharp pain because of our inability to communicate the compassionate love we received from Him to our near and dear ones. This pain is felt by those whom He chose to be close to Him. He is beyond the factors of time, place and person. His love is so pure and blemish less, that it is completely above all earthly cares and comforts. That love of pure consciousness, though somewhat akin to worldly love, is much more subtle, wonderful and infinite.

All thinking persons who were in His divine embrace feel that writing truthfully what they felt must invite sharp criticisms. Some may claim that what we write is all lies. Others will not believe what we write. Some people may even think that the writer is exaggerating in the hope of becoming famous. Most fear that they will be called mad by the intelligentsia if they write in a forthright way all that they encountered and felt. Because of these fears, most devotees desist from writing.

Whatever the result, I want to truthfully narrate a fraction of what I understood and realized. When the rush of ideas takes place, I become irrelevant. My only hope is that some spiritually thirsty seeker might find these writings to be like a glass of cool water in the desert of the material world. If so, I will deem my attempt successful.

Personally, I feel that my life only began when, by His grace, I met Baba in May 1965. From then until His great departure on October 21, 1990, I ran a marathon race trying to be physically close to Him. I felt as the Upanishads say,

*Durat sudure tadantike ca.*

He is farther than far,

And He is so near as to be in your "I" feeling.

Sometimes I felt that this Entity, illumination personified, was several light years away from me and that I was wasting my life pursuing this impossible task. I felt tired and like a lost traveller waiting for divine dispensation.

But there were many more occasions when I felt that no one could be closer to Baba than I; it was impossible even to think otherwise. A few times I even found Him within me.

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<sup>1</sup> Paramahansa Ramakrishna was a renowned saint who lived in West Bengal, India in the nineteenth century. He was the guru of Narendra, who later became world famous as Swami Vivekananda.

## **Glimpses of a Mystery**

In this book I have capitalized all references to Baba to show my deep respect for my Master. The translations of Baba's Prabhat Sam'giita songs are not official.

I must tender my sincere thanks to sister, Avtk. Ananda Gaorii Ac., for editing the draft, and to Ac. Saoreshvarananda Avt. who typed it. I also thank Ramakrsna of Australia for the photograph that adorns the front cover of the printed book. I greatly value the assistance of Jayanta Kumar and Ac. Giridevananda Avt. who helped with the proofreading. I also tender my sincere thanks to Ac. Maheshvarananda Avt. who encouraged me by taking the first and last dictations from me. Without his labour and assistance I could not have finished this book.

I want to repeat what a great devotee once said about His inadequacy in spreading the message of his Guru: "Whatever good I have said is His; whatever wrong I have said is mine." In the same way I apologize to the readers for any mistakes caused due to my excessive anxiety to share these experiences.

Acarya Bhaskarananda Avadhuta

# 1 MY EARLY ASTONISHMENTS

We affectionately call the founder of Ananda Marga as Baba, which means "most affectionate". He is Shrii Shrii Anandamurtiji, spiritual Master for millions. The physical form through which He expressed Himself was known as Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, who was born in Jamalpur, India in 1921.

Sannyasiis (renunciates) greatly attracted me when I was young. I used to feel then that something was incomplete inside me. I desired a spiritual master from the age of ten, and each year after that my longing increased. I spent my leisure time studying philosophy and the lives of saints and mystics of different cultures and disciplines, yet no books satisfied me. I deeply yearned for direct perception and experience of the Supreme Consciousness.

I received initiation through Acarya Pranavananda Avadhuta of Ananda Marga at a time when I was most tormented by the search for a master. I expressly wanted the greatest guru, and I was not willing to accept anyone else.

When I met Baba, I felt as though I had known Him before. I felt like a lost child finding his father.

He was of short height of five feet and two inches, with broad chest, muscular hands and legs, and superb athletic strength. I have never seen more beautifully shaped fingers and hands. His skin was alabastrine. The peach flower is initially a heavenly pink before turning white, yet even this colour cannot accurately describe the soft celestial glow of His palms and face.

He always remained meticulously clean. He dressed soberly in His traditional dhoti and kurta everyday, even on tours abroad.

His bewitching smile was at once affectionate and mischievous. Just a glance from Him was sufficient to arouse one's sleeping divinity. He had complete mastery over all His expressions.

A few days after first meeting Him my initial confidence evaporated, and I started wondering whether He was hypnotizing me. For nearly six months, I remained skeptical. Yet each day that I was with Him, He astonished me with His apparently unending knowledge. His profound ideas filled my mind. To every question I asked, Baba gave beautiful answers that baffled me for hours. When I reminisce about Him, again He baffles me!

Once I asked about the meaning of mudras.<sup>2</sup> He replied, "They are the physical expression of mental feelings." I pondered this beautiful reply for hours. Another time I commented that a certain person was "carefully careless". Baba immediately quipped back, "Is he carelessly careful, too?"

His personality was so charming and sweet that we used to feel that our burdens and responsibilities dissolved in an ocean of peace and tranquillity. He made us feel safe and secure, and when He smiled, we felt like children who love to laugh and play without any reason. In those days it was a common sight to see devotees heavily intoxicated with the "wine" of spiritual love.

I had the opportunity to watch Baba closely for nearly 28 years. I never observed any distasteful expression. He was the epitome of humility. He gave more than 40 social norms to be followed, but He Himself always did more than He asked of others.

He had a very modest way of conversing, yet He also made us laugh by acting out charming dramas. In this way He illustrated political and social problems, then gave their solutions.

He brought out in us the most profound feelings and emotions with His different moods. In His reporting sessions<sup>3</sup>, He would make everyone roar with hearty laughter, cry tears of happiness or parting sorrow. He sometimes delivered brilliant discourses, then

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<sup>2</sup> Mudras are the gesticulations performed in the classical dance of India or the hand positions held by the figures of ritualistic worship in Indian temples. In His discourse, "Bio-Psychology", Baba explained their psycho-spiritual importance.

## Glimpses of a Mystery

displayed a mystic aura when He cured someone of a terminal illness. Occasionally He burst into moods of feigned anger. Then I felt especially blessed and remembered the words of a mystic song:

*Kitni sheeri hei tere lab ke rakiib! galian kha ke be maza na hua.*

How sweet is thy tongue, O my beloved, That even after abuse I don't feel unhappy.

*Hey rudro, hey priyatamo tumar shashan piyush shamo* (Prabhat Samgiita)

Oh Rudra (the entity who moves you to tears), Your disciplining is like nectar.

His half-closed eyes, always hidden under thick framed glasses, seemed to betray His stance in the plane of relative consciousness, with one foot standing in the created Universe, and the other standing simultaneously in the formless state of pure Consciousness. I was very curious to watch His eyes. I had read that the eyes of some realized saints were also usually half-closed.

During my early twenties I used to do many silly things when I was alone with Him. Once I removed His glasses and forced His eyes open with my fingers. Two blue sapphires, as deep and unfathomable as two oceans, gazed back at me. I wanted to contain them but was helpless. I still feel helpless like a baby in its mother's arms when I recollect that sight.

A few times I observed a ray of golden light, like a small torch light, emanating from His eyes when He surveyed the body of a disciple who had some ailment. He would heal them by a touch or a look or with some caning, but only after taking an assurance that they would henceforth work for the good of humanity.

A spiritual brother of mine, Kishan Kumar (who is now an advocate in Jammu), told me a story that illustrates Baba's perfect control over facial expressions. Kishan was massaging Baba when He inquired if Kishan had eaten. Kishan replied that he had, which was a lie because he did not want to leave. With a unique combination of smile and anger, Baba instructed him to go and take food. Kishan said to me that even after thirty years he can never forget how Baba perfectly combined an angry face with such an affectionate and loving smile. I read in a scientific article that it takes 17 muscles of the face to look angry but just a few to express happiness. Baba did both simultaneously!

He walked majestically, like the king of kings. His presence inspired various feelings among the assembled people, but most of all we felt a reverential awe. When He paused during His walks, with walking stick in hand, to explain a particular point, His voice was musical yet distinctly manly.

Even while feigning anger, He remained perfectly composed and always expressed *karuna bha'va* (compassionate tenderness) for suffering humanity. His inner attitude was that of a loving father towards His universal progeny. The outward nonchalant expressions were a facade, like a coconut shell full of sweet water. Only those who knew Him well appreciated this. So when rebuked, they would feel internally happy and tried hard to suppress their laughter in keeping with the drama He was staging, for He never liked that the seriousness of the situation should evaporate.

Many of the public "exposes" of Baba and Ananda Marga, made by those who did not understand Him or were inimical to His ideology, centred around the assumption that His devotees believed Him to be God. It is certainly true that the relationship between Guru and disciple is of paramount importance in Tantra, which is not the case in other disciplines.

Bulleshaw, a well known Sufi saint from Punjab, clearly expresses this Tantric ideal<sup>4</sup>:

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<sup>3</sup> Baba daily met with different groups of workers to review the progress of Ananda Marga's social service work around the world. During these reporting sessions He pressured us to do more, taught us many different things, individually corrected and blessed us, and also made us laugh and relax.

<sup>4</sup> Baba explained in *Human Society Part II* that the Vaesnavas and the Sufis both drew their inspiration from Tantra. Sufism came to India with the Muslim conquest. When Islam clashed with the Persian civilization, Islam won physically. Yet the vacuum in Islamic thought was filled with Sufi ideas. The Taj Mahal is a Persian form of Islamic art. Though Islamic ideas were in juxtaposition with Indian ideas for many centuries, their influence on Indian thought was meager. Sufi spiritual ideas were, however, already present in India in the form of Vaesnava philosophy. These two spiritual trends enriched each other and took root in the minds of the Indian people.

*Rab miliya tu na miliya.*

*Rab terei varga nai.* [Punjabi]

Oh Preceptor, I found God, but I did not find You.

God is not as perfect as You.

The mystical Tantric poet Kabir wrote:

*Guru Gobind dou khade*

*Kake lage pamv*

*Balihari Guru apno jin Gobind diyo batai.* [Bhojpuri]

If Guru and Govinda [the Supreme Consciousness] appear simultaneously, you have to pay your obeisance to Guru only, because the Guru made you realize Govinda.

A very famous mystic, Charandas, said, in a long poem: Let me forget Hari [the Supreme Consciousness], but not the Guru. Hari put me in bondage, but Guru alone liberated me from it.

From my first days in Ananda Marga I heard many stories from Margiis which attributed Baba with super-human qualities. I became very curious about this. Finally I told Him, "Baba, some people say that you are God, but I don't believe it." Baba replied, "I have never said that I am God. My philosophy does not accept the avatar theory of God incarnation<sup>5</sup>."

Now, while writing this many years later, I appreciate the difficulty Baba must have felt in answering my child-like question. If He was in fact Parama Purus 'a (the Supreme Consciousness) and said so, I would certainly have asked for some stupid proof This universe was created systematically, with certain laws for every expression to follow. He usually never broke them, even though He was capable of it. From experience I found later that even God-realized souls, though they possess these faculties, never interfere with the cosmological order. For example, if I had asked Him to change day into night and He agreed, such an action might have caused the total destruction of our solar system.

Each small incident in an individual's life is intermeshed with the functioning of the entire universe. To change one small aspect requires adjusting everything else to maintain cosmological equipoise.

Though He had no sam'skaras (reactions to past actions stored in potential form), except His Mahasamkalpa (great determination) for the betterment of society, He would take on the bad sam 'skaras of His disciples and undergo their requitals. When performing some demonstration or responding to a plea for intervention, Baba would Himself take on the sam'skaras of the individuals concerned and suffer in their place. This is the reason why Baba's most sentient body was afflicted with certain ailments throughout His life. He suffered the sam 'skaras of His devotees.

For example, an old Acarya suffering from piles once mentally offered his ailment to Baba after his meditation in Guru Puja ("Offering to the Guru") - from that time on Baba suffered from piles. Whenever He altered the cosmological order to please His devotees, He Himself suffered the consequences of the imbalance He brought about.

On another occasion in Ranchi, in January 1968, a boy came with a stomach ulcer. Baba touched Acarya Dasarath on the head who was then able to "see" that the boy's stomach had been turned blue and black by a severe ulcer. Baba touched the end of His stick to the boy's stomach and cured him, explaining, "I have changed this disease into magnetic and electrical waves. There will be great changes in the whole universe as a consequence."

In a similar vein Baba commented, "Every incident in an individual's life is significant. Suppose an ant is moving on a rock from east to west. If the direction is changed contradictory to Parama Purus'a, then that small change can affect the entire balance of the universe. An 80 year old widow should not say that her life is useless, because everything is the will of Parama Purus'a. No one is insignificant, not even a blade of grass."

If, to my child-like questions of long ago, He had answered "No, I am not Parama Purus 'a", then it would have been a lie.

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<sup>5</sup> This is the Hindu concept of God descending to earth in bodily form.

## Glimpses of a Mystery

On frequent occasions Baba commented that all religions will have to meet on a common ground. "All religions have a common aim, but the preachers agree to disagree. This happens only when they forget the common aim of God realization. They fight each other because they are not bothered about the goal and don't strive hard to attain it. Ananda Marga is ever ready to help all when they find difficulty on the path."

Once I said, "Baba, it is said that the paths are different but the goal is one."

Baba replied, "No, the goal is one and the path is one - that is a physico-psycho-spiritual approach. Convert physical energy into psychic energy and psychic energy into spiritual energy by sadhana, service and sacrifice."

He inspired us all to practice meditation. The milk of human kindness will flow only through this process of expansion or sadhana (meditation, literally "sustained effort"), and in this way, one day all religions will meet on a common ground. The sword of religious wars cannot change human hearts.

As long as the universe exists, variety will also exist. Variety lends beauty to the creation, as each coloured flower adds to the beauty of a garden. To try to convert all the people of the world to one religion is a mad idea. But to encourage everyone to be a universal human being, and then a spiritual human being, is a noble idea. The wise understand that the apparent diversity will gradually change into a fundamental unity.

He propounded one significant and revolutionary spiritual concept which has corrected the main defect in the philosophy of the Sanatanis. Even today, they argue that jagat (the created universe) is false. The most irrational part of this belief is that the arguments they use arise out of the same false world or maya which they reject. They can bring no example from truth. Baba obliterated this blunder by giving the status of relative truth to our experience of the objective world. While Baba accepted the superiority of non-dualistic theory or advaetavada, He also accepted the relative existence of jagat.

*Brahma satyam jagadapisatyam apekshikam.* (Ananda Sutram )

One day I mentioned to Baba a story I had learned about Him as a child. He asked me, "And where did you hear this story, my son?"

"Baba, I came across it in an issue of Bodhi Kalpa (an Ananda Marga magazine)."

"Oh!", Baba quipped. "I never read any literature."

This created a big question mark in my mind, because I had always thought that Baba was a very well read person. So I watched Him as much as possible; I also asked others who had the opportunity to observe Him, until finally I was convinced that He really never did read any book, magazine or newspaper. He never studied beyond intermediate college. The fact is, He was truly omniscient!

In those days, due to my knowledge of philosophy, especially the Indian system of six theistic philosophies, I was burdened by a very swollen ego. There were always many bright students around Him. So once, when I was alone with Baba, I asked Him, "Why do these brilliant students run after You? If there is something in You, please tell me about it. Who are You?"

He told me: "I have come as a mystery, I will remain as a mystery, and I will leave as a mystery. To know my nature you have to do sadhana."

Then I begged Him to bless me so that I could do sádhana. My hands were resting on His lap. Suddenly I felt a soothing vibration transmitted from Him to me that thrilled me with bliss.

From that day, Baba gave me the ability to sit in meditation continuously for hours. I easily crossed the orbit of time. I was amazed that when I sat and closed my eyes, sometimes three or even six hours would elapse before I opened them again. On other occasions I would feel that I had done many hours of meditation effortlessly, only to find that just a few minutes had elapsed. A frail being like me could be lost in deep meditation only due to His endless grace.

This word mystery baffled me for so many years. When people cannot understand some occurrence, they are inclined to say that it does not exist or does not happen. This is particularly true of psychic and intuitional phenomena which are readily dismissed by those who lack the courage to investigate them. Baba is a mystery in the sense that the human mind cannot expand enough to encompass the entirety of Him. But His existence and His remarkable life is factual experience which no one can deny.

Three months after that blissful experience, I decided to dedicate my life as a sannyasii and to grow spiritually under Him.

I started experiencing profound visions during my sadhana. Once I saw myself being struck by lightning which turned into two inverted triangles. I felt I understood the message in this vision: that Brahma tej (sentient force) and Ks'atra tej (mutative power) should co-exist for the sake of dharma (spiritual morality). That is, bhakti (devotion) and shakti (force) are both needed to protect the virtuous from evil. This is the quintessence of the Bhagavad Giita - an exhortation to fight incessantly against all evils.<sup>6</sup> As a result of this vision, I joined Ananda Marga, that is, for the protection of dharma.

In February 1966 I remarked to Baba, "I love Rabindrath Tagore Gitanjali. It touches some unknown strings in my heart. Tears well up in my eyes, yet I can't say exactly why."

Baba replied, "Tagore was a mystic. His book Bolaka was, in My opinion, better than Gitanjali. It should have won him the Nobel prize instead of Gitanjali. Mysticism is a never ending endeavour to find a link between the finite and the infinite."

Subsequently I began to understand what Tagore wanted to convey in his poetry. Even today Baba's definition captivates me and I enjoy contemplating the depth of its meaning.

In 1967 Baba chided me saying, "Don't run after intellect." From then on He stopped responding to my prying questions. I was sad because He started to give me the cold shoulder, and I stopped asking questions directly. It was only in 1985, when my quest to understand devotion reached some maturity, that I realized how futile running after intellect had been.

Maharishi Patanjali said, "Rtam bhara tatra prajina," which means that intuition in its unassailed stance is filled with veracity and can only be attained through dhyana (deep meditation). It means that running after knowledge is like throwing away the cream and drinking buttermilk which has gone stale. Through dhyana one can have access to all mundane things, but one should not run after these. If one does an'udhyana, which means to continuously chase one's Is 't 'a (Guru), for a few months, one can also know this secret. Baba actually meant that if one dives deep in to one's inner conceptual depths, reply to all questions will be found.

For seven months I stayed in the jagrti (the Ananda Marga centre) in Jamalpur and watched Baba every day. I observed that whenever a person tried to test Him, Baba would behave in such a way that He put that person to the test. For example, when a person full of doubts questioned Baba, He would sometimes feign ignorance, so that the person judged Baba unworthy and left. Mostly such persons tested in order to try to better Him.

One should never test the Guru. Only one who is puffed with ego tests the Guru. That is why Christ said, "Blessed are those who believe without seeing." Here Christ meant that the real seeker should be humble like an innocent, guileless child. When there were seekers, however, who wanted to dedicate their lives to serve the suffering humanity, and sincerely wanted to know if they were choosing the right Guru, Baba used to undergo their tests happily.

Similarly, the right to test the worthiness of the disciple lies with the Guru. But when He tests, the disciple always fails. Then one can realize how mean he or she was to test the Guru. Kabir said:

*Kabir, yeh tan vishki belari Guru Amrit ki khan  
shiiish diye sadguru paye toe bhi sasta jan.* (Bhojpuri)  
Kabir! this body of yours is a poisonous creeper.  
The Guru is the storehouse of nectar. By the exchange of your head,  
If you receive Guru in turn,  
Understand that you got Him cheap!

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<sup>6</sup> Generally, in the history of India, spiritual or sentient people did not use force to protect themselves or the weak. Virtuous persons were considered physically weak and therefore a physically powerful person had to be present to protect them. For example, in 1857 a sannyasii, who had been observing maona (silence) for 18 years, was bayoneted to death by an English soldier because he did not reply to the soldier's questions. While dying the sannyasii said, "You are Brahma who has appeared as a soldier and who kills me." Krs'n'a urged the virtuous kings of his day to fight against their malevolent kinsfolk. In my vision also, I understood that devotion (bhakti) should be protected from the evil intentions of non-spiritual people and that to achieve this end, force (shakti) should be used if necessary.

## Glimpses of a Mystery

That is why, when Shrii Shankaracarya was tested by Shakti, he lamented:

*Ku putro jayet kwacidapi kumata na bhavati.*  
A bad son is born, but a mother is never bad to her child.

Guru Govind, the tenth and last Guru of the Sikhs, said:

*Jo tohe prem khalan ki chav, Sir Dhari tali gali meri avo.*  
If you want to play the game of love divine,  
Walk my path with your head on your palm.

Due to my swollen ego, I also made the mistake of testing Him, but He accepted my tests happily.

Because of my thirst to learn, I used to write down all that I could. Like the proverbial ant, I would struggle to carry away, grain by grain, every bit of His inexhaustible knowledge from the sugar mound that He was. Before each effort I would think, "Next time I will carry away the whole hill." But when I returned, I found that the mound had again grown larger. Finally, realizing that His knowledge was much more than the greatest mountain, I had to throw away the grains and surrender.

When did I stop my pet weakness - intellectual pursuit? It was only in May 1968 during

Baba's Renaissance Universal (RU) discourse<sup>7</sup>, "Expression and Symbolization". Tens of thousands of Margiis attended this speech. As usual, I was struggling to take notes and finding the topic difficult. By the time I finished writing a few lines, Baba had advanced sentences ahead!

Dropping my pen and paper I thought, "Let me listen, understand and remember as much as possible, and leave the rest." At that moment, a miracle occurred. A blissful feeling spread from my ajina cakra (the psycho-spiritual centre located in the centre of the head). I started to understand and remember nearly everything He was saying.

Baba usually asked for comments after His RU talks, so this time I rushed eagerly to Him. But before I could say anything He asked me, "And why did some intellectual boys throw away their pen and paper?" I said to Baba, "Baba your speech was so deep". Baba quipped back "How many fathom deep my son". I was silent, because that reply meant so many things.

Thereafter, bit by bit, Baba enlarged my receptivity. I realized that ego is the arch enemy. When ego does not dominate, then only can He augment one's powers of receptivity. This I experienced, and increasingly I could retain all the important points from His talks. At the same time, a beautiful feeling like a current of light, would penetrate my ajina cakra and anahata cakra (psycho-spiritual centre located in the centre of the chest), bringing tears of happiness. I would become lost in ineffable bliss. After such experiences I never felt like talking; rather I preferred solitude in order to cry and thus soothe the pain of my own pettiness.

I had made myself small and mean by doubting Him. Yet despite everything, this Great Personality bestowed such grace upon me. Years later I understood that these experiences were His application of positive microvita<sup>8</sup> to make my plexi and associated glands more complex so that they could absorb increasingly more subtle and spiritual vibrations.

The wonder was that for many years He was elevating His disciples without them even knowing it. Baba never wanted kudos. He did not want anyone to know that He was giving them something extraordinary. Only on later reflection could the recipient sense something of what had happened. When He enlarged one's receptivity, one would feel that everything in this universe was happening properly and correctly according to the Cosmic Will. After such experiences I would contemplate deeply, and after finally understanding, realization would come.

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<sup>7</sup> Baba founded Renaissance Universal (RU) in the late 1950's as a public forum for intellectual discussion and debate of new social and scientific ideas. He served as President of the organization and gave regular discourses on this platform that were later compiled in the series, *A Few Problems Solved*.

<sup>8</sup> Microvita are subtle, subatomic entities which are the smallest emanations of the Cosmic Faculty. Baba proposed this new scientific concept in 1986.

Occasionally Baba would ask persons more learned than myself to expound on a topic about which He had just spoken. If they failed, He would turn to me. I was always amazed at the beauty and coherence of the explanations coming from my mouth. I knew it was someone else talking through me and I experienced a sense of bliss at my anahata cakra. The intellectuals were amazed that a less educated person could speak so well. After this, I lost the desire to show off my knowledge.

One day out of the blue Baba said to me, "You are a critic. Today I want you to criticize me."

I hesitated because by now I was well aware of my ignorance. I offered a cautious reply. "Baba, Veda Vyasa wrote the Mahabharata through a parrot, so I can never venture to speak about You."

But Baba persisted, "It is My order for you to criticize Me."

So I said, "First, I have read that true mystics used to remain absorbed in samadhi. They found it very difficult to maintain physical parallelism. You are the first person who gives samadhi and yet is never affected by it.

"Second, I found that other philosophers and mystics repeat the same ideas many times. Yet, You never repeat the same idea twice. Even when we request you to repeat something, the repetition always has added fragrance, so it is very difficult to take the latter and leave the former.

"Third, on numerous occasions You have stopped delivering a speech before it was completed because the audience could make neither head nor tail of it. In short, your knowledge has no end.

"For example, when You go to the south of India You select very abstract topics."

He said, "Not the whole south, only Madras."

I continued, "Baba, when you deliver lectures in front of intellectuals, You first start in a tough language with a tough subject. Later, when the listening intellectuals surrender, You tell it in an easy, understandable way. At the end You stress the importance of devotional sadhana." Except a few, all His lectures followed this pattern.

In the first week of January 1968, in Jaipur, Baba started explaining the origin of the swastika and its meaning.

At least a dozen PhD's and heads of departments of different universities were present. The subject was very abstract. After a short time, Baba stopped abruptly. Later, when I asked why, He said, "Nobody was following."

I still remember the main points of this lecture. Baba explained that the first tantrics (spiritual scientists) observed the horizon and drew a horizontal line to represent the Supreme Cognitive Principle (Shiva). Then he gave a vertical line crossing it to represent the causal matrix or Supreme Operative Principle (Shakti). The cross later entered the Bramhi Khraosti scripts as the symbol of the sound "ka". The English letter "k", and "ka" in Hindi and Sanskrit also have similar structures like a cross. When clockwise handles are added to the cross, the swastika of India is formed. It symbolizes the preservation of Creation. The arms represent the anti-clockwise movement of kundalini. In temples of Shiva, the parikrama or movement around the sanctum is done anti-clockwise to symbolize this, while in other Hindu temples, it is done clockwise.

I remember the subject was very abstract. Until 1979 He delivered most of His discourses in Hindi and English. Some of these were not preserved because of the shortcomings of His disciples. Only a portion of His long life, the twelve years from His release from prison in 1978 to 1990, was meticulously recorded. This is only a portion of the total years He spent touring and teaching in different parts of India and overseas.

## 2 COMING TO TERMS WITH SUPERNATURAL PHENOMENA

I used to wonder why Baba did not personally give microvita sadhana to everyone. In my opinion He often selected people for this sadhana who worked very hard and had less time for their spiritual practices. For some, too, who had more fear than love for the Cosmic Consciousness, microvita sadhana was one of the special means by which Baba aroused this love in them.

This caused me to think deeply over the connection between internal spiritual dynamism, i.e. always thinking of Parama Purus'a, and external dynamism, i.e. remaining extremely active in service work.

Finally I met a sannyasii who had both internal longing and a desire to work hard for Baba. He was torn between the two. Once, when he was alone with Baba, He demonstrated many spiritual experiences.

First He asked the Dada to sit in siddhasana and do dhyana. A sweet smell began to pervade the room that filled Dada's mind with bliss. Soon Baba interrupted, saying, "Don't get lost in this, there are still higher realizations." Next Dada began to see a divine light. His mind again experienced waves of bliss, but Baba repeated His warning. Then he heard the beautiful sound of crickets. This was the subtle anahata nada vibration, which starts with this sound and progresses through various stages. The second sound is like the rippling of a mountain stream; the third like the call of a celestial flute; the fourth like the roiling of tropical thunder; and the fifth like the roar of ocean surf. Of course, these descriptions are very inadequate approximations of the actual sounds which can only be experienced in deep meditation.

Dada later told me that when he heard the last sound he felt like entering into an unbreakable embrace with the Cosmic Consciousness. In this way Baba united sound with love.

Sound is the first, most subtle tanmatra (sensory inference); and love is beyond all tanmatras. If a special dish is prepared with wonderful spices but without salt, it will not taste delicious. Love, like salt, is the essential ingredient which transforms the bondage of Cosmic devotion into liberation. If a drop of water falls into the ocean, it does not worry about losing its identity; rather it becomes the ocean by expanding its limited awareness to infinite awareness.

Baba was omniscient. He could transport a person's mind to both the future and the past. He performed these kinds of demonstrations until 1971. I had the unique opportunity of joining Ananda Marga in 1964, and until 1971 I personally witnessed dozens of demonstrations. I was most interested in the psycho-spiritual and spiritual aspects of the anubhuti (direct spiritual experience).

Baba used to read the past of different people through Acarya Dasarath. Once He took this devotee's mind back more than 15,000 years. Baba explained that all the tanmatric vibrations of the past are eternally present. An A-grade sadhaka (spiritual aspirant) can reassemble and experience these vibrations, but it is extremely difficult. Only Lord Shiva and Lord Krs'n'a were able to give this capacity to others, which is beyond even the occult powers. On one occasion in Ranchi in July 1968, Baba explained that many centuries ago Tulsi Das sang the Ramayana while composing it. He then touched His stick to the ajina cakra (centre of the forehead) of a nearby sadhaka and asked him to concentrate. The sadhaka could hear the voice of Tulsi Das singing.

The five stages of onm'kara (the uncaused or "seed" sound of the cosmological system) were all made audible to various sadhakas in 1968. Baba permanently gave this siddhi (occult power)<sup>9</sup> to Jaidhari, an illiterate man who used to look after Baba's garden (he is still alive as I write this).

Recently Jaidhari told me that when he listens to instrumental music, a sympathetic vibration starts in him and it is very difficult for him to maintain psycho-physical parallelism. He becomes lost in a trance.

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<sup>9</sup> Occult is derived from the word cult. Occult is that which is cultured or acquired through the spiritual practices taught by a cult, an esoteric group devoted to self realization.

Not once in His life did Baba make a public exhibition of His siddhis. Great gurus never exhibit these powers because they can be misleading to spiritual aspirants. However in Ranchi during the Sadhana Year of 1969, He demonstrated siddhis to a small group of His disciples. He did this to illustrate the nature of knowledge and how the boundaries of knowledge can be expanded through the use of siddhis. Great gurus help their disciples through spiritual experiences in order to elevate them and to goad them along the path of spirituality. The wise do not consider this to be a mere exhibition of powers, but rather as a fillip to help others move ahead.

What are these occult powers?<sup>10</sup>

- 1) *Anima* means reducing one's psychic existence into a small point and then transforming it into a minimum entity. One may understand anything and everything by entering into each and every physical particle and becoming one with the different waves of expressions and emanations, by dancing with the waves of objects and ideas. This occult power acquired through positive microvita is called anima. The only way to understand these subtle entities is to increase one's powers of perception through spiritual practices.
- 2) *Mahima* means vastness. With the help of positive microvita, the mind can expand to become vast. Its radius may encompass the entire universe and so we acquire ideas about many different subjects without reading books. In this way, too, we may feel our oneness with the varied entities of this universe - unity in variety, unity in diversity. By associating our benevolent thoughts with each and every entity, we will contribute to universal progress and prosperity.
- 3) *Laghima* makes the mind light, free from the bondage of so many liabilities. This carefree mind, freed from so many fetters and bondages, can understand and think clearly. So by dint of this occult power, one may understand any idea, subtle or crude, abstract or concrete. Unless you understand how much pain and sorrow is accumulated in other's minds, how many tears well up in their eyes, you cannot completely alleviate their sorrows and sufferings. Through laghima, your own mind becomes unburdened so you can clearly appreciate the minds of others.
- 4) *Prapti* means helping oneself and helping the souls of so many people to acquire and be benefited by the grace of the Supreme.
- 5) *Iishitva* – Iish means to guide and administer. Iishitva enables the spiritual aspirant to guide other people who suffer from different causes. So many people in this world are crying in pain and agony. So many miseries and afflictions paralyse both physically and mentally. Iishitva enables one to correctly lead afflicted humanity to their physical progress and psychic well-being.
- 6) *Vashitva* means to keep everything under control and properly regulated for welfare. In order to bring people goaded by defective ideas to the path of Supreme greatness, vashitva is necessary. If people work haphazardly and do not follow the right path, they cannot be expected to establish a state of welfare for all. So if you really want to help people, you will have to inspire and influence them in a positive way, and then direct them along the right path to their goal.
- 7) *Prakamya* means the ability to accomplish whatever one desires, to translate wish into reality with a view to promote universal welfare, to bring light to the entire universe. Through this occult power, spiritual aspirants acquire the capacity to serve the entire world.
- 8) *Antaryamitva* is to enter the ectoplasmic or endoplasmic structure of others and thereby to know their pain and pleasures, their hopes, aspirations and longings and to guide them properly. It is somewhat like transmigration of the soul. Regarding this occult power, spiritual cult alone will not suffice - it requires the special grace of Parama Punt's 'a. He usually does not give this power to sadhakas because if they do not possess universal love, it can be abused for personal gains. Baba explained that this power makes the mind so subtle that it can enter the intra- and inter-ectoplasmic mind stuff of every individual as well as the collective human society.

Until that time, I had a big question in my mind about this. If these occult powers are an impediment to spiritual progress, and no great saints ever used them, then what is the purpose of their existence?

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<sup>10</sup> For a more complete account of the eight occult powers, the reader is referred to Discourse XXIII, 'Parthasarathi Krs'n'a and Bhakti-Tattva' in *Namami Krs'n'a Sundaram* by Shrii Shrii Anandamurti, pub Ananda Marga 1981.

## Glimpses of a Mystery

Baba advocated the maximum utilization of all mundane, supramundane and spiritual potentialities. For the first time in the history of spirituality, He explained that all eight of these occult powers can and should be used as a special knowledge to do greater service and help society progress. Then I realized that great saints and preceptors also occasionally used these powers to elevate spiritual seekers.

It is interesting that the ancient Indian spiritual traditions had mental yardsticks to measure these psychic capacities. The critical mistake made by today's psychologists is to apply physical yardsticks to measure mental health and capacity. This is absurd. Antaryamitva is not granted to one who has not attained universal love, because it would harm both that individual and the society. A true spiritualist must love all equally and hate no one.

This is easy to say but extremely difficult to achieve. Baba once gave a good example of the human predilection for favouritism: if you happen to come across a game of football and watch it for some time, though both teams are unknown to you, still you will discover your mind slowly starting to favour one team. This is a limitation of the human mind.

He also said that every human mind obeys some special dynamics. Only the Universal Entity can catch the chains of action and reaction and, without disturbing the universal flow, do something to accelerate the collective or individual human progress. Within this universe, millions of things exist, yet we perceive only a minute fraction of them; and of what we perceive, only a little can be explained.

Future biopsychologists might use these occult powers as yardsticks to measure psychic progress and to some extent psycho-spiritual progress. The powers of omniscience and Supreme Knowledge are above these eight occult powers, and according to the scriptures, only Taraka Brahma, the Supreme Entity in Its liberating aspect - Baba - possesses them.

Before meeting Baba, I had studied most of the important literature published by the Ramakrishna Mission. I had read that Paramahansa Ramakrishna had the power to rouse the *kun'd'alini* (sleeping divinity) of his disciples. It resides in the lowest plexus of the vertebra called the *kula*. I often wondered what this *kun'd'alini* is like. Despite my skepticism, I believed the experiences of Paramahansa Ramakrishna, since he was a realized soul and had the innocence of a child. He could not lie.

Six months after first meeting Baba, I had begun to recognize that He was an extraordinary personality. I thought that if Baba could lift the *kundalini* of someone in my presence, I would accept Him as Sadguru. I never said it to Him personally for fear of being disrespectful, but He very clearly knew what was in my mind.

In those early days in Jamalpur, Baba came to the *jagrti* every morning at 7:00 a.m. After a little organizational work, He gave *darshan* (spiritual discourse) to the workers and Margiis; then he returned home and walked to the Railway Workshop to start work. On Saturday, which was just half day at the office, he came to the *jagrti* at 3:00 p.m. and gave *darshan*. Sundays he came at 9:30 a.m. and gave *darshan* in both the morning and the evening.

On one Sunday morning in February 1966, Baba was in a very pleasant mood and talked in English about *kulakun'd'alini*, the fundamental negativity. Baba explained that for each group of important physical glands there is a corresponding psychic plexus nearby. Photography of the psychic plexi is of course impossible.

Suddenly He became grave. He asked me to move a bit to the back and called a young man called Bishambhar who was then a Science student in mathematics and is now an officer in the of Police department, some where in India, to sit in my place near the front.

Let me say a few words about this man. I had only a nodding acquaintance with him in those days. He was from a middle class background and faced very sharp opposition from his family and village when he joined Ananda Marga. They would not allow him to sit for meditation and would always criticize the organization. He was by nature a reticent person with strong likes and dislikes, and remained always in a sentient mood. He possessed an overwhelming love of people and often cried to Baba about his inability to adjust with the calculating ways of worldly people.

That day, Baba asked him to sit in *siddhasana*, close his eyes and concentrate at the *ájina* cakra. Suddenly He ordered, "Utho!" which means "Rise!". Next without touching, He ordered the *kun'd'alini* to pass through all the six plexi, commanding, "Muládhára! Svádhis't'hana! Man 'ipura! Anáhata! Ajiná! Sahasrara!". Finally He commanded in Hindi, *Dhiire niche ao*. ("Come down slowly").

Bishambhar gave a sharp shout, "Hum!", that conveyed an air of courage. He arched his back, and, unable to withstand the vibrations, fell backwards with both legs out-stretched. I knew from the writings of Paramahansa Ramakrishna, that the body in *nirvikalpa*

samadhi becomes very stiff and one cannot speak. So I stealthily tried to feel his limbs but was a bit afraid of Baba. Suddenly Baba told me not to be afraid and to examine the body as I wished.

To my amazement, I found his body very, very stiff. Baba turned to Acarya Dasarath and explained, "When one goes into nirvikalpa samadhi, the body becomes stiff" Dasarathji also examined the body and confirmed the stiffness. Baba left the jagrti saying that we should massage Bishambhar's body until he regained consciousness.

Some time later Baba told a householder Margii that He had performed the demonstration for the benefit of someone else in the room. Little did anyone know that I was that person!

More surprises were to come. When Bishambhar came out of samadhi, I pestered him for nearly an hour, and also on several subsequent occasions, to get a satisfactory account of his anubhuti. He would say only that it was "unique", which was confirmed by his tears of joy.

"First comes the divine ecstasy and then the divine inebriation," said Paramahansa Ramakrishna. Recalling his further words, I asked Bishambhar if he felt as though he had left the solar system and passed through many celestial bodies and galaxies until merging into an ocean of divine light. He replied it was not just that but something more. Pushed further, he described feeling clearly that "I am not this 'I' who is in the body." After a lot of pestering, Bishambhar, who tends to be a man of few words, terminated the discussion with, "Yah goonge ki gur hai?" ("If you feed a dumb person molasses, how can they describe the taste?").

Language is a very poor medium to express such an experience. I can say that a rasagulla and a jelebi are sweet, but I can never adequately express the difference between them.

Over time, I witnessed many demonstrations of different samadhis: *Salokya*, *Samipya*, *Sayujya*, *Sarupya*, *Sarшти*, *Kaevalya*, all collectively known as Savikalpa Samádhi; Brahmananda, Kankalamalini, Tanmátrik, Apluta, Samprajináta and Asamprajináta. He demonstrated all these just to explain the difference in the experiences.

For me, all these demonstrations only intensified the mystery that was Baba. I wish to describe another demonstration conducted in 1965. A high school headmaster, Mr. Tej Karan (from Kotah, Rajasthan), came to Jamalpur and stayed ten days. During his stay he wrote a letter every day to a Margii who was an officer in the Indian Administrative Service. His first nine letters carried the same message: "Today I saw nothing to prove the extraordinary qualities of Baba. I will stay another few days." In the ninth letter, he wrote, "Tomorrow will be my last day. Until today I have seen nothing to make me believe in Baba."

On the tenth day, Baba announced in the jágrti, "Tomorrow, one of us is leaving Jamalpur." Then looking in the direction of Tej Karan, "You see, in order to see a miracle you have to be a miracle yourself. If I purchase a first-class ticket for a movie and hand it over to a blind person, will it be beneficial? There is nothing miraculous in this world. When people with limited understanding perceive a phenomenon quite unknown to them and beyond their capacity to understand, they call it a miracle."

Then speaking directly to Tej Karan, Baba said, "You have no strength in your body or nerves. Even if I wanted to give you something, you lack the power to withstand it. But still I will do something."

Then He called, "Tej Karan!", simultaneously snapping His thumb and index finger. Instantly, Tej Karan collapsed on the floor and started twisting and twirling like a serpent, as though he had no bone in his body. Even eight strong men could not bring him under control. A very strong sannyásii was thrown away like a feather in the attempt.

Finally he became quiet. Before leaving the room, Baba asked us to massage him and give him hot milk after he recovered consciousness.

After one hour Tej Karan could sit up. Then I asked him to describe the experience. He said that a strong light emanating from Baba had passed into him, electrifying his body from head to toe. A wriggling snake as tough as a steel rod (the kun'dalinii) started rising from his muládhára cakra at the base of his spine and pushed upwards like a "piston moving in a steam engine." The flow of energy was so strong that he felt it could light many powerful bulbs. At one point he felt that he might explode like a bomb. Unable to assimilate the vibrations, he collapsed and was lost in an ineffable ocean of bliss.

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Needless to say the tenth letter he wrote was positive! He was a double MA. and a very rational man, but after that experience, he would declare in superlatives to all sorts of people, that Baba was Parama Purus'a. Cynical persons declared that he was out of his senses. In fact he remained divinely intoxicated for several months, and it took more than two years for Tej Karan to regain normalcy.

Baba gave these and many other dramatic demonstrations to facilitate the progress of disciples on the spiritual path. It cannot be claimed that they were public displays of miracles.<sup>11</sup>

In early February of 1969<sup>12</sup>, in the Ranchi jagrti, I watched Baba conduct three death demonstrations. The modus operandi was that Baba would call someone attending the general darshan and ask that person to sit in front of Him He then would announce, "I am going to conduct the death demonstration." Then without touching the person's body, He would order nine of the vayus (vital airs) - prán'a, apána, samána, udána, vyána, krkara, nága, kurma, devadatta - to leave the body. (The tenth vayu, dhanainjaya, leaves only after the disintegration of the corpse on the funeral pyre or in the grave.) As the váyus left one by one, the subject would start gasping for breath, frothing at the mouth and ultimately fall down, dead!

There was always more than one doctor present. In one case I remember, Dr. Ramesh (recently retired as vice-principal of Ranchi Medical College) examined the subject thoroughly and declared him clinically dead. Baba said that if left in that condition, ants would start congregating around the body within half an hour. But then He ordered, one by one, all the vayus to return, bringing life back to the body. He advised us to massage the body for a long period and administer hot milk since the joints had become very weak as a result of the experience. According to Baba, normal death is not painful, though death caused by accident or certain diseases may be.

I knew a Margii called Diipak who had a very deep desire to take part in Baba's demonstrations. He enjoyed the samadhi demonstrations, but after experiencing one death demonstration, he backed out whenever Baba called his name again. When I teased Diipak as to why he refused, he replied, "A strong body is required for such demonstrations, especially the death experience. The effect on me was devastating. I felt very weak afterwards and it took me months to become normal again."

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<sup>11</sup> As a footnote to this story, in 1968 Tej Karan took his only son, a graduate, to visit Baba offering that he could become a WT (whole-timer worker). Baba declined the offer gracefully saying that WT's are person's already selected at birth. They are born from time to time to join His mission.

<sup>12</sup> Baba declared 1969 to be 'Sadhana Year' and He conducted all sorts of demonstrations that year.

# 3 THE MYSTERY OF THE MIND AND MYSTICAL PERCEPTION

During a class in the Jamalpur jágri in February 1966, Baba described the mind as having three parts: the conscious part (between the eyebrows), the subconscious part (extending up from there the width of ten fingers to the pineal plexus) and the unconscious part (starting from pineal to the back part of the skull).

We work with the help of the conscious mind, but its freedom is limited since it is always influenced by the immediate subconscious. The subconscious is the repository of all past memories, from the day we first emerged as protozoa through millions of lifetimes until our present birth. So we all work according to our past samskaras

I had difficulty in comprehending the nature of the mind. It was even more difficult to explain it to others. No analogies that came to mind were satisfactory. Then I read a beautiful article by Baba in Bengali that is loosely translated as "Different Stages of Psycho-spiritual Sadhana". I was astonished by the example He used of the development of a cloud. In my teens I once witnessed this very phenomenon and I never forgot it.

You might have noticed that on some days the whole sky is clear blue except for a small patch of cloud on the distant horizon. If you go inside for an hour or so, on coming out again, a huge fluffy cloud nearly fills the sky with the same shape as the first small one. It takes a few seconds for you to appreciate that the original patch of cloud has grown into a gigantic shape. Baba used this analogy to describe how the mind expands through psychic clashes and sádhaná.

Mind is the combination of citta (done "I"), 'aham (doer "I") and mahat (the witnessing "I" or the knower "I"). For example you imagine that you are eating a mango. In your mental picture, a portion of your mind becomes the mango, and another portion of the mind engages in the act of eating, and the third portion witnesses the action. The mango is the citta, the act of eating is the doer "I", and the witnessing entity is the knower "I".

The third portion is common for both the unit mind of a person and the Cosmic Mind of Parama Purus'a. The only difference is that the mahat of unit beings is like the air within a pitcher, and the enveloping air of nature is the Cosmic Mahat. The two are divided by the doer "I" feeling which is the wall of the pitcher.

In 1986 or 1987 I was struggling to understand two words that Baba used in his talk "Universal Man and Spiritual Man": manasphot'a and cetanasphot'a. Manas means mind, cetana means consciousness and sphot'a means explosion.

The formation of mind stuff or ectoplasm is described in Baba's Idea and Ideology - the inquisitive reader should go through this book. Still much research is required to understand this process. Here I am only trying to draw on my own experience to explain how ectoplasm explodes into endoplasm and then endoplasm explodes or melts and merges into the Cosmic Mahat.

Sádhana transforms physical cells into ectoplasm, and ectoplasm in turn explodes into endoplasm. Citta is responsible for the done "I" feeling, but the faculty of awareness is less in it. Sometimes when you are half asleep, you know what is going on around you, but on waking you cannot remember things clearly. This hazy consciousness is like citta awareness. Endoplasm is the distinctive "I" feeling.

With manasphot'a or ectoplasmic explosion, one's awareness and "I" feeling increase, and this causes the intellect and its capacity to memorize, perceive and discriminate to also increase.

The inside of the outer layer of the expanding mind is called endoplasm. When the volume of the mind enlarges, the density also enlarges due to a fresh supply of ectoplasmic cells. The transformation of lymph cells into ectoplasmic cells only takes place through the process of intuitional practices or sadhana.

Both the mass and volume of the mind increase directly in meditation, contrary to the Inverse Law of Gaseous Expansion. This expansion is the result of friction between old ectoplasm and new ectoplasm, with intense bombardment on the body's psychic centres

## Glimpses of a Mystery

through the process of concentration. A crude example is if you inflate a balloon, both the size and the circumference increase. With the increase of the circumference of the mind, the doer "I" feeling increases, as well as the magnitude of the mind.

In Baba's last RU discourse in June 1990 He explained that mind's magnitude grows in four ways:

- 1) thinking power develops, which results in discovery and invention;
- 2) memory power develops;
- 3) transmutation and diversification of psychic pabula - in simple language, the faculty of teaching;
- 4) rationality increases.

The faculty of teaching is very important. All students will benefit if they are given an opportunity to teach with their studies. This will increase self-confidence, conceptual power and thinking capacity.

Baba explained that rationality is a spiritual quality. The capacity to love also increases when rational thinking increases. I have realized that the ability to memorize is directly proportional to one's capacity to love others without expectation.

Rationality is judicious love. One loves all equally and hates none. For example, a rational and spiritual judge will harm none and benefit all.

With the increase of "I" feeling, knowledge increases. When a small child cries to understand something, and, after psychic clashes, does understand, his or her knowledge increases and the mind expands in a limited sense. At that time the ego also increases proportionately. Good teachers are well aware of these subtle ectoplasmic explosions.

The contentment that a researcher experiences after solving a difficult problem, is the peace he or she feels after a psychic explosion. The purpose of university education with its many faculties and mammoth libraries is to catalyze this ectoplasmic explosion.

Science today accepts only those things which can be physically demonstrated; that is, it only recognizes the veracity of a phenomenon if it comes directly or indirectly within the scope of the tanmatras of sound, touch, form, smell, and taste. Now if something exists due to a sixth (non-physical) attribute, science cannot discern it, since methods of scientific proof use only the five sensory gateways. Scientists say that what cannot be proved by such methods is not to be believed. This argument is no less dogmatic than the assertion of religious zealots that "My way is the only way, my prophet the only prophet and my scripture the only scripture."

If science is to advance in rapid strides, it will have to utilize a sixth antenna which Baba called "special perception". This special perception is "the reflection of conception within the periphery of perception." (I shall discuss this topic in more detail later.)

Suppose an entity called "God" exists and He comes in the form of an ordinary person who says, "I am God." No one would believe the person. I personally think the word "God" is a defective expression for the Supreme Cognitive Principle. This is an example of the limitation of language, because only a minute portion of what we experience can be expressed. The first intuitional scientists, after having had profound inner experiences, tried to symbolize their experiences and gave the name Brahma to the Supreme Entity.

Who can also make others limitless.

How can one know that limitless Entity? One of Baba's greatest gifts to humanity was His unparalleled elucidation of different aspects of spiritual or intuitional science in language which linked the "mysterious" to the rational and scientific realms.

A sádha must be more than the average person in order to understand spiritual mysteries. When one gets an understanding of this, then one may also catch a glimpse of His omniscience, and appreciate that Baba's effortless establishment in this realm was a unique occurrence.

Here I would like to offer an explanation of Baba's concepts of manasphot'a (bursting of mind) and cetanasphot'a (bursting of consciousness). It is a lay person's attempt to scientifically explain the phenomena of intuitional or spiritual realization.

While explaining microvita in 1988, Baba said that the third type of microvita can be perceived only through "special perception". He said that "special perception" is nothing but "the reflection of conception within the periphery of perception." I contemplated this for several days and finally realized its meaning in an intuitive flash. I also understood what was meant by a "conceptually developed mind". The following examples illustrate my understanding.

The Russian chemist Mendeleev described how he developed the periodic table. He thought that there must be some relationship between the chemical elements and he spent sleepless nights puzzling over it. Ultimately he saw, in a dream, the whole periodic table and wrote it down immediately upon awakening.

The scientist Kekule discovered the structure of carbon compounds like benzene. His solutions also came in a dream. Once, while sitting by the fire in the evening after toiling for several hours with models of long chain carbon compounds, he became drowsy. In his half sleep, he saw the chains turn into twisting and turning snakes. When one of the snakes suddenly seized its own tail and formed a ring, the idea of a cyclic structure came to the great mind.

These scientists had conceptually developed minds since they were assimilating tremendous amounts of diverse data in their mental arena. Their dreams were a reflection of their concepts. Dreams come within the realm of perception. So the answer to their problems came as a reflection of conception within the periphery of perception.

It is significant that enlightenment comes at a point of relaxed drowsiness, when the ego or "I" involvement is conspicuously absent. The symbolization of that knowledge is witnessed by the knower "I" and that profound revelation is communicated to the doer "I", which retains it.

Barbara McClintock received the 1983 Nobel prize in medicine and physiology for her research on "jumping genes". She expressed amazement in her memoirs that the rush of enlightenment happened only when her "I" was forgotten in oblivion at the peak of her deep investigations - that is, she completely lost herself in the act of investigation.<sup>13</sup>

The "I" who retains intuitive knowledge is not the same "I" who brings the knowledge at the time of the pulverization of the ectoplasm into endoplasm. In a state of oblivion, the all-knowing unconscious mind takes charge, allowing the Cosmic Mind to transmit this knowledge. Later the superficial "I" tries to take the credit for the discovery.

Our unconscious mind is His all-knowing mind or the hiranyagarbha of the Guru. If by constant endeavour one crosses the subconscious and comes in contact with the unconscious, one can get symbolic expressions of profound truths.

In every country there are stories of people who experience extra sensory perception (ESP). For example, the daughter of a naive but very devotional man suffered from an incurable disease. He constantly and fervently surrendered to his goddess for a long period. Then, in a dream, his unconscious mind appeared to him as his goddess. She said, "My child, go to such and such place and such and such herb will be shown to you. Use this herb and your daughter will be cured." The devotee came out of the dream, found the herb in the exact location and cured his daughter. Many of us have come across such incidents in our day to day life. It is the unconscious mind which creates the symbolic revelation.

A dream from the subconscious mind is not usually inspirational but dreams of the unconscious mind are very exhilarating. After having them, one feels thrilled and enjoys a beautiful cool balm from the anáhata to ájina cakras.

So-called scientific people usually dismiss such experiences as coincidental or chance, or label them as parapsychic phenomena. To explain them as intuition is only the beginning. By a constant endeavour, if one establishes a link between the conscious and unconscious (this is possible only after one becomes dagdhabijja<sup>14</sup>), then one can start to enter the mysterious spiritual world. Anyone can attain the unconscious and begin this wonderful journey by developing constant devotion and receiving the compassion of the Sadguru.

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<sup>13</sup> Her application for the Nobel prize was submitted in 1954, but was neglected by the scientific community because she was a woman.

<sup>14</sup> Dagdhabijja means that the seeds of all one's sam'skaras are burnt by the grace of the omniscient Master.

## Glimpses of a Mystery

In an interesting conversation with Ac. Rameshvarananda, Baba described what happens when unit consciousness of the jiiva (unit mind) makes a link with Cosmic Consciousness. "When the unit comes in contact with the Cosmic and the Cosmic comes in contact with the unit, as a result of the proximity of the two, the natural becomes less natural and the supernatural becomes more natural."

Baba said in the future this "special perception" will be the sixth sense of knowledge. It may also be called enlightenment. To achieve collective progress, our society needs to nurture conceptually developed people. When scientists eventually combine their analytic approach with the synthetic spiritual approach, humanity will advance in great strides. Only then will the dusty earth be able to heave a sigh of relief and get release from the constant turmoil among nations and communities.

In a DMC<sup>15</sup> in northern India, a few workers and I were sitting with Baba when He was reclining after lunch. He was speaking freely with us, so some workers discussed their problems. Baba generously began offering very specific solutions that included specific details about different people He had never met. This amazed some of the workers, so they asked, "Baba, how do You know about people You never met before?"

He replied, "I require only one second to know about anything."

Then I said, "Baba, You are confusing us, because You don't even take one second! I always watch You speak, and details are constantly flowing from Your mouth without pause!"

Baba smiled lovingly and nodded His head. He explained, "So how can you know this? You need a torch. With that torch you can see everything." Then I understood that His torch is the torch of omniscience. Only persons who cultivate their power of concentration to an extraordinary degree get even momentary access to the realm of intuition or knowledge in its pure form.

On another occasion, a college student in 1969 asked in Ranchi jágrti, "Baba, You know so many things. What is your qualification?"

Baba did not answer, but the boy repeated the question many times. Finally Baba said, "I have only one qualification: I know the One. You also try to know the One. Know One, know all." From this it was clear that He was effortlessly established in omniscience.

Slipping into the unconscious mind is not governed by any rule or condition. It happens only after one's doer "I" feeling is defeated and surrenders. If a sádharma wants to do psycho-spiritual research, she or he will have to do an'udhyana or chase their Is't'a, the omniscient Guru. Suppose your Is't'a says to you in dhyana, "You're a nasty vicious scoundrel and I don't want anything more to do with you!" Then you will have to reply, "No, You are my everything and I will not leave You." If this is not sufficient, then you will have to chase Him. During the chase, it is baffling to find multiple forms of ego stealthily appearing in front of you and yet you are unaware these are the result of your doer "I". The moment you catch it, it again disappears. So I am tempted to say that mayá and the doer "I" feeling are one and the same.

Remaining physically alone is very crucial to this process. The witnessing "I" of the doer "I" becomes dominant when you are alone. This makes it easy to watch when the doer "I" slips into the subconscious and unconscious mind. When you are alone you can identify your sam'skaras and discover which ones are stronger. You can analyse your thoughts, noticing their patterns and frequency of recurrence. Thus you can cleanse the subconscious mind of these thoughts with your mantra ideation.

This "I" feeling, however, becomes a block or an impediment in further expansion or progress. Now in what way does this "I" feeling explode? This aspect I still had- to understand. Baba appeared in another dream and explained, "When you are crying for Parama Purus'a, out of longing for the Great, the endoplasm gets melted. If one is insulted, on the other hand, then the endoplasm explodes and cetanasphot'a occurs."

The clash, tension and helplessness one feels when being insulted, and the subsequent resignation to the Cosmic will, develops wisdom, which is the impression of the Cosmic Mahar.

When I was a new worker, in June 1966, I felt very attached to Baba and did not want to leave Jamalpur to go to my posting. Baba then told me, "Find Me in My Mission." I was still reluctant to go. Then He said, "Between you and Me there is only one enemy."

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<sup>15</sup> DMC means Dharma Maha Cakra, a large spiritual gathering held at least twice a year at which Baba used to deliver a major discourse.

"What is that, Baba?"

"Ego," He replied.

"Baba, remove it immediately!"

He smiled and said, "It is not easy. It takes time."

"Baba, how can I remove it?"

"Get yourself insulted."

"Baba, please save me from the insults of the world. You can insult me as much as You like."

Then He mysteriously replied, "As and when I find time, I will do it."

I could not realize in those days how hard this process was. I forgot about this conversation.

Ten years later, when Baba came out of jail in 1978, He started insulting me without any apparent reason. He constantly rebuked me for the next eight years, saying, "Idiot nonsense scoundrel! Tall talking, high-sounding do-little boy! You have so much potentiality, yet do nothing, whiling away the time! Inefficient grade number three!"

Though these words did not bother me, He also used words in public that hurt me very much. Two things happened inside me. I intensely hated His treatment. Simultaneously, my longing for His love became stronger. Through my pain and tears, I experienced an irresistible attraction towards Him. It felt as though He was constantly twisting and squeezing me, just as if He was wringing out a wet towel.

Gradually His insults felt less painful, until by 1986 I actually started to enjoy them. Then I suddenly remembered Baba's advice to me twenty years before. I realized that this long, painful process was the fulfillment of the promise He made for my personal development.

What we call conscience is the expanded form of consciousness. The quality of developed conscience is loving all equally. As this capacity increases, the spiritual aspirant becomes more dynamic internally. He or she starts slowly getting lost in the process of psycho-spiritual parallelism. Bhava or Cosmic ideation is the start.

In 1981 Baba began to personally review each spiritual aspirant. He called this review Dharma Samikss'a. The purpose, in my opinion, was to pulverize the ego and thus explode the endoplasm in cetanasphota. He said that this process was not done by Shiva or Krs'n'a. Baba promised that anyone who underwent this experience will never fall below human life. This was His special grace to the devotees.

Though painful, from this we can understand the benevolent intention Baba had when He sometimes insulted His devotees. In these situations, He tried never to allow people to see through His acting. He did not want the seriousness of His dramas to be broken, and He wanted the full effect of His acting to be felt. Only when a devotee realized that He was acting would He admit the

*Ronei s'e ishk mein bebak ho gaye, dhoye gaye aise hum bus pak ho gae.*

By crying in ecstatic love for the beloved,

I became liberated

And was thus cleansed and felt purged.

After a lot of weeping in secrecy for the beloved (Cosmic Consciousness or Parama Purus 'a), one gets the feeling of purity, humility and lightness - that is, the feeling of surrender.

When one longs for Parama Purus'a, one's sense of awareness again increases and one feels the proximity of turiya (the fourth stage of spiritual realization) making all sensory phenomena seem as a dream.

## Glimpses of a Mystery

*Mei barasti hei fazaon mein nashatari hai 'Mere saki ne ka hein jam uchale honge.* [Urdu]

Wine showers from the heavens, The inebriating love lingers on,

As my beloved bartender pours barrels and barrels.

The divine inebriation referred to here is, of course, experienced only in the state of intense longing for Parama Purus'a.

*Shamma lei ayei hei, jalwa gahe jana se ab to alum mei ujale hi ujale honge.*

From the magic abode of my beloved, I have brought a lambent flame and now the sky is filled with effulgent light.

This longing is physically very exhausting. Paramahansa Ramakrishna used to suffer physically. Miira wrote:

*Piili pad gayi keser kaya, rup ne apna rup gavaya* [Hindi]

The pink hue of my body turned pale yellow, and beauty squandered her beauty.

The chemical transformation in the body during these spiritual states is a study for future biopsychologists. Cetanasphot'a is the explosion of unit "I" feeling into the mahat which has a close touch with the Cosmic Mahat. The feeling is one vast witness-ship of the doer "I". We can call it the knower "I" feeling, and as a result of this experience rationality increases.

## 4 BABA'S MYSTICAL ASPECT

*Tula upama va Krs'n'asya nasti.*

Krs'n'a can be compared only with Krs'n'a.

Similarly Baba can only be compared with Baba. Millions of His disciples scattered around the world have had different experiences according to their individual sam'skaras.

Upon hearing these stories, it is natural for everyone to desire similar experiences. Baba taught us to treasure our spiritual experiences and discouraged us from sharing them with worldly minded people. They usually belittle or make fun of such things, and often wound our devotional sentiments. However He did not mind when we discussed them with other spiritual aspirants for our mutual inspiration and education.

It is also true that the range of words which we have to express our sensory experiences is very limited. For example, feelings of love vary in many ways, but we only have a few words to describe the nature of love. The best understanding is always to be had from anubhuti rather than from words. But in spiritual matters, even the glimmer of a glowworm can strike the mind like a flash of lightning.

A person whose psycho-physical body is not refined or pure enough to receive the subtle but very powerful currents of spiritual energy, may become disturbed or collapse.<sup>16</sup> So Baba gave these experiences according to a person's individual sam'skaras. He always maintained samadarshita (judicious impartiality) by any standard of measurement, but He did not indiscriminately distribute anubhuti.

So how can scientists argue that what they cannot demonstrate cannot be accepted? The depth of anubhuti varies from person to person in proportion to the development of the glandular system. The psychic expansion of Self by making the glandular system more subtle is called Jinana Yoga.

The mystical aspect of Baba's life was the most difficult to understand. He remained constantly in one of two moods, liilá or nitya. It was very difficult for anyone to know when He was in nitya or in liilá. I gradually came to believe that He was in both moods simultaneously.

Nitya means eternal. Whether giving personal contact or a DMC discourse before thousands, this eternal mood in which He expressed the omniscient Baba was predominant.

Liilá means sportive. When the reason for a particular sportive or playful mood is not known, it is called liilá, and when the cause is known, it is known as kriida.

When He moved with the members of His vast spiritual family, sometimes He would feign to forget, go into moods of anger, or exhibit other human emotions or foibles in keeping with the drama He was enacting on the stage of the world. Most people could not comprehend this seemingly "human" or "fallible" aspect of Baba, as they were rarely exposed to it. Only those closest to Him could see through this enigmatic aspect of His personality and realize that these dramas were pretensions. They were only external, not internal.

Anyone who sincerely desires to realize the Supreme, no matter from which background they hail - geographical, linguistic, historical or cultural - can find a place in His universal spiritual family.

One amazing realization that I had of Baba as the Supreme took place in the second week of January 1968 in Jaipur, Rajasthan. Baba stayed ten days as my guest while I was working there as Regional Secretary of Ananda Marga. The entire period was wonderfully

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<sup>16</sup> The yogic practices of strict vegetarian diet, asana postures and pran'ayama breath control gradually purify the nerves and glands of the body, allowing one to experience higher states of spiritual bliss.

## Glimpses of a Mystery

blissful. One day, when Baba returned after His morning field walk, I attended Him. He was relaxed, so I closed the door and was alone with Him for nearly three hours. I addressed Baba as Shiva. I repeated the long Dhyána Mantra of Shiva in front of Him which ends with Paincavaktram trinetrám, which means "You have five faces and three eyes." Baba then explained and demonstrated the three eyes of Shiva. First He placed His hand over His left eye which He said represents the past; then He placed it over the right, which represents the present; and finally He placed His hand between the eyebrows which represents the future.

Then He explained that the five faces represent the five different expressions that the Lord uses to convey different messages to people. On the extreme right is Daks'in'eshvara, which guides people in sweet language. On the extreme left is Kálagni, which punishes wrongdoers severely. The middle right face is lishána, which clearly states the consequences of misdeeds and offers some advice. The middle left face is Vámdeva which threatens and scolds severely but does not actually punish. The middle face is Kalyán'asundaram, which displays pure bliss. He explained that good or bad, all are His beloved children and have an equal place in His lap.

Then Baba asked, "Do you want to see these five faces?"

I immediately said, "Yes, Baba."

Then He gave a wonderful display of what He had just described. I found that my mood changed dramatically according to the face of Baba that I saw.

He began by showing me lishána. In that mood He began reprimanding me for my mistakes. He scolded me lightly for ten minutes and it made me very serious.

The second face He showed me was Daks'in'eshvara, which was affectionate guiding. It was heart touching to see Baba advising me so sweetly.

Then He showed me Kalyán'asundaram for almost half an hour. He was deliciously sweet and inexplicably affectionate. I sat on His lap and embraced Him. The attraction built up and I was seized with a fervour to shed the limitations of my body. The experience was so blissful that I wanted it to go on forever.

Then Baba said, "I will not show you the terrible Kálagni, because no human can stand it. Even the Vámdeva is very terrifying." He cautioned me against seeing it, but again asked, "Do you still want to see?"

"Yes, Baba," I replied.

Then His eyes and face started becoming sarcastic and angry. As I watched I became more and more afraid. He was becoming so ferocious looking that I, who had an exaggerated idea of my courage, quickly put up my hands to cover His face and said, "Enough, Baba, please stop!"

It took Him a few seconds to become normal again. Then He broke into peals of laughter.

Masters of the past often acted abnormally when they experienced deep spiritual bliss. This is because parallelism with the physical body is not possible, even for very great persons, when one is in high spiritual states. For example, when

Paramahansa Ramakrishna was spiritually intoxicated he sometimes went outside naked, oblivious to society's reactions, and it was Hridaya's job to clothe him.

The Upanishads say that the salt doll could not come back to tell how many fathoms was the ocean. The secret esoteric texts support this, saying that after attainment of the highest state of nirvikalpa samádhi, the body has to be shed in three to seven, or at the most 20 days. It is like an elephant trying to enter a small hut. The hut (one's body) cannot accommodate such intense spiritual energy and it disintegrates.

In Baba's case, however, His ensconcement in the Supreme state did not produce a ripple. The salt doll never dissolved. He moved with ease through the ocean and told us not only its depth but everything else about it. Baba was always calm.

When asked how He could display such vast knowledge so effortlessly, He would quip "I have an uncommonly developed common sense," and so lightly sidestep the question.

Our modern age badly needed a worthy legacy of Shiva and Krs'n'a. Their unfinished work needed a conclusion. Baba revived their forgotten contributions in Namah Shivaya Shantaya and Namami Krs'n'a Sundaram. He also added Neohumanism (The Liberation of Intellect) as well as an appendix in the form of the Progressive Utilization Theory (Prout).

In order to create this legacy Baba worked hard and suffered greatly. He created the model of a new society with the active participation of both householders and sannyasiis who mutually help each other. The sannyasiis take spiritual care of the householders, and they in turn provide the basic necessities of the sannyasiis. For the protection of dharma, this mutual help is essential.

The beauty of this legacy has as its focal point a happy blending of oriental sublimity and occidental dynamicity. What qualities are needed by those who will carry this legacy into the future? He trained His sons and daughters to be:

*Nafz par kabu rahe*

*Aur dost banjaye zamir*

*Shan phir hogi ata*

*Sab se juda sab se alag.*

With well-controlled nerve And conscience as friend, You glow in esteem

With intimacy to all and detachment from all.

During my posting in Himachal Pradesh, I met saints who lived alone and remained aloof from our society. From them I came to know about a language known as Sandya Bhasha in which the Prayoga Shas'tra, a practical Tantric cult text, is written. During one of Baba's Sunday darshans He talked about it and said that this language is prevalent among the Tibetan yogis who call it charya pad

In the Mahabharata, there is a story of Yudhistira and a \_yaks 'a (a luminous being). More than a hundred and twenty questions are asked by the yaks 'a (who was dharma in disguise) and Yudhistira answers all of them correctly. One of the questions is: what is the number that exceeds the combined number of all the florals and grasses of this planet? Answer: the number of thoughts that pass through the human mind!

One Ekádashii (fasting day) I was distracted by the thought of a particular food item while travelling in a bus. I brushed the thought aside and chastised myself (with a little pain) for stooping so low as to think about food on my fasting day. I then forgot it. After Baba came out of the jail, He took me to task for that thought. He asked me to remember the actual occasion but I could not, even after some effort. Then He touched my head with His stick and I remembered instantly. I was amazed to realize that He remembered every thought of mine, yet only with His power could I remember my own thoughts!

During another reporting session, Baba asked Ac. Citkrs'n'ananda Avt. about conversations he had when he was an engineering student in his hostel in Coimbatore. He could not remember anything. Then Baba temporarily gave him a special power to recollect his conversations about a haunted room and many other matters with his friends. He was amazed how Baba could do it.

Baba praised Gandharii of the Mahabharata. e told how when her son, the immoral Duryodhana, went before the battle to receive her blessings of victory, she only said, "Where there is Krs'n'a, there is dharma, and where there is dharma, there is victory." She did not give importance to filial love, but to dharma. Viewers of the popular TV serial that was made of this epic may remember that this part was included by the script writer, the late Mr. Rahi Mazum Raza. In fact I knew Mr. Raza personally and he happily included these lines after I mentioned them to him.

Once while I was talking with Baba in March or April of 1982, He traced my ancestry back to 544 BC. He also described my home village perfectly, named many of the local places and explained many local words. He illustrated how each word and name evolved out of the ancient history of the place and then became simplified. The things He spoke about are known only superficially by the local people of my village, yet He spoke in great detail. I think someday someone with a highly developed intuition will rediscover this knowledge. Some are in Baba's book, Varna Vicitra.

In Jamalpur, about February 1966, one new Acarya asked Baba, "When You know everything, why do You ask questions of us?"

He replied, "My son, do you want that I not speak to you at all?"

## Glimpses of a Mystery

In the early 1950's in Jamalpur, Baba carefully selected His disciples and purposely maintained an aura of secrecy. At that time they could not comprehend Baba's vision for the future of Ananda Marga because they were very few, perhaps less than 50. His plans seemed impossible to realize in their lifetime.

His extreme secrecy conveyed both a good and bad impression to the public. In fact, His extreme aversion to public recognition was a special facet of His mysterious existence. He told Harigovind Dada then, "Malicious propaganda is the real propaganda."

In the early seventies when Baba was arrested and the most horrible slander about Him and the organization was carried by the national and even world mass media, He used to console me by saying that, "Apapracar is the real pracar." This means that negative reporting and sensationalism is a highly effective means of getting well known.

Throughout His life He refused to meet journalists. He explained that He was a spiritual Guru, not a politician, and so only gave audiences to initiated Ananda Margiis. In this way He hid His multi-faceted divine expressions from mass recognition; and He left this earthly abode when His genius could remain hidden no more. The recognition and the garlands He left for His disciples.

He did not want cunning and conceited people around Him. In March 1968 in Ranchi He told me categorically that He did not want misdirected millionaires and self-serving politicians to join Ananda Marga. He said, "Wherever they go, they pollute society." While good people welcome Ananda Marga, its strong moral stand causes headaches for bad people. "Let all good people of the world love my sons and daughters," He said.

Nevertheless, these last 28 years I have been wondering and worrying why such a beautiful ideology and its founder should remain in oblivion. Once He told me that India's main defect is that her leaders are over jealous. They never allow others to come to prominence. By hook or by crook they sabotage the emergence of any independent great personality. So there was a concerted effort to undermine the glory of Ananda Marga and keep the middle class intelligentsia away from it.

We were and still are too primitive to fully appreciate His ideas. Due to defective education, we are nationalists, we have different sentiments, we identify with different religions. We have no common ideals, though spirituality is fundamentally the same for all. While making the final touches to His discourses on microvita, He told us that He had made us do 25 years of sadhana so that we could understand this concept and utilize it in our lives and society. Gradually His universal philosophy spread universal values of life that will eventually result in a common constitution for the entire human society.

Baba told me once, "The human body is a miniature form of this universe." In every human disciple, there is a fight going on between the spiritual personality and the combined influence of the cellular minds of the physical and psycho-physical body. The culmination of this fight is the achievement of spiritual realization. Then only does one become completely universal.

Science is advancing and Baba encouraged us to help this advancement; but we should be careful to transmute the negative aspects of intellectual vibrations (pratikula vedana) into intellectuospiritual vibrations (apluta vedana).

He personally taught me a method to achieve this. The body remains completely motionless and one has the feeling of being completely at ease out of the body. This is called apluta samadhi, and it can be practiced only in a burial ground. The difficulty is that one cannot easily come out of this state; one may want to re-enter the body and stand up, but it is very hard to do so.

Baba was Mahákaola. Who is a Mahakaola? Those who can move the collective ectoplasm, through the medium of their own ectoplasmic rhythmic stamina by awakening new power in shabda. The awakening of this power is called purashcaran'a in Sanskrit, and those who can perform this tough task are called Mahákaola. They can create a stir in the universe. They alone are worthy of the status of Guru and none else.

# 5 DIVINE LOVE AND SUBTLE TANMATRAS

I want to include in this short book, which is incomplete in so many dimensions, a humble attempt to portray a profile of His divine love. Science, mentioned earlier, is only vocal on the operative (objective) side and not on the cognitive (subjective) side. So how can one understand love?

Once a veteran Marxist challenged me with his atheism. I simply asked, "Have you ever observed how a mother holds her little baby? The baby is unable to articulate, but the sea of emotions exchanged through their glances, just like the enraptured non-verbal communication between two lovers, cannot be disregarded even by an atheist. How much they communicate! Even many volumes of writing will fail to capture the fullness of their emotional states. Can any science measure the intensity of these states through inferences? Yet can any scientist deny this love?"

He nodded in agreement with me and became deeply silent. I continued, "Then how can you deny the Universal Love? Our individual love is only a reflection of that Love. When Cosmic Love enters you, you want to explode into pieces for others like a bomb. This is an intensely emotive feeling. How can anyone deny the reality of this experience?"

In our day to day lives, we have many intuitional experiences which science cannot measure, and which unfortunately we often ignore. Suppose you are quietly humming a tune, and after walking a few hundred meters you hear the same tune wafting from a nearby house or shop. There are many such experiences, which startle us when they occur, but which we subsequently forget.

Baba once told me, "God is love and love is God." We can measure our spiritual evolution by our capacity to love selflessly. Selfless love, like service, is unilateral, i.e., we must not accept anything in return. With advancement in sadhana, our propensity for hatred also slowly diminishes.

How few children are fortunate enough to receive true love from their parents? And then even those few are usually taught to be selfish or to stay close to home. Baba demonstrated a kind of loving greater than any we had ever experienced.

Every Margii experienced in Baba's physical presence the feeling of a whole family sitting together. The Ananda Marga family has always been very cosmopolitan. Every year new members join from distant lands and remote cultures.

As a true father, He used to admonish us. He was very affectionate and communicated profoundly without words, inducing in us tears of joy upon meeting and tears of sorrow at every temporary parting.

He was our first family. He was our Father, our Mother, our Child, our Teacher, our Friend, our Authority. Every aspect of human relations He fulfilled with true family feeling.

Another of Baba's great attributes was supreme optimism. It was infectious, so how can we criticize those of His devotees who believed that Sadvipra Samáj (a society guided by moral spiritualists) would be established before He left His physical body? Contrary to our expectations, it was not established on the geographical or political planes in His lifetime. Rapid change is frequently superficial; for universal values to permeate deep into the foundations of human society, in a permanent way, must take some time.

Yet it should also be noted that in Ananda Marga He established a miniature form of Sadvipra Samáj. And for those disciples who followed the Sixteen Points<sup>17</sup> strictly, nature provided for all their needs without exception. So in a way, His Progressive Utilization Theory (Prout) was also established in individual Margii families.

Through love He created a truly universal family. This concept did not just remain a utopian ideal: in reality, the whole Ananda Marga became a great family during His physical sojourn on this earth. Wise disciples will now have to expand the frontiers of this family by

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<sup>17</sup> The Sixteen Points are a set of physical, intellectual, social and spiritual practices of Ananda Marga that promote all round health and personal development.

## Glimpses of a Mystery

helping people to grow through the spirit of inquiry, through a scientific and rational approach. The dogmas which still bind us can be eradicated only through meditation and open-minded study.

The feeling of being one of His close, intimate family members was more intense during the early days when our numbers were less. As our numbers increased, He used to chide me for being possessive of Him and jealous of others. He said, "You are older, a senior disciple. Let the new ones get a chance." So I helplessly had to accept His will, though my individual connection with Him became less physical and more psychic.

The collective family feeling also became stronger; I believe it will continue to intensify as we become more spiritual. Eventually our family feeling will expand to embrace animals and plants and the entire inanimate world.

Baba was the very embodiment of Supreme love. He had two kinds of relationship: one with His disciples individually and the other with us collectively. As a father He was equal to all.

Everyone received their brimful and felt contented. 'Everyone felt Him to be impartial. Incredibly, every disciple truly felt, "My Guru is my personal property." He gave each of us the feeling, "He loves me the most."

His physical presence emanated a special bliss which was experienced even by those who did not conform to His ideology. It was universal. Some days when, due to the pressure of work, His disciples could not complete the target He had set for them, He used to feign anger and would not take food. Everyone used to worry over this and there would be a great commotion around His quarters.

To my astonishment, I found that a similar anxiety and commotion took place in the prison when Baba was there. The same tension spread among the guards, wardens and other inmates when Baba refused to take the glass of buttermilk which He used to drink twice a day during His long fast in the jail.

He was so special that people used to feel a strong and irresistible attraction for Him. Among His disciples there used to be a competition to rush to Him and be with Him.

Ac. Amitananda Avt. once said to Baba, "The General Secretary is so lucky."

"Why?" asked Baba.

"Because he can always go to Your room."

Baba laughed and said, "Then My slippers are even more lucky! No, unnais se biis nahi hoga. [Nineteen won't be made into twenty.] Whosoever works for humanity, wherever they may be, Grace will go to them accordingly. Even one paisa more than that, one cannot get."

Good people, even children, liked Him because here they found a person who only loved. We have heard about God who punishes wrong doing and rewards good deeds. Everyone hopes for rewards and fears punishment. Yet in Baba we found a person who would forgive a thousand times. Not only that, He would take on the bad sam'skâras of His disciples and thereby free us from nature's reaction. His punishments were always blessings in disguise. Many of those disciples who had the opportunity to receive punishment from Him realized that upon receiving a scratch, they had escaped reactions of formidable consequence.

His devotees used to get much pleasure from giving Him small gifts from their homelands. A few of these gifts were quite costly, most were very humble, but He gave equal importance to all. Once in a small gathering of devotees He said, "The physical value of different gifts may differ, but psychically they have the same value for Me." He said this to reassure His economically poor devotees who occasionally worried that their offerings were somehow of less importance.

One example will illustrate this truth. In March 1990 a boy from Bihar travelled to Calcutta to visit Baba. After purchasing his train ticket he had only 25 paisa left (less than one US cent). So he used that coin to purchase a guava for Baba. When he saw the items brought by other devotees from all over the world, he felt ashamed and left without offering it.

Meanwhile, in another room Baba was taking His lunch. Doctors had prohibited Him from eating guava because of His diabetes, but suddenly Baba demanded to eat a guava. His Personal Assistant searched the kitchen, but found none. Baba then instructed him to go outside and ask if any of the devotees had a guava. He did so, and the boy from Bihar offered his guava. It was brought to Baba and

He ate it with great relish. From this incident I realized that Baba gave more value to the intensity of devotion with which an offering is made than its physical or psychic value.

Baba proved logically in His RU lecture of 1967, "Pragati and Paincavedana", that there can be no progress in the physical and mental spheres. At best, physical progress means the demise of an old structure and the creation a new one, as for example in the construction of a motor car. In the mental realm, progress means fighting against all dogmas. "The best is yet to come," should be the attitude, He would say. In the spiritual realm, progress means to cultivate *Radhabhava*<sup>18</sup> for the Supreme.

It is interesting to note that where the spiritual concepts of the Vaisnavites, Sufis, and Ananda Margiis coincide is in the point of Radhabhava. According to Ananda Marga the fundamental starting point of spirituality is this longing for the Great, longing to be united with the Great in wedlock. The feeling at first is, "I love You because it gives me bliss" and the final feeling is, "I want to love You because now I know this gives You bliss. I want to be Yours." In this state one is even ready to sacrifice his or her life, if it will make Him happy. The unit self is absolutely negated here.

An ideal love, I believe, is that between two lovers whose likes or sam'skáras (reactive momenta in potential form) are almost the same. Both of them would be accomplished in every possible sense. They would also be physically charming to each other. Then, their mutual love will touch some very deep strings inside. Baba's love to every individual disciple touched much deeper strings than this ideal love of lovers. A few such husbands and wives (who are very much spiritually developed) confessed to me that Baba's love was much deeper than their attraction for each other.

There are many kinds of love: for example, the love between father and son, mother and son, between friends, brother and sister, master and servant, husband and wife. All these are love with different dimensions and limits. According to Paramahansa Ramakrishna the love between an ideal husband and wife who are mentally married contains all the forms of love, and hence it is superior to the others. This ideal love is similar to what is known, in Tantric terminology, as madhurbháva.

Higher than this is the devotional stage of mahábhava. I knew a little about this from the life of Paramahansa Ramakrishna, who was a Brahavid, a knower of Brahma. (Brahavid Brahmaeva bhavati: "One who realizes Brahma becomes Brahma".) From my earliest days in Ananda Marga, I was curious to know more about this bháva.

In Jamalpur around January 1966, I met a boy called Vinod. (Today he is an engineer in the Indian Railways.) He was behaving like an intoxicated person, singing and dancing all the time. He would run up to Baba, touch His chin and then run away singing, "You are really Krs'n'a of Vrindavan!" During evening walk, I asked Baba, Is he in mahabhava?"

Baba said emphatically, "No!"; but then He added, "I reserve my tongue." The talk shifted to a different subject and I forgot about it.

The next day Baba came early in the morning, asked for a blackboard and gave a lecture which lasted for one hour. "Yesterday," He began, looking at me, "your question was about mahabhava, but today you should understand what is bhava." He then explained bhava in great detail, and He said a little on mahabhava.

It took me twenty years of meditation to comprehend the meaning of mahábháva. Later I would like to write a book on this sweetest and highest of spiritual attainments. By understanding mahábháva, one can realize more deeply the wondrous mystery of beloved Baba. I have not ventured to write on it so far because this aspect of spirituality can be misinterpreted by quacks. Unless one has a very deep interest in spirituality, it cannot be comprehended. I want to cry and shout about it at the top of my lungs: "Here is the quintessence of spirituality, and in it lies final emancipation!" But so far I have always felt some unseen power holding me back from explaining this devotional sentiment in a straightforward way in black and white.

Baba often asked me to speak on devotion. In His presence I used to mouth like a parrot about madhurbháva or Radhabháva, but I never knew what it was like.

Then, in 1985, on one of these occasions, He took His stick and gave me a blow on the head. Instantly there was a flash of bliss. It was inexplicable. In those few seconds I realized how exquisite is the intensity of this spiritual love. This helped me understand how a

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<sup>18</sup> An intense love for the Supreme, epitomized by Radha, the idealized consort of the boy Krs'n'a.

## Glimpses of a Mystery

truly loving husband and wife can be so devoted to one another. I became like a dumb person for months and could not do serious work because of my internal preoccupation. (From that day, Baba never again asked me to deliver lectures on devotion!)

Sádhakas understand that love and bliss are one and the same thing. The pleasures derived from the tanmatras of sound, touch, form, smell and taste are different. Yet in loving your mother, father, child, and others close to you, you feel a kind of happiness. In the Mahabharata, Vidura says that everyone waits anxiously for the arrival of a saintly person who is devoid of egotism. In deep spiritual love, one feels a subtle kind of intoxication. In worldly love the intensity of this intoxication is less. Spiritual intoxication is due to Brahmrandhra, the pineal body, which secretes a nectarial hormone. Baba explained that the pineal gland of every human being secretes three drops a month; but if crude thoughts surround the pituitary region, the nectar evaporates and one cannot enjoy the bliss of divine intoxication. A person who does regular meditation enjoys three drops of this nectar daily; when it touches the pituitary gland, the sádhaka feels great bliss. When it filters through to the lower parts of the body all the glands are strengthened.<sup>19</sup>

Rama Prasad, the famous mystic of Bengal, sang:

*Surapan korini ami sudha khay jai kalibole.*

I did not drink wine but tasted the nectar and shouted "Victory to Goddess Kali"! Worldly people think I drank wine and got intoxicated, which is not true.

I believe that the human body must be very much developed through sáadhaná, asanas and other yogic practices before it can enjoy the pineal nectar. Before one can experience the bliss of spiritual love, all the plexi, glands and subglands must be capable of absorbing it.

What is this love? Love and bliss are one and the same thing. The more the capacity to love, the more the capacity to enjoy bliss. Love is soft, yet so strong and strenuous that it calms and inspires the mind during great trials and tribulations. Love gives a perpetual feeling of bliss and happiness. For an aspirant, a spiritually realized Guru becomes the object of ideation, because the physical medium of the Guru becomes the Impersonal (God) personified.

The Sufi Amir Khushru understood this great importance of Guru. His fellow Muslims condemned him for his worship of his Guru. They accused him of being unfaithful to Islam, of being a Hindu (who use a sacred thread) and of idolatry. He replied:

*Quafir-e-ishkam*

*musalmani mara darkar ne ast,*

*Har-rege man tar-gest hajate junnar ne-ast*

*Khalk me goed ki khushro buth parastii mi kunad*

*Arei arei mi kunad khalko alamkar ne-ast.* [Persian]

I am a non-believer, lost in love.

I am intoxicated from head to foot With the love of my Master, Nezamudin Aoulia.

I don't have anything to do with Islam.

Every vein of my body is intoxicated With divine love for God,

Therefore I don't need the sacred thread either.

Worldly people call me an idolater.

What reply can I give? I have only this to say,

"Yes, yes, I am an idolater."

What do these worldly people know of my idolatry!

When parabhakti (absolute devotion) is granted, there is a risk that the devotee can suffer from a special ideation called mahimna bodha. This causes the aspirant to feel so petty, so small, so insignificant that he or she feels unworthy of the endless, vast, incomprehensible Guru who is the personification of the impersonal Brahma. This type of inferiority is an impediment in the path of realization.

A Persian story illustrates this feeling and its dissolution. A lover knocked at the door of his beloved. "Who is there?" she called and he replied with his name. "Go away! I don't know you!" she replied.

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<sup>19</sup> Some scientists now point to the hormone melatonin, a nocturnal secretion of the pineal gland, as a possible source of this spiritual bliss.

He knocked again and the same thing happened three times. The fourth time, however, when she asked who was there, he said, "I am you, O beloved, therefore open yourself to me!" And the door opened.

In September 1970 in Ranchi, Acarya Karunanandaji and I sang and danced a special type of kiirtana in front of Baba. During this devotional singing, Dada repeated two lines from the poet saint Miira:

*Jo mein aisi janti preet karei dukh hoi Nagar dandora piititi preet na kareo koi.*

If I knew before that loving You causes such bitter pain, I would have proclaimed everywhere with the beat of drums, "Beware, don't love Him!"

Later, Baba summoned Dada and me and said, "I was going to give you 100 percent marks for your kiirtana. But I cut 60 percent because of that couplet. It contains the expression of ego. The duty of a devotee is only to please the Lord and not to challenge Him." Sufis embrace this concept of suppressed mental agony which they call *gila* in Persian and *abhimān* in Bengali. Baba never liked this approach. Later, when He composed Prabhāt Sam 'giita songs, He sublimated this sentiment into six stages: *viraha* (longing), *milan* (encounter with the beloved), *a'vedan* (earnest desire to stay close), *nivedan* (surrender), *stuti* (praises) and *visarjan* (shedding of the unit identity by merging with the Lord).

Swami Vivekananda said that love is like a triangle. The first vertex represents the truth that love knows no fear. The second that love is not a business transaction, it is unconditional giving. The third that love is surrender - total trust. The result of all three is complete abandonment in love.

After much inquiry along these lines, I understood very well that faith in Sadguru is the Guru's grace (*krpa*), and its depth is His compassion. Here I use the word "compassion" for *ahaetluki krpa* – grace which the recipient does not merit by his or her service, but which He generously bestows in abundance.

What is the relation between sex and love? Sex can be of four types: physical, psychic, psycho-spiritual, or purely spiritual. For ardent spiritual aspirants and sannyāsis, psycho-spiritual and spiritual sex are allowed. The intense longing of the mystic poet Miira for Krs'n'a is an example of psycho-spiritual sex. There was nothing physical in it. Savikalpa samādhi, the union of jīva and Shiva, is a type of spiritual sex. This is a separate subject of discussion, about which I will write in the future.

The *sadripu* or the six enemies (lust, anger, avarice, infatuation, vainglory and competitive urge in the material sphere) can never be vanquished, they can only be sublimated since all six have their origin in the mind.

The first Indian swamis who visited the West used the term super-consciousness to describe the state of samādhi. Absorption is the more appropriate English word to describe it. Baba uses the phrase "trance of determinate absorption" as a translation for savikalpa samādhi. *Vikalpa* was defined by Maharishi Patanjali as:

*Shabdājīnānanupati vastushunyo vikalpa.*

If a meaning is not accurately or fully conveyed by the words used to explain it, that is vikalpa.

Suppose you are travelling to Delhi by train. As you get close to Delhi you say that "Delhi is coming." Literally speaking, Delhi can never come to you, rather it is you who approaches Delhi. This is an example of vikalpa, where a particular choice of words does not convey the event accurately.

In the case of savikalpa samādhi, no choice of words can accurately convey the experience, because in this state the visible world and all its sensory phenomena vanish into thin air! Baba uses the term "trance of determinate absorption" for this state of ineffable bliss. When one is lost in bliss, one forgets oneself, and only a state of blissful oneness with the contemplated subject remains: this is samādhi. Savikalpa samādhi is samādhi where duality with the Supreme Self still remains. Absolute oneness is not achieved because the enjoyment of duality, the enjoyment of companionship with the Supreme is still present.

Nirvikalpa means the absence of vikalpa, where there is no scope for a second entity. You have arrived in Delhi so there is no separation between you and your goal. You have become the subject itself. Perfect oneness is achieved. The jīva (unit self) becomes *saccidānanda*. The unit becomes infinite, the microcosm becomes Macrocosm. The microcosm feels, "I am saccidānanda."

## Glimpses of a Mystery

*Sat* refers to the Transcendental Entity, beyond the relative conditions of space, time and person. *Cit* means "consciousness." "It is by the power of *cit* that the Cosmos is created, and it is this power that, through the unit mind, experiences or activates the created substance."<sup>20</sup> *Ananda* means the ineffable divine bliss and not ordinary happiness.

So in *nirvikalpa*, the final oneness is realized. The One without a second. The individual who attains *samadhi* is above all three combined. So "trance of indeterminate absorption" is closer to the meaning of *nirvikalpa samadhi*.

When Baba was physically present, tens of thousands of Ananda Margiis of all ages and both sexes were deeply absorbed in Him. When He was released from jail in Patna on August 3, 1978, the procession raced after His car; each person was oblivious to his or herself.

Since I first met Baba, I have seen many devotees in the state of complete absorption in Him I have watched in utter amazement their face, eyes and chest turn red as they cried or danced or laughed intoxicatedly. A divine aura enveloped their faces. I have also seen *sádhakas*, while meditating in *padmāsana* (full lotus posture), leap more than a meter high, then fall with a thud, without causing injury to themselves. In such states of blissful intoxication, their body chemistry was transformed. This will be a subject of very interesting study for future bio-psychologists.

During my early years in Ananda Marga, I had few such experiences and could only watch in utter amazement as if at a circus. All used to become intoxicated. Once in 1966 a student of T.N.B. College, Bhagalpur, came to see Baba. He was in the habit of drinking alcohol. Baba scolded him for this and then touched him on the pineal plexus. The boy became spiritually intoxicated, and for hours there was a divine aura around him. He cried, danced, rolled on the ground, and exhibited all sorts of other spiritual symptoms. Later he told me that he had never previously enjoyed such intoxication. Thereafter the boy completely abstained from alcohol and became a good *sádhaka*.

With the rise of devotion many impossible ailments can be cured. A person called *Muflish* used to suffer from severe Parkinson's disease, but after devotion was awakened in him, I observed him become completely healthy. *Sádhakas* can be easily recognized by their strong personality and the glow on their face.

It is important here to say something about subtle *tanmátras*. Once Baba asked a *sadhaka* to explain in one line what this universe is? When he could not, Baba Himself said, "It is an ocean of *tanmátras*." Humans are fondly attached to these inferences and hence to this material world.

If the universe is so beautiful, how handsome must be the Creator! In deep meditation we can enjoy all these inferences even more intensely. But entry to this subtle world is not possible if one is preoccupied with ordinary mundane affairs.

He could change ordinary *tanmátras* into subtle ones. For example, once He touched my arm and caused a divine perfume to be emanated from that spot. Incredibly, the fragrance lasted for three days, despite the fact that I bathed daily and washed the arm with soap and water.

*Na hyeshatma balahiinena labhyo.*

Weaklings cannot attain the Supreme state.

There is a gap, however, between these two forms of inferences (internal and external; physical and spiritual), and most *sádhakas* are fearful to cross the gap. Once they do, however, they get a glimpse of these subtle inferences and become absorbed. This happens when the doer "I" subsides and the knower "I" takes control. *Sáadhaná* then becomes as effortless as a river flowing downstream or as watching television! You enter a world more distinctive and colourful than the normal one.

After this experience, I felt that this expressed universe and all its enjoyments are the distorted, fragmented reflections of the real world inside each one of us. It is not easy to comprehend this idea. If the external inferences of the world fascinate us so much, what will be our condition when we are ushered into the internal world? I mention this subject here for people who are interested in psycho-spiritual research. Baba first discussed it during the Purodha Board meeting of January 1989.

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<sup>20</sup> *Idea and Ideology*, Chapter 7, "Life, Death and Samskara".

In an ordinary dream you find all the inferences of sound, touch, form, taste and smell. These are crude expressions of subtle tanmátras. A dream, however, of the unconscious mind leaves an indelible impression on the conscious mind. It is also always accompanied by a subtle feeling of exhilaration that extends from the anáhata to ajiná cakras.

Once an ecstatic disciple expressed to me how, in the exalted stages of sádhana, he felt Baba loved him so much that sometimes he desired to cut his body into pieces and offer them to Him. Many devotees feel this sort of intense love. It is an exclusive love, a possessive love, a celestial love in which you only want to give and give and not to take anything.

This special love is above all types of human love. It can only be understood by those who are especially graced. It is an intensely spiritual feeling, and even the memory of it induces a sort of ecstasy. There is a remarkable change in one's ideation during this state and a mystical glow transfigures one's face and eyes. Actually, it is inexplicable.

## 6 AJANA PATHIK ("THE UNKNOWN TRAVELLER")

Baba started the last phase of His earthly sojourn by composing Prabhat Samgiita. His method of conveying these songs was unique. He would first give the tune and only when the secretaries were capable of repeating the melody, would He give the lyrics. In this manner He composed 5018 songs, which included many related to the departure of Ajana Pathik, "the mysterious unknown traveller."

*Se amar a'panar janitam na agei janitam na  
Du're jobe gele chole amarei akela phele  
Amare rakhia diye virohero davanole  
Chilo koto bhalobas'a koto rangei ranga hansa  
Ekhon bujhe chi agei bujhita'mna*

You went away, far,  
Leaving me alone,  
Despondent,  
In the engulfing fire of deepest longing. How fathomless was Your love.  
How colourful Your play of joyous smiles.  
Now, I realize Thy silent desire to leave.  
Not in those days of drunken love with You amongst us.

From the beginning of 1980 to His great departure at the end of 1990 He exhibited an extraordinary superhuman endurance that goes beyond any superlative description. All those eleven years He worked 22 hours a day to supervise the multiple dimensions of Ananda Marga. Also remarkable during that phase was the energy which He secretly transmitted to His secretaries, who worked with Him incredibly long hours daily with little fatigue.

The reporting sessions during those years demonstrated to us that He was not His physical body but rather the omniscient Baba who knew everything. He proved on hundreds of occasions that His eyes were watching us everywhere.

Work became paramount to Him. In 1983, Baba was at Mehrauli in Delhi. He casually mentioned there that He could introduce a new type of dance; but He said that He would not, because it would cause His devotees to become less active in social service and to give more importance to cultural pursuits.

Baba was established in tatra niratishayam sarvajinā bijjam (the seed of omniscience in an unexpressed form). The vast amount of knowledge He expounded in Shabda Cayanika (an encyclopedia of selected Bengali words, usually those words which carried more than ten meanings) alone spread over the span of 8,000 pages. In that, too, He related only up to the letter ga, the third consonant of Bengali alphabet. He proved in this series that His knowledge is truly endless. Know the One, and know all. The encyclopedia conveys the charming feeling of a gardener lovingly describing the flowers and herbs in his garden.

I believe that Baba also thoughtfully planned not to complete Shabda Cayanika. Every Sunday for many months, He gave darshans on different words. He used to ask His devotees, "Shall I continue this letter ga, or shall I go ahead to the next one?" Invariably, they asked Him to continue, because His explanations were so amazing and charming. It seemed that there was no end to His knowledge.

A few weeks before His great departure Baba asked, "Will I ever be able to complete it?" At that time we had no idea that He would physically depart, but, on later reflection, it seemed He was planning to stop.

In almost every general darshan He reminded us that we came to this world for a noble cause and not for wasting time. Often He said in Hindi:

*Karte karte maro, marte marte karo.*  
"Work, work and die; and die, die while working."

During a few of the last DMC's and darshans, as He was getting up to depart, Baba said something like, "My shirt was given by the children of China, My chain is from Taiwan, My shoes from Australia, My vest from Italy, My pen from Germany, My ring from the Philippines, My watch from the USA, My dhoti from Bengal and the walking stick is a gift from the children of Russia; but `I` belong to all of you."

There was a clear universal and spiritual appeal in His words, and a sad look in His eyes and smile. He seemed reluctant to depart, as His children never wanted Him to leave. Yet He would get up, bid pranam (the salutation between guru and disciple), give blessings and nod gracefully, saying, "Let there be some kin-tam." He would then walk away with majestic steps. Before stepping down the staircase, He would again and again turn and bid pranam as if not wanting to leave.

I now recognize that in the last phase of His life, Baba gave me indirect hints of His passing away, but either I could not believe or was I not ready for the understanding. Immediately after His release from jail He gave a vanii (spiritual message) on August 3, 1978:

Unlike other Gurus, He came with no bows, no arrows, no trishula (trident). His all embracing ideology combined with discipline takes the shape of sudarshana cakra<sup>21</sup>. Moral strength is required to materialize His mission. It is desirable that His sons and daughters should acquire the necessary moral strength by strict adherence to the Sixteen Points.

Then He said, "There are three phases. In the first phase the immoralists tried to destroy Ananda Marga, but it fought against all odds and survived. The second phase has started; in this phase we have to go to the grassroots."

Then one devotee, Shrii R. Prasad, a Collector of Indian Central Excise and Customs and a close brother of mine, asked, "Baba when did this second phase start?"

"On the 2nd of August, 1978," came His reply.

Then I asked about the third phase. He replied, "I will not say anything about the third phase, lest it affect the progress of the second phase."

His life was meticulously planned. Even before He started Ananda Marga in 1955, He personally initiated about 40 Avadhutas, teaching them the intricacies of esoteric Tantra. He then assigned them to lead unknown lives in different jungles and remote areas. From those places they did intense sadhaná to create a spiritual wave that would positively influence the collective mind of human society.

In the month of October 1989, while I was in deep meditation, I saw Baba in front of me. He was weak and emaciated. He said, "See, I am very sick and there will be no DMC on the first of January, 1990." I broke into tears. Next day I mentioned this to Ac. Purnajinananda Avt. and Ac. Cidghadananda Avt. I never believed in such visions, thinking them to be the same as dreams, and I dismissed this one also. But in the second week of December 1989

Baba had a massive heart attack, and He did not hold the New Year DMC.

One message that Baba gave at that time also worried me. He announced, "Let this be the happiest New Year for you." Rather than make me happy. this sounded ominous to me. I thought, "Sadvipra Samaj is not yet established; the communists are attacking us constantly all over Bengal; Baba is also very, very sick; then how can this be the best New Year?"

Although by no stretch of the imagination could I imagine what was to come, yet I felt alarmed. I kept. asking my brothers, "Why did Baba give this message?" Only today do I understand that He hid the plan of His passing within it.

I could never imagine that the third phase would start from October 21, 1990. That was the day of the dissolution of the Mahasambhuti., of the complex structure or shell that contained the omniscient Baba, the unknown traveller, the Ajana Pathik. He carefully avoided arousing the least trace of suspicion about His forthcoming departure.

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<sup>21</sup> Sudarshan cakra was a hand thrown disk that Krs'n'a used during battle. It had a saw-tooth circumference with magnets attached. I once asked Baba about it. He said that the magnetic power was used to retrieve the disk after throwing.

## Glimpses of a Mystery

Baba was unpredictable and sometimes playful. After His heart attack, the doctors ordered complete bed rest. But one night Baba asked his second Personal Assistant, Ac. Aks'ayananda Avt. to wrestle with Him. Dada refused, but Baba kept insisting. Finally Baba placed His right foot on the floor and asked Dada to move it. Now Dada is very strong and well-built, but, though he struggled for several minutes, he could not move Baba's foot an inch!

He never looked for any qualification in a person, insisting that the minimum qualification needed for sádhana is only a human body. Paramahansa Ramakrishna wanted a guileless, clear heart as the minimum qualification for a sádhaka. Yet Baba said that in near future even some animals will be able to do sádhaná. In His last RU speech. He exhorted us to open training centres for animals and plants which have a developed "I" feeling.

He loved His children so affectionately and gave and gave and took nothing from them. People came to Him en masse. Whatever they wanted He gave them: name, fame, money, anything. He was like a vendor who bargained from morning until evening. To everyone He constantly emphasized that no great work can be accomplished without sound moral character and He bargained for "service to humanity". But when evening came, He distributed everything free and left stealthily.

He wanted people to exploit His benevolence and appeared happy when He was cheated. What a dispassionate and detached entity! Towards those who came for love and real knowledge, He was very tough - He gave them the seed of divine wisdom, nurtured them and made them strong. He made them realize what is poison and what is nectar. And He bound them with such love that they desired only the narrow path of enlightenment and not the broad path of material enjoyment.

Men, women, young, old, poor, rich - all sorts of people were possessed by a fire of love for Him. This is why I believe that He had no courage to foretell His passing away. On two earlier occasions in His life He announced that He was leaving, but both times the earnest imploring of His devotees prevented Him from doing so. So this last time, His Maháprastana (Great Departure), He decided to leave stealthily. He came without announcement and He left without telling anyone. The songs of departure in His Prabhát Sam'giita describe this agony:

*Tumi eshechilo kauke nabo,le, naboliye gelo chole*

*You came without notice, and You silently left without telling anyone.*

*Dekhechi tar ankhijol bujhini tahari bhasha,*

*Bujhini kichilo asha, nihito bhalobasa.*

*Neerove gele se chole neerovota kotha boll.*

*When I saw His tearful eyes,*

*I could not understand their language:*

*Neither the expectant hope nor the hidden love.*

*He left silently and now the silence is eloquent.*

*Bhavite parini ami, ye bhabe ashibe tumi emnijabe*

*je chole ankhi jole more bheshe.*

*I could never in my wildest imagination*

*Presume that you would come in this way,*

*And depart so casually, flooding me with tears.*

*Neissesh holo rati phuteche prabhato dyuti argal khule chali tai.*

*The night has come to an end,*

*The morning sun is peeping,*

*Therefore I am unlatching the door,*

*And quietly leaving.*

He did as He foretold to me in 1965: "I will leave as a mystery." As long as the Creation exists, Baba will exist as a mystery.

On October 21, 1990, Baba was ready for work after finishing His morning duties at 4:00 a.m. In the words of the General Secretary, Ac. Sarvatmananda Avt, that day He worked hardest and finished all pending work.

The 25 years I spent with Baba passed like 25 seconds. I sometimes feel He was too good to be true. It was a dream. I felt that time stood still. Like Rip Van Winkle, I got up from the dream to find that I had become old. My reconciliation with the agony of His departure is feigned. My heart cannot accept it.

*Vakt sari zindagi mein,*

*Doe hi guzari hei kathin*

*Ek terei áneise pehle*

*Ek tere janei ke bad..[Urdu]*

Time dragged painfully only twice in my life:

Once was before I met you;

And again after You left.

## Personal Epilogue

The last words of this book express my inability to reconcile the physical departure of He whom I loved so much more than my life. For three years I had almost continuous dreams of Baba.

Actually dreams of Him are visions. Baba once explained, "When you dream of Me, it is not a dream." When such vision occurs, one's body consciousness disappears. For hours afterwards a blissful intoxication fills the aspirant. A cool, soothing feeling vibrates between the anahata and the ajin a cakras, and the mind goes into a state of ecstasy.

In these dreams we quarreled. I would say, "This is a dream," and He would reply, "No." On three occasions, which I will narrate in the future, the experience was so profound that I had to accept the truth of His presence within me. It was like an altered state of consciousness that felt more real than this world around us.

On one occasion He said in a vision, "I leave a scent of sandalwood on your body as a proof that I came." Then when I slipped out of dhyana, I found not only my body but the whole room was full of the scent of sandalwood. It was past 1:00 a.m. I went downstairs and found Ac. Purnajinananda Avt. was still awake. Before I could say a word he asked, "Why do you smell like sandalwood?"

After a few days, I again slipped back into my old despondency over His departure. This continued until the night of August 13, 1994.

At Anandanagar<sup>22</sup> after midnight I was meditating and I lost my body consciousness. Suddenly I saw Baba standing in front of me. He seemed angry and said, "I won't talk to you."

I asked, "Why not, Baba?"

"You are not ready to reconcile yourself with My physical departure."

Then I howled in agony, "I will never, never accept Your decision to part!"

He walked over to the bed and lay down. His face was melancholy. He looked weak and sad.

A long time passed. Ultimately, when I realized that He was adamant, I surrendered. I said, "Baba, You win. I am defeated. I accept Your departure. Please talk, because I cannot bear Your silence."

He got up and His face was beaming with joy. He said, "Promise me to work."

I said, "Yes, Baba."

"But your speed is not sufficient."

I said, "I can't do the work in which I don't recognize You. That is why my speed is less."

He replied, "Yes, I agree. The work in which you don't find Me is no work. Your speed will slowly increase."

He started walking out of the room. During the last years of His life, we always used to sing a Prabh at Sam'giita song when He left. I asked, "Baba, what song should I sing - Tumi esechile?" (the song we sang at the time of His cremation).

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<sup>22</sup> Anandanagar is a huge rural development project of Ananda Marga in Purulia District, West Bengal, India. It is also a tremendously vibrated spiritual centre, where many great tantrics practiced sadhana and achieved liberation as far back as 15,000 years ago. The author lives there now.

He said, "No, sing Ashru muche an'abo hansī ("I will wipe my tears and force a smile"). Before you start every work, you should sing this song. When you finish your work, you should sing Amra gado nibo gurukul ("I will establish Gurukula University<sup>23</sup>"). If there is any project which encompasses all My programmes, it is Gurukula." (This is the last song He gave before His departure.)

Then He started to leave. As He often used to do in His charming way, He stopped again outside and called me. "If you change the heart of people through love, that is a spiritual transformation."

I said, "Baba, it is very difficult to change the hearts of people."

That is true, but nevertheless, you should try to change the hearts of people within and without the organization."

He again turned to go. Again He stopped and called me. He said, "Have I left you? No, I have not left you. Don't we keep meeting now and then?"

I was amazed. He placed His hands on my head. I felt a mist in my mind disappear and an effulgent light begin to shine. I felt profoundly happy.

When this dhyāna broke, I found my hands were full of my tears. A mixed feeling of happiness and pain flooded me. From that day onwards, I never again doubted His presence with us. Almost every night since then I wait for Him.

Somewhere in the astral world, He is in His causal body. He comes unexpectedly, according to His whims and fancies. Our sādhanā. our labour, our sweat, though important, do not seem to work here. Only His grace, ahaetuki kṛpa, brings Him.

His mystery continues.

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<sup>23</sup> The first name given to the Gurukula University was Bhagavat Dharma University. For more information on Bhagavat Dharma, see next appendix, *Baba's Namah Shivaya Shantaya: Shivokti 11*.

## Baba's Namah Shivaya Shantaya: Shivukti 11

It is dharma that sustain the existences of plant, animals, humans and all living and non-living entities. So if the dharma of some entity is jeopardized, it should be understood that the very existence of that entity is in jeopardy. That is why wise, creative and thoughtful people become seriously concerned when they notice that something has lost its innate property or dharma. In fact, the presiding deity in a living being is dharma. *Dharayet dharma ityahuh sa eva paramam' prabhu* ["That which upholds an entity, which is its motivating force, is dharma"]. Scientists first become acquainted with the dharma, or properties, of various substances, and then begin their research to discover newer and newer information about those substances: then they propagate their various theories and formulate new plans of invention.

Trees and plants, wood, bricks, and stones, animals and humans - all are great in their respective spheres of dharma. Here dharma does not mean any particular religion; it means the quintessence of one's very existence. As human beings have come in human form, they will have to live and grow, they will have to establish themselves in human life and die a glorious death, for this is their human dharma. They cannot afford simply out of the instincts of self-preservation and reproduction, to degrade themselves to the level of non-human beings.

The very, essence of manava dharma, human dharma, lies in three factors, plus a fourth factor which is the resultant of the first three: (1) *vistara*, the principle of expansion; (2) *rasa*, the principle of total surrender to Parama Purus'a; (3) *seva*, selfless service to Parama Puru'sa and His creation; and (4) *tatsthiti*, the final ensconcement in Parama Purus'a.

Human beings want expansion; but this is not possible by depriving others of their wealth. It is possible only by drenching one's human values and existential awareness in a flow of sweetness and expanding them throughout the universe- by in fusing the sweetest feelings of the innermost recesses of one's heart into the heart of each and every entity.

Rasa means to be saturated with ever-blissful awareness- to enliven human existence with sweet freshness. This becomes possible only when one maintains a constant link with the Supreme Entity from whom one's individual existence has emerged.

This world of ours is a world of give-and-take. And in this process of give-and-take, the human mind neither progresses nor regresses. if one thinks only of receiving, the mind degenerates; again, if one thinks only of giving, at a certain stage one may develop indifference to one's very existence. Thus, people will have to transcend this level of give-and-take: they will have to consider themselves as instruments of the Supreme Entity, and throw themselves unreservedly into the work desired by Him. This is the underlying spirit of *seva*.

So *vistara*, *rasa* and *seva* – these three come within the scope of *sadhana*. and the goal of this *sadhana* is the fourth factor, the resultant of all these three.

Manava dharma, human dharma, is the combination of all the four factors. This dharma is the greatest friend of human beings. One can sacrifice anything for the sake of this dharma; for this dharma no hardship is too great. Therefore, this dharma is called Bhagavat Dharma<sup>24</sup>.

Shiva's observation is, *Dharmo raksati raksitah* - "One Who protects dharma is protected by dharma." Dharma saves the dharmika, the upholder of dharma, in the material sphere, in the subtle sphere and in the casual sphere. When dharma saves people in the material sphere, they experience it before their very eyes, they hear it with their ears, they feel it with the tenderness of touch. When dharma helps them in the casual sphere, they experience it by loving Parama Purusa with all the sweetness of their hearts. This feeling has no external expression. When dharma saves people in the subtle sphere, they experience it through deep reflection.

The dynamicity of dharma functions mainly in the subtle sphere. With the increasing development of the power of reflection, dharmik people realize that dharma is always with them in a very subtle way. They further realize that their dharma and their beloved Parama Purusa are one and inseparable. So Shiva clearly observed, *Dharmasya suksma gatih* ["The ways of dharma are very subtle"].

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<sup>24</sup> "The dharma to attain the Supreme" – Trans.

# Glossary

<i>Acárya, Acarya'</i>	spiritual teacher.
<i>ajina cakra</i>	psycho-spiritual centre associated with the point between the eyebrows.
<i>anahata cakra</i>	psycho-spiritual centre associated with the midpoint of the chest.
<i>Anubhuti</i>	direct spiritual experience.
<i>an'udhyána</i>	constant chasing of one's Is 't 'a in meditation.
<i>Avadhuta, Avadhutika</i>	literally, "one who is thoroughly cleansed mentally and spiritually": a senior monk or nun of Ananda Marga.
<i>bhakti</i>	devotion.
<i>bhava</i>	idea, ideation. mental flow during intense devotion
<i>dharma</i>	characteristic property; spirituality; the path of righteousness in social affairs.
<i>dhyana</i>	deep meditation in which the psyche is directed towards Consciousness.
<i>Is't'a</i>	the chosen ideal; Guru.
<i>kiirtana</i>	collective singing of the name of the Lord, usually combined with a dance that expresses the spirit of surrender.
<i>kun'd'alinií</i>	literally "coiled serpentine"; sleeping divinity: the force dormant in the lowest vertebra of the body, which. When awakened, rises up the spinal column to develop all one's spiritual potentialities.
<i>mahábháva</i>	highest state of devotional intoxication.
<i>mayá</i>	Creative Principle and Its power to cause the illusion that the finite created objects are the ultimate truth.
<i>Parama Purus'a</i>	Supreme Consciousness.
<i>Prabhat Sam 'giita</i>	A collection of 5018 songs composed by Baba in the eight years of 1982 to 1990. Most of the songs are devotional, and all are completely optimistic and positive.
<i>prajiná</i>	intuition.
<i>Radhabháva</i>	an intense love for the Supreme, epitomized by Radha, the idealized consort of the boy Krs'n'a.
<i>sadhaka</i>	spiritual practitioner.
<i>sadhana</i>	literally, "sustained effort"; spiritual practice; meditation.
<i>Sadvipra Samaj</i>	a new order led by spiritually elevated moralists.
<i>samadhi</i>	"absorption" of the unit mind into the Cosmic Mind.

## Glimpses of a Mystery

<i>sam'skára</i>	reactive momenta in potential form; mental seed of reaction.
<i>sannyasi</i>	a renunciate; literally, "one who has surrendered one's everything to the Cosmic will."
<i>shakti</i>	Cosmic Operative Principle, Prakrti; energy; force.
<i>siddhi</i>	spiritual attainment; psycho-spiritual power.
<i>Tanmátra</i>	inferential wave; literally, "the minutest fraction of that".
<i>Tantra</i>	A spiritual tradition which originated in India in prehistoric times and was first systematized by Shiva. It emphasizes the development of human vigour, both through meditation and through confrontation of difficult external situations, to overcome all fears and weaknesses.
<i>vrtti</i>	mental propensity, proclivity.